



BIBLE RADIO PRODUCTIONS

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BIBLE ADVENTURES SCRIPT:

A1807 ~ Joseph Sold into Egypt.

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

In our last *Bible Adventure*, Jacob sent his favourite son of 12 sons, Joseph, to check and see how his older half-brothers were getting along. The brothers had been grazing their father's flocks of sheep and goats 50 miles to the north at first, but then they moved away a further 15 miles to find more feed for the animals. When Joseph found them, he was tired from carrying food from home for them. But Joseph's older step-brothers hated him, because he was the favoured son in the family. When they saw him coming in the distance, they decided then and there to get rid of him.

As soon as Joseph arrived, the brothers captured him, stripped him of his valuable coat of many colours that signified importance and favour in their father's eyes, and they threw him into a dry well or pit. Then they sat down to eat the food that he'd carried so far to bring to them.

The brothers talked about killing Joseph but the eldest brother, Reuben, said they couldn't do that. He had a plan in mind to rescue Joseph from the pit and send him back home later. But while Reuben was absent from the group, a caravan of camels that was owned by Midianite traders on their way to Egypt passed by.

Judah now stepped up as the leader while Reuben was away, and he suggested that they sell Joseph to these traders, which the brothers agreed was a good idea. So they did. Judah's plan was not very praiseworthy – he was selling his own brother into slavery and for a good price at that! Joseph got no say in what was happening. And Reuben was extremely upset when he couldn't find Joseph later in the pit. As the eldest in the family, he was accountable to his father for whatever had happened to Joseph.

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After selling Joseph off as a slave, the brothers realised that they needed to give their father an explanation that accounted for Joseph's failure to return home. So they ripped up and dipped Joseph's coat of many colours in the blood of a goat, before giving it to their father Jacob as 'proof' that Joseph had been killed by a wild animal. Jacob himself had deceived his father Isaac with a meal of goat and now his sons deceived him with the blood of a goat. This is a good example of divine justice that God allows to occur in one way or another, as our sins always come will back to haunt us unless God has forgiven them.

Jacob believed the false story of his sons. He was left grief-stricken and couldn't be consoled. He determined to mourn for Joseph until he joined him in the grave. For the next 22 years, Jacob mourned for Joseph. How many times during those years Jacob must have seen in his imagination his most beloved son being torn to pieces by some wild beast because he'd told him to venture out on his own without others to protect him. Jacob's downcast face and self-blame told his other sons how cruel they had been in playing this trick on their father. Jacob didn't love them any more as they had hoped.

For Joseph's part, he travelled with the Midianite caravan as a chained up slave until it reached Egypt. With every mile he walked, he would have felt himself getting further and further away from his father and home. Would he; no alas now, could he **ever** go back? Despair could have blackened his thoughts. Maybe those early dreams of being a great leader came back to remind him that one day, he would be important again?

When we're grieving or going through hardship, and despair grows out of our circumstances in life, there are several passages from the Bible that we should turn to frequently for God's comfort. It's a comfort to learn that many heroes of the faith faced the same types of pain, loss and grief that we may now be facing. There are promises and truths that we can apply to our own situations.

Joseph needed to remember that God will not, and does not, forget us. Do we have the faith to believe that God is always there with us in our struggles? In Matthew, Chapter 10, the Lord Jesus said: "Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin? And not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father's will. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear ..."

In every corner of the world, God actively cares for all of His creation. If He keeps an eye on every sparrow, a little brown bird, how much more does He care about a person who He made in His own image!

In Ecclesiastes, Chapter 3, it says: "For everything there is a season, a time for every activity under heaven ..." There are reasons behind everything that happens, both the good and bad, and God understands our pain and sorrow. It's part of life and we should fully expect to have to live through seasons of grief. But unlike Jacob who remained grieving dejectedly for Joseph for 22 years, a season of grief should pass in time and be replaced somewhat with other things.

In Deuteronomy, Chapter 31, it says: "It is the Lord who goes before you. He will be with you; He will not leave you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed." What better comfort could we have than that?

Was it God's will for Joseph to go to Egypt as a slave? Of course, God wasn't taken by surprise by this sudden turn of events. God's foreknowledge of what is going to happen in the future makes it possible for Him to work out the plans for accomplishing His purposes. Joseph wasn't sold into a grave digger's team but as God purposed it – into Potiphar's household. Potiphar was the captain of Pharaoh's guard and an important person in the Egyptian kingdom. This meant that Joseph would be trained to help with the business side of his master's affairs if Joseph was willing to work.

In the covenant promises God made to Jacob, God promised to be with him. And God's presence was with Joseph as a slave too.

Do you have that sense that God is with you in whatever you're doing? Have you ever reasoned out that only God can save a person from entering through the gates of hell? If so, then that conclusion brought you to a position of giving your life and future into the hands of the Lord Jesus, by trusting His death to pay for your sins. God is willing to give you His own Holy Spirit if you are willing to give up your desires and personal ambitions for following His ways. Christ's salvation from sin marks the end of having your own control over yourself. When a person becomes a Christian, the Lord Jesus doesn't usually take them home to heaven immediately to be with Him. Instead, He has a plan for each Christian to do good works that He has planned for them to do here on earth first.

None of us who've given ourselves to Christ are perfect at all times while living here on earth. We still make mistakes and sometimes sin in a variety of ways. When we do sin, we must quickly confess these things to the Lord, asking for His forgiveness, so that His fellowship and holy presence with us can be restored.

Sadly though, not everyone who says they're a Christian really is one. God's great enemy, Satan, has his agents or evil spirits working against God Himself in most Godly churches. These agents don't live by the Scriptures but instead, try to draw away weak Christians to listen to them and their voices. Time spend studying the Scriptures is well worth the effort because we can use verses from it to refute errors we hear by those who would lead us astray. If the content of the sermons or advice from other Christians aren't lining up with the truths of the Bible, then it may be time to ask the Lord to show you how to pray about this situation and whether or not He would like you to worship Him somewhere else in the future.

We live in a time that is close to the end of the Church Age. How do we know this? In 2nd Timothy, Chapter 3, we are warned there will be difficult times ahead. People will be selfish, greedy, boastful ... and will display many more anti-social character traits. In recent years, there has been much more violence against innocent people and an endless pursuit of pleasure and entertainment. Paul advised young Timothy to stay away from such people.

From listening to the news or reading a newspaper, we may have many reasons to be afraid in these uncertain times. But when we live in a constant state of fear, we demonstrate a lack of trust in the Lord in whom we place our faith. If we think we are in control, we feel secure. But such security is short-lived. Instead, it's only in our loss of control and total trust in the Lord Jesus Christ that we begin to really grow our faith. We will still face times when our faith is tested. But it's in those moments of crisis that we need to remind ourselves to trust in Jesus and that He has everything under control. He is sovereign! Take everything to God in prayer.

Growing in faith requires that we pray fear out and we pray faith in God's wonderful character and faithfulness towards us. We must keep our faith active, for only Christ has the power to overcome the obstacles before us and within us. For this reason, no matter what our circumstances, we can confidently follow His words: "Do not be afraid."

The drama is from The Bible In Living Sound.

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