



BIBLE RADIO PRODUCTIONS

www.bibleradio.org.au

BIBLE ADVENTURES SCRIPT:

A1964 ~ Jesus Heals a Paralysed Man.

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

The human body's nervous system can be harmed by disease or serious accident. An account of Jesus healing a paralysed man is listed in the Gospels of Matthew Chapter 9, Mark Chapter 2 and Luke Chapter 5. Sometimes Scripture translations use the word "paralytic" to describe this man's condition. He couldn't walk anywhere but he had good friends who did and believed in Jesus' power to heal him.

When Jesus healed the crippled man beside the Pool of Bethesda, the diseased man in the story didn't have knowledge of who Jesus was or His ability to restore human flesh to full health.

When Jesus healed, He healed people at two levels. The Samaritan leper who had been healed among a group of ten lepers, returned to thank Jesus. That man received spiritual healing as well as his physical healing. Jesus didn't forgive the scribes and Pharisees as they refused to admit they were sick and in need of God's inner transformation.

The Gospels have recorded many times Jesus healing the lame or crippled along with the blind, deaf and diseased. But no names of the people healed are given. Jesus was sometimes in the Temple when sick people asked Him for healing. Other times He was out preaching in some town or village far away from Jerusalem when needy people sought His help to make them better.

In today's Bible Adventure drama, Jesus healed a paralysed man right in front of the scribes and Pharisees. They'd seen many of Jesus' miracles but still didn't believe He was from God the Father. To try to explain away such amazing healings, the Pharisees claimed that Jesus did His miracles by the power of Beelzebub, or Satan. They decided that Jesus must be possessed by an evil spirit. This brought up a teaching about an Unpardonable Sin.

In Matthew's Gospel, Chapter 12, it's recorded how Jesus replied to the Pharisees about their accusations that He did His healings by an evil spirit. He said: "Any country that divides itself into groups which fight each other will not last very long. And any town or family that divides itself into groups which will fight each other will fall apart. So if one group is fighting another in Satan's kingdom, this means that it is already divided into groups and will soon fall apart!"

"You say that I drive out demons because Beelzebub (or Satan) gives me the power to do so. Well, then, who gives your followers the power to drive them out? What your own followers do proves that you are wrong! No, it is not Beelzebub, but God's Spirit, who gives me the power to drive out demons, which proves that the Kingdom of God has already come upon you."

Jesus also said at that time: "Anyone who is not for me is really against me; anyone who does not help me gather is really scattering. For this reason I tell you: people can be forgiven any sin and any evil thing they say; but whoever says evil things against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven.

"Anyone who says something against the Son of Man can be forgiven; but whoever says something against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven – now or ever."

Speaking against the Holy Spirit is what is called the ‘Unpardonable Sin’. Sometimes Christians worry that they may have committed the unforgivable sin. The wise counsel to such people is that they should pray to God instead of worrying, asking for Jesus’ forgiveness and naming the wrong things they’ve done. If God grants them His peace, they are forgiven. Their concern is itself a sign that they have not committed the sin spoken about here.

The scribes and Pharisees exposed themselves to such a danger when they gave credit to Satan for the redemption brought by Jesus the Son of God. The casting out of demons was a sign of the presence of the Kingdom of God. Yet the scribes’ accusations against Jesus amounted to a denial of the power and greatness of the Spirit of God.

By giving the action of Jesus to a demonic origin, the scribes show a perversion of spirit which, despite the truth, chooses to call light darkness. This is a conscious and deliberate rejection of the saving power and grace of God released through Jesus’ work and actions. Speaking lies about God’s very nature is like calling good evil and evil good. Isaiah chapter 5 says: “Woe (or grief) to those who call evil good; and good evil.”

In the case of incurable sicknesses like leprosy, the Jewish leaders taught the Jewish people that the person’s unforgiven sin had caused their sickness. In Luke’s Gospel, Chapter 13, Jesus dispelled that idea when some people in the crowd told Jesus about Governor Pilate killing some Jewish men while they offered sacrifices to God.

Jesus answered them: “Do you suppose that these Galileans were worse sinners than all other Galileans, because they suffered such things? I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish. Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them. Do you think that they were worse sinners than all the men who dwell in Jerusalem?”

Jesus concluded: “I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish.”

The scribes and Pharisees taught that many sins couldn't be forgiven while Jesus taught there was only one.

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

It isn't always God's plan to heal every sick or injured person. In the Christian world today, the most famous “paralytic” living is Joni Eareckson Tada who lives in the United States of America. When she was a teenager, she dove into shallow water and hit her head on the bottom, breaking her neck. Her body was paralysed from the neck down, so she has no use of her arms or legs. This condition is called, ‘quadriplegic,’ which ‘quad’ meaning four limbs. We aren't told if the paralysed man in the Scriptures had his upper body affected or not.

After Joni's initial period of recovery, she was sent to an old people's ward in a public hospital and stayed there for two years. Whenever she thought about her future, she became very depressed and this turned into despair. She decided she didn't want to live paralysed in a wheelchair for the rest of her life; instead, she wanted to die. But thankfully, God placed people around her to listen to her questions and encourage her.

She said to one of her Christian friends, “I know I'm going to heaven anyway, so show me in the Bible where it's wrong to arrange an ‘early exit.’” She wanted to know if mercy killing was OK when the suffering was too much to bear. The friend was shocked to hear this. He told her from Exodus, Chapter 20, “You shall not murder.” Then he added softly, “And, Joni, I think your conscience will tell you that includes ‘self-murder’.”

After a series of events, Joni came to the position where she prayed, “Then, God, if I can’t die, please show me how to live.” Slowly she began to embrace God’s purposes for her life, even if that meant total and permanent paralysis all the days of her life. She knew God loved her and wanted her character sharpened, her faith refined and her hope in Christ cemented.

This was the same principle God has for all Christians in 1 Peter, Chapter 2: “To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example that you should follow in his steps.” As Joni delighted herself in the Lord, He gave her the desire of her heart, not miraculous healing but instead, a more sweeter, intimate union with Jesus Christ inside.

Joni learnt how to paint pictures by holding the paintbrush between her teeth and some of her lovely artwork was shown in art fairs. She began sharing her story with local churches and made a couple of TV appearances. Letters started to pour in. Some people wanted to buy her artwork. Others were written by quadriplegics like her but still in the stages of depression and despair. Other letters again were from parents of children with disabilities. They wanted to know how Joni had developed such a positive attitude in life.

Joni sensed then that God was calling her to share the help and hope she had found in His Word with a widening world of hurting families. For Joni, God’s plan wasn’t to heal her but to make her a public advocate for all the disadvantaged people living in the world. With her friends, Joni today has a Christian organisation which speaks out against abortion, abuse, neglect and disability restrictions.

In one of her books, she encourages Christians to learn to speak up and not to be fearful of what other people might think. As one of her friends observed, “Courage is merely choosing between your fears.” We should be more afraid of the judgment of God on us for not speaking up, than we are of people’s reproach!

Joni's life is one of accepting other people's help in many ways. Some people find it hard to accept being helpless and be in need of basic support. The independence streak needs to be humbled and perseverance must be a part of every task.

Jesus showed God's love for people everywhere and in all circumstances. God loves you too and longs for you to be with Him in heaven for ever.

But there are conditions on this: A person can't just add Jesus onto the rest of their present life and think that is good enough. Jesus won't share you with the world. You need to renounce all worldly things and give yourself completely over to Him. In James Chapter 4 it says: "If you want to be the world's friend, you make yourself God's enemy." Call on Jesus to be your Saviour and start reading about Him in the Gospels.

Here's what we must do for other people as listed in Ephesians, Chapter 4, Verse 32: "Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you."

The drama is from The Bible In Living Sound.

< END OF SCRIPT >
