



BIBLE RADIO PRODUCTIONS

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BIBLE ADVENTURES SCRIPT:

A1708 ~ Repent and Be Converted.

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

More than 30 years ago, a missionary family worked in the northern areas of Ghana. Although they visited every village and preached many times, they only had a very small response to the Gospel message. When one family did respond, the missionaries sent a student from their Bible school to teach at their village every week for two years. At times, the missionaries asked themselves, “Is it worthwhile? There are other groups without a pastor.”

A little discouraged, the missionaries wrote home to several prayer groups asking for people to pray for the area. As people prayed, the missionaries noticed an openness to the Gospel developing. But war broke out between that tribe and another, and again, much prayer was focused on that situation.

A year later, the missionaries visited that area again and found seven new adult converts had been added to the initial family. After one particular meeting, the missionaries were taken to visit a man who had been ill for 12 months. They were appalled to see a very thin man lying on the floor in the semi-darkness of his mud hut. He was paralysed from the waist down due to the bad infections that had resulted from numerous drug injections.

Although his back and legs burned with pain whenever he moved, with great difficulty the man managed to lift himself up onto his elbows. A month earlier, he hadn't been able to do even that, but the Christian family had kept telling him of God's great and wondrous power. The missionaries encouraged the man's wife to give him a greater variety of food and not just yam. They also shared with him the story of the crippled man who was healed by God when Peter and John were on their way to the Temple to pray.

After talking about God's power, they urged the man to put his faith and trust in the Creator God. After praying for him, the missionaries left his hut but he remained very much in their minds and many prayers. Two weeks later, that sick man had improved so much that he could sit up in a chair and was making some effort to walk. Later on, his wife started attending the meetings to learn about who the Lord Jesus was for herself.

In today's *Bible Adventure*, we hear what happened next after Peter and John had helped a crippled man to be healed by God's Holy Spirit, as recorded in Acts, Chapter 3.

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

Peter, John and the newly healed man moved to another part of the Temple called Solomon's Porch. There a crowd quickly gathered around them but Peter told the crowd not to be so amazed. It wasn't Peter and John who healed the crippled man, but the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. Although Peter had just performed a great miracle, he refused to take any credit or praise for it. He gave all the glory and praise to Jesus Christ who had done the miracle. We too, should follow Peter's example in giving glory to Jesus because we can do nothing by ourselves.

Peter called God ‘the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob’, as these three men were the ancestors of all Jews. This miracle was a sign that God was bringing glory to Jesus. Then Peter accused the people listening to him that they had sinned by rejecting God’s Son in front of the Roman governor in favour of a murderer being released instead. The result of this was that Jesus was killed. But God raised up Jesus from the dead and the apostles were witnesses to this event. For the crippled man to be healed, two things were necessary: Jesus’ power and a man’s faith – either Peter’s faith or the crippled man’s faith. Both things are always needed.

Peter told the crowd before him that they and their rulers had Jesus killed in ignorance. But he also told them that God is always ready to forgive those who sin in ignorance. Jesus prayed to His Father on the cross: “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do.” It’s fitting that Peter gave the Jews mercy, because only a few weeks earlier, he himself had knowingly denied the Lord three times.

However, it was no accident that Christ suffered and died. The Old Testament prophets and particularly one called Isaiah, wrote that Christ must suffer. All the Biblical prophecies concerning Christ’s death and resurrection were now fulfilled. Peter then told the crowd: “repent and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out; so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord.”

How amazing God’s forgiveness is! These people had only just put His Son to death, but if they repented and turned to God, He would now completely forgive them, wipe away their sins and join them with His Son who they had treated so badly. There’s no hint of revenge from God. In 2nd Peter, Chapter 3, Peter said, “God is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance”.

But the chief priests and rulers weren’t glad at all that a man born crippled and who had never been able to care for himself was now completely cured. Why this sour reaction?

You'd think the rulers would be the first to rejoice with the man in thankfulness and with loud praises to their God for His great mercy and compassion. The miracle was something that the man would never have imagined could have happened to him that day. Christians are taught in Romans, Chapter 12, to "rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep". When we enter into another person's emotional feelings, it brings them comfort and care.

A mission-oriented organisation made a film about their health work within some poor countries. Many people who had leprosy and polio were given operations to make their hands and feet more useful. Some were given special shoes to protect their damaged feet so they wouldn't be harmed by stones and sticks as they walked along. Others were trained to do jobs that would help them support their families and avoid the stigma held against them by their local community.

A leader from the mission said that they had to be very careful in the way they went about helping people from communities that had a different social structure. When the very poorest of the poor are helped, then the next level of poor people want some sort of help too, or they become jealous of those who have already received help. The leader said this is why the mission has to try to improve the whole community first with the provision of safe drinking water and toilets to stop the spread of diseases. When such actions benefit everyone in that community, then the mission can start teaching the people about the symptoms and treatment available for different diseases.

Maybe the high priest Caiaphas and the other rulers feared that one crippled man being healed could pose a threat to their top rank and control over the people? Probably not, though. It was likely that they were more upset about those doing the miracles in Christ's name than caring if the cripple was healed or not. Peter and John were well known to the rulers as disciples of Jesus Christ. The rulers had mistakenly thought that with the death of Jesus, everything would quieten down and life would get back to some normality. But they found that those same disciples of Jesus were no longer timid and afraid and were claiming Jesus was alive and was the Son of God.

Peter told the people that Jesus must remain in heaven until the time appointed by God for Him to return again to earth. Then He will truly restore everything to its rightful place, including the whole world being redeemed from the curse of sin. Then Jesus will establish the kingdom of God on earth in Jerusalem. How we look forward to that happening! At that future time, people of the world will live in peace and without fear.

In Micah, Chapter 4, it says: "Everyone shall sit under his vine and under his fig tree, and no one shall make them afraid." And in Zechariah, Chapter 3, it says: "'In that day,' says the Lord of hosts, 'everyone will invite his neighbour under his vine and under his fig tree.'" That time will be a time of peace for everyone among all their families and communities.

That time will also be a time of peace between nations. In Isaiah, Chapter 2, it says: "They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore."

Although these verses describe the end times, we have to live in the present wicked world where the followers of Christ are often despised, mistreated and deprived of their possessions. Jesus said in John, Chapter 15: "If the world hates you, you should realise that it hated me before you. If you belonged to the world, the world would love you as its own.

But because you do not belong to the world and I have chosen you out of it, the world hates you.” Jesus was telling His disciples that the world would hate them and persecute them for His name’s sake. We are Christ’s modern-day disciples, meaning all who follow after Jesus Christ, keep His Word and believe on Him by faith these days will also be hated by the world.

During this stage of history, the Church of Jesus Christ is being trained for a great role or job in Christ that will one day be ours. While we wait for Jesus to return, we are passing through a period of apprenticeship or preparation for the time when we will reign for ever and ever as recorded in Revelation, Chapter 22. Part of this apprenticeship is learning how to handle suffering with humility and hope for Christ’s sake.

Christians have been killed for their belief in Jesus Christ in every part of the world. Such suffering continues and will not stop until the Kingdom of God is established on earth by an already triumphant Jesus Christ. Peter wrote in 1 Peter, Chapter 4: “If anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter.”

In some repressive countries Christians expect persecution and ill treatment and are actually quite cheerful about it. They say that their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ suffered so much for them that they can expect to suffer in return. So with this attitude, they rejoice in suffering to remain joined to their beloved Lord and King.

It was the Lord Jesus Himself who said in Revelation, Chapter 2, Verse 10: “Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.”

The drama is from The Bible In Living Sound.

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