



BIBLE RADIO PRODUCTIONS

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BIBLE ADVENTURES SCRIPT:

A1735 ~ Saul and the Governor.

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

Saul, Barnabas and John Mark were all staying on the island of Cyprus while sharing the good news about Jesus Christ's salvation for all people. When they reached the city of Paphos, Saul arranged to speak to the island's Roman governor. Saul's group had met a man named Elymus the sorcerer. He was a friend of the governor and was trying his best to dissuade the governor from listening and believing whatever Saul had to say.

Saul started by explaining to the governor that God is perfect. We can only wonder why God didn't destroy Satan and his fallen angels before damaging the earth by enticing Eve to believe Satan's lies and disobey God. In our minds, we can think that God's early intervention would have saved so much suffering and sin. But God wants people who will love Him, and who will trust and obey Him. That's why He gave Adam and Eve a test of obedience.

God's perfection is part of who He is, and His ethical qualities like justice and uprightness are part of His moral character. God is complete, faultless and totally sufficient in every aspect of His being. In Psalm 18, it says: "As for God, His way is perfect ... He is a shield to all who trust in Him."

Our *Bible Adventure* drama is about Saul's explanation of Christ to the governor and Elymus trying to interrupt his explanations.

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

The governor was pleased to know the truth and to act upon it. For so many people in that generation, there were no books about Jesus Christ's life to read or for them to see the truth of God for themselves. They often relied on what they had been told by someone else and who wouldn't have known the full truth either. How sad it is these days to see so many people fail to take any interest in reading a Bible to see what God says in it. Many can afford to buy one but they just don't bother. Why is this?

Essentially people lack an understanding of how valuable they are in God's sight. Each person has a body, soul and spirit. We are a spirit being – we live in a body that God has breathed His breath of life into and possess a soul, which consists of our mind, will and emotions. However, the real person inside of us is our spirit.

So what's the difference between our spirit and soul?

Even though our Bible uses the words 'soul' and 'spirit' in the same way, there is a distinct difference between these terms. In Hebrews, Chapter 4, it says: "The word of God is alive and active, sharper than any double-edged sword. It cuts all the way through, to where soul and spirit meet, to where joints and marrow come together. It judges the desires and thoughts of the heart."

Even though believers have died to sin, and have been raised to new life through Christ Jesus, our souls (that is our minds and will) still need to be transformed into God's likeness. In Ephesians, Chapter 5, it speaks of Christ loving the church. He gave Himself for the church so that he might set it apart and cleanse it by His living Word.

The Bible is clear that our spirit is instantly reborn and made new the moment that we accept Christ as our Lord and Saviour, but our minds need to be purified and cleansed each day. Our minds can carry much spiritual baggage around from our past lifestyles or be tempted away from trusting in Christ's promises. This is why so many believers can continue to struggle with sin even after accepting Christ. Their souls still contain grime and dirt that needs to be readily removed and washed clean as part of the transformation of becoming like Jesus.

In Romans, Chapter 12, it says: "Do not conform yourselves to the standards of this world, but let God transform you inwardly by a complete change of your mind. Then you will be able to know the will of God – what is good and is pleasing to him and is perfect."

Why did Paul punish Elymus the sorcerer with blindness? Paul himself had gone through a period of blindness and had used that time to gainfully pray to the Lord for forgiveness for his many sins, particularly those against the new church. Blindness can bring a great change in a person's life. In 1850, a boy named Chang Shen was born in the north eastern area of China and by the time he'd grown to manhood, he was called by his neighbours Chinese words that meant "one without a bit of good in him."

Chang was a thief, a gambler and a woman-chaser, who had thrown his wife and only daughter out of their home. When he was stricken blind, neighbours said it was judgment for his evil doings.

Chang heard of a missionary hospital where people were receiving their sight. In 1886, he travelled overland for hundreds of miles to reach the hospital, only to be told on his arrival that every bed was full. Yet the hospital evangelist took pity and gave up his own bed for Chang.

Chang's eyesight was partially restored, and he heard about Christ for the first time. The doctor reported, "We've never had a patient who received the Gospel with such joy." When Chang asked for baptism, missionary James Webster replied, "Go home and tell your neighbours that you have changed. I will visit you later, and if you are still following Jesus, then I'll baptise you."

As Chang travelled towards his hometown, he discovered open roadside places where travellers could rest and buy drinks. On reaching such places, Chang would seat himself at a table and at once, begin to tell the story of Jesus and His love. He gave out to others with power the little information that he himself knew and was so keen, that soon crowds drew around him. So before reaching his hometown, his gospel-sharing ministry had begun.

But as Chang continued to travel home, doubts started to overtake his mind. He kept asking himself: "Can it be that the hospital evangelist is no better than a smooth-tongued liar as I have been and dealt with? Did he say that he would visit and baptise me just to get me to go home, but has no intention of coming?" When his faith started to falter on such things, the Lord sent Chang a dream to comfort him. Later, Chang said how much this dream dispelled all his doubts and fears, and restored the joy and peace he seemed to be losing at the time.

Chang dreamt he saw the Saviour coming toward him, all glowing white. He had a book in His hand and a crown on his head. As he handed Chang the book, he smiled down upon him and vanished. This dream strengthened Chang's weak faith and he took it as his personal divine call to carry the Gospel to others. Five months later, the missionary James Webster arrived in Chang's area and found hundreds of inquirers. There Webster baptised the new evangelist Chang with great joy.

A clumsy native doctor accidentally robbed Chang of the littlest eyesight that the missionaries had restored. Undeterred, Chang kept witnessing for Christ and became known as 'Blind Chang' as he continued his travels from village to village, winning hundreds of converts. He praised God when cursed and spat on, and even when people turned their dogs loose to drive him away. He learnt practically the whole New Testament by memory and could quote entire chapters from the Old Testament.

Other missionaries followed Chang, baptising converts and organising churches. Then persecution came to that area. In 1898, groups of poor country people in northern China banded together and formed a secret society. They practised body exercises and boxing, which they believed would keep them safe from bullets. The Western press called them the 'Boxers' and by 1899, they were anxious to rid China of all foreign influence, which they then considered a threat to Chinese culture. As a result, bands of Boxers killed many Christian missionaries and Chinese Christians.

Blind Chang was preaching in Manchuria in the northeast when the bands of Boxers came to that area. Christians felt sure Blind Chang would be one of the Boxers' first targets so they led him to a cave in the mountains. The Boxers reached a nearby city and rounded up about 50 Christians for execution. "You're fools to kill all these," a resident told them. "For every one you kill, 10 more will spring up while that man Chang Shen lives. Kill him, and you will crush the foreign religion."

The Boxers promised to spare the 50 people if someone would take them to Chang. No one volunteered. Finally when it appeared the Boxers would kill the 50, one man slipped away and found Chang to tell him what was happening. "I'll gladly die for them," Blind Chang offered. "Take me there."

The Boxer leaders put the blind evangelist in an open cart and drove to the cemetery outside the city wall. As he passed through the crowds, he sang the first Christian song he had learnt in the hospital:

“Jesus loves me, He who died Heaven’s gate to open wide; He will wash away my sin,
Let His little child come in. Jesus loves me, He will stay, close beside me all the way;
If I love Him when I die, He will take me home on high.”

After the Boxers killed Blind Chang, they refused to let the Christians bury his body. Instead, fearful of a report that Blind Chang would rise from the dead, they forced the believers to buy oil and burn the remains. Even after that, the Boxers grew more afraid and fled from the revenge that they believed Chang’s spirit would destroy them. The local Christians were thus spared execution.

Blind Chang determined to do what Jesus wanted him to and never let his disability prevent him from sharing Jesus. He became known as the most famous evangelist in his area.

After Elymus the sorcerer met with Paul in Acts, Chapter 13, he received temporary blindness for his wrongdoing, his name doesn’t appear again in the Scriptures. Did he repent and turn away from his evil displays to impress the people? This we don’t know.

But what we do know from Paul’s meeting with the governor is that the governor was amazed by Paul’s power and teaching, and this resulted in him believing in the Lord. How about you? Have you settled your mind on trusting the Lord and following His will for your life? The season for the Lord Jesus’ return to earth is on us and the Bible says He could come at any time.

In 2 Corinthians, Chapter 6, Verses 1 and 2b, it says: “In our work together with God, then, we beg you who have received God’s grace not to let it be wasted ... Listen! This is the hour to receive God’s favour; today is the day to be saved!”

God's perfection is made known to the world through Jesus Christ, and is the ultimate outcome of the Christian life. In 1 Peter, Chapter 1, it says: "Be obedient to God, and do not allow your lives to be shaped by those desires you had when you were still ignorant. Instead, be holy in all that you do, just as God who called you is holy." We're to follow Christ's example of living God's plan for our lives, even when it involves hardship and suffering. And in the next life, we look forward to a glorious future in fellowship with God in heaven.

The drama is from The Bible In Living Sound.

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