



BIBLE RADIO PRODUCTIONS

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BIBLE ADVENTURES SCRIPT:

A2131 ~ On the Way to Jerusalem.

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

Have you ever visited someone knowing that this would be the last time that you'll see them alive? There is a great sadness in saying farewell to anyone in such circumstances. This happened to Paul as he journeyed by land and sailing ships from Macedonia to Jerusalem. He gave final instructions to the leaders of the Christian churches to care for their congregations and protect them from false teachers who would come and no longer teach them the truth about Jesus Christ their Messiah.

In recent times when missionaries leave on their first tour of duty in a new country, the farewell at the airport is particularly tearful; friends often sing together the song *'Til We Meet Again*. The words form a blessing and a promise: 'God be with you 'til we meet again; By His counsels guide, uphold you, With His sheep in love enfold you, God be with you till we meet again.' There is the assurance that no matter what happens in the future, there will come a time when all true Christians will meet again at Jesus' feet.

It was difficult for Paul to find time to see every congregation on the way to Jerusalem, as he had set himself a timetable to be in Jerusalem by Pentecost. When all of Paul's travelling companions boarded a ship at Troas, he didn't. In reaching the next port, the ship had to go around a peninsula of land that jutted out to the sea. Since it was quicker going by foot, Paul decided to walk to the next port of Assos; and thus he was able to spend an extra day at Troas before leaving to meet the ship.

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

After starting the church at Ephesus, Paul spent more than 2 years there training and teaching the new Christians to grow in their faith. But the ship Paul's party was travelling on wasn't stopping at Ephesus and Paul didn't want the ship to leave him behind when it stopped and unloaded its cargo at Miletus. When the elders of the church at Ephesus heard that Paul would be at the port of Miletus for several days, they dropped whatever they were doing and they walked 30 miles to see him.

In Acts, Chapter 13, we're given an example of Paul's preaching among Jews; in Chapter 17, his preaching among Gentiles; and in Chapter 20, his preaching among Christians.

Paul reminded the Ephesian elders about his life and ministry among them during the time that he had lived in Ephesus. Paul served among them with great humility and tears. Paul's tears were shed from sorrow over the sins of his Christian brothers; and also the shameful behaviour of the Corinthians he had heard and the Jewish plots against him. Paul had experienced many trials while there.

But even though he risked being persecuted, Paul didn't hesitate to preach and teach openly whatever was beneficial to the believers at Ephesus. Paul didn't preach only the pleasant and reassuring aspects of the Gospel; he also preached about the cross of Christ and what it meant to die to one's own selfish, sinful nature. Even though the cross was a stumbling block to the Jews and foolishness to the Gentiles, Paul preached the whole message.

Today people often avoid preaching about the blood of the Lord Jesus shed on the cross, but it was a necessity for Christ's sacrifice for the world to be valid. In Hebrews, Chapter 9, it says: "Without the shedding of blood there is no remission (of sins)."

Paul also told both Jews and Gentiles that they must repent from their sin and turn to God. However, it wasn't just enough to only repent, but they also had to put their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, believing in what Christ had done for them and all who make Him Lord of their lives. Wherever Paul went, he set an example for new Christians to follow and he spoke with boldness and authority. This is why his preaching was so successful. He wasn't like the Pharisees, who didn't practise what they preached or know the revealed will of God.

Paul told the leaders of the church at Ephesus to remember the words of Christ and to use them to build up themselves as well as weaker believers so that they all could progress in the Christian life.

A pastor told a story from a time when he was a younger preacher. In the Sunday morning services at the time, an intelligent young man sat in the third front row of the church every week. When it came time for the sermon, the young man would pull out a book and started reading it. This happened week after week. Finally the pastor caught up with him and asked why he did that. The young man told him that there was no 'meat' in his sermons.

Many Christians and preachers are working in the power of the flesh, in the power of their intellect or their energy and enthusiastic zeal, but with poor effect. They need to become linked to the power of God through the Holy Spirit. The Spirit shines the spotlight on God's Son yet enables and teaches a believer how to apply and understand the Word of God.

Pastors, preachers and teachers mustn't focus on themselves or their own successes or failures; rather, they are to be a spokesperson on behalf of Jesus Christ through the power, teaching, forgiveness and direction of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit testifies that Jesus has complete victory and authority over all things through His death and resurrection. And believers are to live in this power and fully represent Jesus their Lord in whatever they do.

Preaching isn't easy. The range of listeners in a congregation is from children to the elderly, from unsaved to godly believers who know the Scriptures well. How can a preacher give them the right spiritual food in just a 30-minute sermon? It is said that before you can bring people the Gospel, you must first love the Word yourself.

Two young men just out of Bible College and very sure of their ability to put together good sermons visited a country church. When an elderly man climbed up into the pulpit and began to speak, the college graduates began to judge and pull his sermon to pieces as it was being delivered. The old man wasn't doing this and he should have said that. On and on it went until the end of the sermon and service.

One of the young men turned to the woman sitting beside him with a critical comment ready to say, when he saw tears streaming down her face. She said, "That's exactly what I needed to hear." God can use anyone He wishes to speak through anywhere at any time. The old man's delivery style may not have been very polished but receptive hearts could still receive God's message to them through the work of the Holy Spirit.

Paul told the Ephesian leaders that he had never coveted anyone's silver, gold or clothing. He laboured to support himself with his own hands so no one could accuse him of preaching for his own gain. He also quoted Jesus as saying, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." But this saying of Jesus isn't recorded anywhere in the four Gospels. Jesus said many things that weren't written down. We only have some of Christ's words recorded in the New Testament. As long as we read it and obey what we have, that word will build us up and give those of us who are holy in the Lord an inheritance in heaven. Eternal life will be ours.

After praying with the Ephesian leaders, Paul boarded the ship and he sailed for Jerusalem. Going to Jerusalem was very dangerous for Paul. The Jews there had been trying to kill Paul after he opposed their teachings soon after his conversion to Christianity; to escape them, he left Damascus for safety by being let down in a large basket over the city wall at night time.

But in obedience to the leading of the Holy Spirit, Paul was determined to go back to Jerusalem. He felt under obligation to hand-deliver to the poor Jerusalem church the collection of money that had been raised by the Gentile churches.

On his way to Jerusalem, Paul heard repeated warnings from his fellow believers that he would face prison and hardships once he got there. At every stop, the Christians urged Paul to turn back and not to go to Jerusalem. But Paul wasn't afraid of persecution or death. He was willing to give up his life for the sake of the Gospel of Christ. Paul had only one goal in life, and that was to finish the race and complete the task of taking the Gospel to the Gentiles that the Lord Jesus had given him to do.

Do you ever think about how close you are to making the same commitment to the Gospel as Paul did? It may seem that Paul had a special task like no one else. Certainly he achieved much because he was empowered, trained and guided by the Holy Spirit. Often in his writings, the apostle Paul referred to the will of God for his life. He told the believers at Ephesus that he would return to them for renewed ministry if the Lord willed. And he wrote to the Corinthians that he planned to visit them if God willed it. This is important for us to factor into our plans and dreams as well. We always should remember to live by: "If the Lord wills."

Sometimes the Lord will lead us differently from where we'd like to go, and this can even be against our will. But what we must come to recognise is that the will of God is perfect, and we should never be afraid of it. Even if Paul was able to leave Jerusalem safely, he still didn't plan to ever return to Ephesus and the province of Asia. He had decided to go from Jerusalem to Rome and from there to Spain, if the Lord willed it.

Paul had been given so many warnings of troubles ahead once reaching Jerusalem that nothing to happen there would be a surprise or bring terror to him. The weeping of his companions saying goodbye began to weaken his resolve to keep going forward to Jerusalem. But in his heart, Paul knew that he couldn't comply with their requests to avoid Jerusalem, as the Holy Spirit was taking him there. His conscience told him he was wrong if he didn't go. When Paul wouldn't be persuaded, the believers stopped trying to change his mind and they started to say, "The Lord's will be done."

It was in Acts, Chapter 20, Verse 32 that Paul said in his farewell speech to the elders of Ephesus: "And now I commend you to the care of God and to the message of his grace, which is able to build you up and give you the blessings God has for all his people."

The drama is from The Bible In Living Sound.

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