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BIBLE ADVENTURES SCRIPT:

A2120 ~ Paul in Thessalonica.

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

After Paul and Silas said their departing farewells to Lydia and her household in the city of Philippi, they moved on to Thessalonica, one of the chief cities of northern Greece and still exists today but under a different name. After the savage beating Paul and Silas had received in Philippi, most people would have wanted to call a halt to preaching for a little while and get fit and well again.

But these men of God had a message to help other people find the way of salvation and they weren't prepared to give up their plans easily. We often wonder why some people who are godly servants of our Heavenly Father have to suffer so much. It certainly wasn't punishment for something they'd done wrong. There is a mystery regarding suffering. Each time we suffer unjustly, we're brought closer to depend on God. Often we wish we didn't have to go through the tough times that God brings us through but they're the experiences that we then know first-hand how to help and pray for others in similar situations.

God doesn't abandon us through the tough times. He takes a Father's interest in everything we do. Sometimes our shattered plans and hopes may be just the start for a new direction of ministry. Paul and Silas spent only a short time in Philippi and may have been disappointed that they had to move on again so quickly. But God knows what is best and on this 2nd missionary journey, He didn't want the men to give up.

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

Paul's message to the Jews in the synagogue at Thessalonica is recorded in Acts, Chapter 17, and taught that Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ. Paul did this by explaining the prophecies about Jesus that were within their own Scriptures. Nearly one third of the Bible covers prophecies God directly made Himself or through His prophets. While the Jews were still waiting for a longed-for Messiah, Paul explained that He had already come and after His death and resurrection, He had returned to His Father in heaven.

Some of the Jews there and many of the Greeks who worshipped the one true God accepted Paul's message. Just as the non-believing Jews in the past had done, those in Thessalonica fiercely opposed Paul and his companions. They were jealous because so many God-fearing Gentiles had begun to follow Paul's teaching instead of theirs. So the Jews took some evil minded men from the marketplace and had them cause a riot.

At the time, Paul and Silas were staying at the home of a new believer called Jason. The rioters attacked his house looking for Paul and Silas. They didn't find them, so they dragged Jason and some of the other new believers before the city officials. They accused Jason of welcoming into his house these men who have caused trouble all over the world. In their absence, Paul and Silas were accused of not only preaching a foreign religion, but proclaiming the existence of another king besides the Roman Emperor Caesar.

To honour the name of another king was a great crime against Caesar. So the crowd possibly thought that Paul and Silas were really enemies of the Roman Empire. When the city officials couldn't find Paul and Silas, they made Jason and the other believers post a bond, which would guarantee that these preachers wouldn't come again into the city. If they did, Jason and his friends would lose their bond.

Once again, Paul and Silas had to hurry out of town after only a few weeks of establishing a new church. However, the new Christians there grew in faith and they gave Paul great joy for their witness and belief. Paul wrote two letters to the church in Thessalonica. They were both written while Paul spent a year and a half in Corinth and the first letter was written after his letter to the Galatians. Timothy who'd been sent back to Thessalonica gave Paul a report on the conditions there.

In his 1st letter to the Thessalonians, Paul commends the new believers for their courage and good behaviour during a time of persecution. He also included some teaching for those Gentiles who didn't understand the Jewish background as they started to live their new life. He gave particular attention to the hope of Christ's return.

In the 2nd letter written only a few months later, Paul corrected those people who thought Christ's return was so close they could sit around and do nothing until He appeared. The Lord Jesus said in Luke, Chapter 12, that He was coming at an hour when people don't expect Him and that those people doing His work when He returned would be blessed.

Paul also spoke about the prophecies that Jesus Christ had fulfilled. Do you ever wonder if there are any prophecies being fulfilled in our times? In Matthew, Chapter 24, the Lord Jesus Himself spoke of end-time troubles with wars, rumours of war, famines, earthquakes and deadly epidemic diseases. If you count up the major earthquakes that have happened around the world in the past two decades, you will soon see that the number has greatly increased.

Many of the unfulfilled prophecies in the Bible are in regard to Israel and a 7-year season known as the Great Tribulation. Prophecies in the books of Leviticus and Deuteronomy were written at the time that the Jewish nation was founded. God made covenants with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and their descendants and these have never been revoked or cancelled.

In Genesis, Chapter 15, Verse 18, God said the descendants of Abraham would have their own country, to be between Egypt and the Euphrates River. This promise was for the descendants of Abraham through his son Isaac, and then through Isaac's son Jacob, or Israel, as God renamed him. The promise, however, wasn't for Hagar's son Ishmael or the sons Abraham had after his first wife Sarah died.

This prophecy has been fulfilled more than once. About 3,400 years ago, the Jews first established Israel. Then, about 2,900 years ago, Israel divided into two kingdoms called Judah and Israel. Both these kingdoms were later conquered by the Assyrians and Babylonians. But then in 1948, the Jews regained independence for Israel. It was the first time in 2,900 years that Israel was both united and independent as a nation again.

God's laws included a list of consequences for persistent rebellion against Him. The majority of the Old Testament is a record of Israel's continual disobedience to God.

Those who survived the total destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 were scattered throughout the nations of the world as God said He would do. But God said He would bring the Jewish people back to Himself and to their land. In Ezekiel, Chapter 37, God said, "Surely I will take the children of Israel from among the nations, wherever they have gone and I will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land; and I will make them one nation in the land."

This started happening from 1,900 AD and onwards. No other national group of people has ever come together again after being so long separated from their homeland. Most refugees assimilate into their new country but the Scriptures said the Jewish people would find "no rest for their feet" in other nations.

God's people started returning to their land before 1948, draining the swamps and irrigating large areas of barren deserts to make them productive.

Yet even after the Jews declared the re-establishment of their state in 1948, Israel was unable to conquest the whole city of Jerusalem in the War of Independence that followed. But God said in Zechariah, Chapter 8: "Behold, I am going to save My people from the land of the east and from the land of the west; and I will bring them back and they will live in the midst of Jerusalem; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God in truth and righteousness."

These words were written 500 years before the time of Jesus, and written after the Jews had returned from Babylonian captivity and had resettled back in Jerusalem. So, this verse was a prophecy about a future resettlement in the city. And in 1967, a 6-day war resulted in the old city section of Jerusalem being won back from the Jordanians. The next step that remains is the rebuilding of their temple on the site where now stands a mosque.

The sad part of the Jewish return to their homeland is that they've been going back with a continual unbelief in Jesus being their Messiah. Thus, they believe that what they are accomplishing is because of their own intellectual ability, moral courage and military power; not in response to God's prophecies. That's not true. One day in the not too distant future, beginning at the mid-point of the tribulation, God is going to allow one last great Gentile world dictator and his violent anti-Jew world to teach the Jews a final lesson. Sadly, the Bible prophecies that 66% of these Jews will die in the process.

But as was the case with God's punishment on Babylon for their delight in bringing down Judah, so He will pour out His wrath on our Jesus-rejecting, Jew-hating world for its attempt to destroy Israel!

In Zechariah, Chapter 2, Verse 8, the Lord of hosts declares that anyone who touches Israel strikes the apple of His eye. Or to say it in another way: “Anyone who strikes Israel strikes what is most precious to God.” For God blesses those who bless Israel and He harms those who harm Israel! Let us persistently uphold the Jews in prayer, and pray for their belief, salvation and safety in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The drama is from The Bible In Living Sound.

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