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BIBLE ADVENTURES SCRIPT:

A2134 ~ A Plot to Kill Paul.

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

The Apostle Paul was being held in a Roman fort close to the temple in Jerusalem. Paul needed those walls around him to protect his life from the local angry Jewish zealots and hostile visitors in town for the Feast of Pentecost. But just because Paul was being protected by Roman soldiers, the Jews didn't believe that there was nothing further that they could do to harm him. Instead, they devised a plot to outsmart the Romans and kill Paul.

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It was common among the Jews to take an oath not to eat or drink until a certain task has been carried out. But if the task proved impossible to do, the vow could be cancelled. Forty men took a vow not to eat or drink until they'd killed Paul and went to the chief priests and elders asking for their involvement to create the right circumstances where they could get their hands on Paul. It seemed that the Jewish religious leaders agreed to the plot, as there is nothing written in the Bible to suggest that they opposed it.

Except for this passage of Scripture, there's nothing else written about Paul's sister and her son. It isn't told how Paul's nephew found out about the evil plot, but the young man did the right thing and warned Paul of the serious danger to his life. When the commander heard of the plot, he no longer dared to keep Paul under his authority. If Paul, a Roman citizen, should be killed, the commander would then be blamed for failing to protect him and would risk his own life.

The commander made the decision to transfer Paul to the Roman Governor Felix who was based at Caesarea on the coast that very night. The army was ready to leave at 9 pm. The foot soldiers must have walked quickly, for they travelled 35 miles that night to a town named Antipatris by the next morning.

As Paul was no longer in danger, the foot soldiers returned to their barracks in Jerusalem, leaving the horsemen to take Paul the rest of the way and hand him and a letter that the commander had written to the Roman governor.

When the governor read the letter, he decided to wait for Paul's accusers to come down to Caesarea to make their charges against Paul in person. At that time, Felix would hear the whole case against Paul. He then ordered that Paul to be kept securely in a palace that King Herod had originally built for himself.

Have you ever had someone plot to harm you? Maybe you weren't aware of it. In eternity past, God decided to have a kingdom over which He could rule as sovereign king. Since it's impossible to have a kingdom without subjects and since nothing else existed to serve Him, God created the subjects over which He ruled. He first made angels or spirit beings, without bones or flesh but with intelligence and the ability to communicate and worship. They spent most of their time in heaven with God, giving honour to Him. There were ranks among the angels and they were more powerful than a second kind of God's subjects: human beings.

God created earth to be part of His domain, as He intended that His subjects on earth would administer His rule over everything on the planet. God made mankind able to receive and understand God's directions, have intelligence and the ability to communicate. God was very pleased with His creations and everything was very good. But not for long!

One of the highest angels became so proud of his great intelligence and powers that he deceived himself into thinking that he could overthrow the sovereign rulership of God, his Creator. He decided to make himself as king of the universe by establishing a kingdom of his own that would war against and destroy God's kingdom. After his rebellion, this angel's name of Lucifer was changed to Satan, which means 'adversary.' He became the enemy of God and every member of God's kingdom. God could have crushed Satan's rebellion immediately but in His sovereign will, He chose not to do so.

For Satan to have a kingdom of his own, he needed to have subjects to rule over too, but as a created being himself, he lacked the ability to create subjects for himself as God did. So Satan persuaded many of God's other creatures from both heaven and earth to join him in his rebellion. Although a third of the angels transferred their allegiance from the kingdom of God to the kingdom of Satan, a huge number of angels chose to remain faithful to God.

In a very underhand way, Satan entered God's province on earth and tempted God's governing authority on the earth, mankind, to disobey a specific command of God. The bait Satan used was that if mankind would disobey God's one and only command, mankind would become the same as God Himself and so could rule over his own life. Adam and Eve listened to this temptation and they decided to join the rebellion against God with some very tragic results. Mankind was transferred from membership in the kingdom of God to membership in the kingdom of Satan.

This change of allegiance affected the whole human race who came thereafter, as those born to the first parents, Adam and Eve, were also members of Satan's kingdom and therefore spiritually dead and separated from God. Worse than that, all members of Satan's kingdom have no way that they can rescue themselves from it. Unless a person accepts God's way of salvation, he or she continues through their life living in Satan's ways and under his rulership. In 2nd Corinthians, Chapter 6, it shows that every unsaved person belongs to Satan and his kingdom of darkness.

Some people deny that they've ever been born into a state of sin belonging to Satan's camp and are therefore, under his control. Instead, they think they're in charge of themselves and that Satan or hell in an afterlife won't worry them. But God says that those who say they have no sin actually call God a liar. Satan already owns the people of the world, as we are all descendants of Adam and Eve, so he doesn't always trouble them. Satan is very interested in the people of God's Holy Bible, both Jews and Christians. Persecution for these groups tends to be greater than for any others in history. Satan wants all that is God's to belong to him and he plots to destroy anyone who loves God.

But God had a plan of redemption and He forewarned Satan in Genesis, Chapter 3, that eventually a man born of a woman would deliver Satan a devastating blow. This Redeemer would abolish and cancel out the cause of human sin. In Isaiah, Chapter 53, it's revealed that the Redeemer would pay the penalty for mankind's sin and completely remove it if they put faith in Him. Naturally, Satan continually tries to prevent the Redeemer's coming again and His current work on earth.

If you yourself are a faithful believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, you definitely do have an adversary who plots harm for you, so much so that he hopes that you will turn away from your reliance on Jesus Christ. Satan has many others who will try to persuade you to do this. Since very early in the history of the world, there has always been ongoing conflict between our Creator God and His kingdom, and those who are in Satan's kingdom of darkness.

Satan is so very subtle when he plots and tempts us to do something wrong and turn away from God. It may be your best friend suggests doing something that would displease the Lord. Unknowingly, your friend is helping Satan to work against you. Trials like this come regularly, so we need to learn how to turn aside from wrongdoing by praying to God and putting on His armour of protection for God's way to escape our situation. God is faithful and He won't let us be tempted above what we can bear. He promises a godly way through any situation that we find ourselves being tempted in.

Can Satan win against God's plans? Ultimately, Satan is a created being who cannot win over Almighty God, but he will have helped many billions of people to spend eternity in the torment of hell.

Many preachers describe God as a God of love, grace and mercy, but this doesn't quite show the full character of God. He is a God of love. He's a God of grace and mercy, but He's also a God of justice and wrath, which is shown as an intense anger with sin.

We are thankful to read in Nahum, Chapter 1, Verse 7, "The Lord is good. He is a stronghold in the day of trouble. He knows those who take refuge in Him." But also look at what it says in Verse 2 of the very same chapter: "A jealous and avenging God is the Lord, the Lord is avenging and wrathful, the Lord takes vengeance on His adversaries, He reserves wrath for His enemies. The Lord is slow to anger and great in power and the Lord will by no means leave the guilty unpunished."

People seem to forget about the naturally destructive consequences that are associated with their sin. In 2 Thessalonians, Chapter 2, it says that during the Tribulation, God is going to remove the restraint of evil. Today, the Holy Spirit works at restraining the tidal wave of evil in this world; however, during the seven years of the Tribulation, God will allow the people to follow their sinful lifestyles to the fullest extent possible.

God is going to pour out judgments on the earth, but it's the natural consequences of man's sin that will bring a lot of people to slaughter as well. Following that time of Tribulation, Satan will be defeated by a returning Lord Jesus Christ. Are you ready to meet your Maker in the not-too-distant future? Like Paul at his conversion, confess your sins to God and ask the Lord Jesus to forgive you and become Lord and Saviour of your life. He will transfer you from Satan's kingdom to God's kingdom so that you will be safe from the wrath of God to come.

In Romans, Chapter 5, Verse 9, it says: "By His blood we are now put right with God; how much more, then will we be saved by him from God's anger."

Heed the message today: repent and sin no more in the Name and power of the Lord Jesus Christ while time is still available.

The drama is from The Bible In Living Sound.

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