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BIBLE ADVENTURES SCRIPT:

A1635 ~ The Centurion's Servant Healed.

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

The servant in today's Bible Adventure didn't start out as a servant but as a slave. One of the most demeaning experiences a human being can go through is to be sold at a public slave auction. These auctions were held regularly in countries where it was legal to keep slaves to do the hard work in the fields and kitchens of their masters. The slaves were considered to have no rights or feelings or hopes for a better life. Their welfare was at the mercy of the person who owned them. Slave masters had a reputation for being cruel and working their slaves hard. Slaves were often beaten because their master expected more work from them than what they could give.

Slavery has been around for a long time. It's recorded in the Bible that Abraham, King David and King Solomon all had slaves. Some people were born into slavery. Others were conquered people after battles of war. At times, the Israelites themselves were slaves in Babylon and Persia. Sometimes children were made slaves to pay for the debts their parents had made. In recent years, children in some parts of the world are still kidnapped to work as slaves and few escape to tell their story.

God delivered the Israelites from slavery and gave the rules of fair treatment of slaves. They were to be released in the Israelite 50th Year called the Jubilee Year. Slaves were considered part of God's covenant with Israel and needed to rest on the Sabbath day like everyone else.

They were to be included in religious meals and could expect equal justice. They could even inherit property.

The slave who was bought at public auction by a Roman centurion in today's drama must have wondered how cruel a boss he would get as he stood waiting to be bought.

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

This account of the healing of the centurion's servant is recorded in fuller version in Luke's Gospel, Chapter 7, and a bit shorter in Matthew, Chapter 8.

This particular centurion had a good reputation among the local Jewish elders because he had built them a synagogue at his own expense. From the outset of buying the slave at the auction, the centurion had an expectation of trust from the slave to become his personal servant. Slaves who escaped and ran away faced severe punishment if they were ever caught.

One of the shortest books in the New Testament is the book of Philemon, which is found just before the book of Hebrews. While Paul was in prison in Rome, he met a runaway slave called Onesimus, who belonged to a Christian man called Philemon. Onesimus had stolen some of his master's property before he had fled the city of Colosse to travel to Rome. There Onesimus had become a believer in Jesus and associated with Paul.

Paul wrote a letter to Philemon and sent Onesimus back to his master with it. This letter is now the book of Philemon. Paul knew Philemon and the church which met in Philemon's house. Paul pleaded for forgiveness for the runaway slave, asking that he be accepted back as a brother in Christ. Paul's appeal was written tactfully and organised in such a way as to build mutual respect, persuade the mind and move the emotions. This shows how sensitive the situation was for a slave to return to his master, even when the man was a Christian.

When the centurion faced Jesus and asked Him to simply speak the words and his servant would be healed, Jesus was amazed at the centurion's faith. Jesus said He hadn't found such great faith among the Israelite people. For the centurion to go to such great lengths to get his servant healed, the servant must have been outstanding at his work and a special companion. Both men believed that Jesus was the Son of God and there remained a strong bond between the centurion and his servant, no matter how sick the servant was.

In Ephesians, Chapter 6, the Apostle Paul spoke to slaves, urging them to be obedient to their masters and to work hard whether they were watched or not by their masters. But as believers in Christ, they were to work cheerfully, as though serving the Lord Himself and not just mere human beings. "Remember that the Lord will reward each of us, whether slave or free, for the good work we do."

Paul also said masters must treat their slaves kindly: "Masters, behave in the same way toward your slaves and stop using threats. Remember that you and your slaves belong to the same Master in heaven, who judges everyone by the same standard."

In these times many people work for wages but the principle is the same. Christian employees are not to slacken off as soon as the boss or manager is out of sight but to work hard for good rewards in this life as well as the next.

Some people are spiritually enslaved because by nature they're slaves to sin. In John, Chapter 8, Jesus said, "Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin."

The Apostle Paul in Romans, Chapter 6, said: "Surely you know that when you surrender yourselves as slaves to obey someone, you are in fact the slaves of the master you obey – either of sin, which results in death, or of obedience, which results in being put right with God."

“But thanks be to God! For though at one time you were slaves to sin, you have obeyed with all your heart the truths found in the teaching you received. You were set free from sin and became the slaves of righteousness, the slaves of God”. “Your gain is a life fully dedicated to him, and the result is eternal life. For sin pays its wage – death; but God’s free gift is eternal life in union with Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Some people have no faith while others have a little faith. God wants us as Christians to have great faith like the centurion and the Canaanite mother. Faith is like a seed that grows if it is planted and cultivated in the heart. In Romans, Chapter 10, it says: “Faith comes from hearing the message, and the message comes through preaching Christ.” As you exercise your faith in times of trial and testing, your faith grows and you glorify God.

The strongest faith is not one based on physical senses but on spiritual conviction. There’s a spiritual element to this world that you cannot see with your eyes, but it is very real. Your faith will become stronger the more you allow the Holy Spirit to strengthen your ‘spiritual vision’, and then you will sense and see the result of God working in your life and in the lives of those around you.

In the 18th Century, a German man named George Muller became a Christian and moved to England. He ministered to a small congregation in Southern England before moving to the city of Bristol for the rest of his life. There he cared for 2,000 orphan children living in five specially-built houses.

The money required for carrying on of this work was voluntarily contributed, mainly as a result of the wide circulation of Müller's narrative, *The Lord's Dealings with George Müller*.

Muller maintained that physical necessities as well as the spiritual needs of life could be supplied by prayer, and on this principle, he abolished church seat rents and refused to take a fixed salary from his church. Muller put his belief in the reality of God publicly to the test.

The story of his life is one of the most striking testimonies to the faithfulness of God that the world has ever seen.

George Müller said that 90% of knowing God's will is choosing to have no will of our own, and relates how he 'died' to himself one day. He “died to George Müller, his opinions, preferences, tastes, and will; died to the world, its approval or censure; died to the approval or blame even of his friends; and since then he studied only to show himself approved unto God.”

George Muller wrote: “Work with all your might, but never trust in that work. Pray with all your might for the blessing of God, but work at the same time with all diligence, patience and perseverance. Pray then, and work. Work and pray. And still again pray, and then work.”

Have you surrendered your life entirely to God? The song says:

Take my life and let it be consecrated, Lord to Thee;
Take my moments and my days; let them flow in ceaseless praise.

The drama is from The Bible In Living Sound.

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