



BIBLE RADIO PRODUCTIONS

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BIBLE ADVENTURES SCRIPT:

A2208 ~ Joseph Makes Himself Known.

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

Have you ever had a crisis in your life and when looking back, you realise how much that crisis changed your way of thinking and living? Often it's only in the tough times that we're prepared to consider a different way of life. When we've had a serious illness or accident, a major financial loss or someone we love has passed away, there seems to be a slowing down of the normal pace of life. And during the slow periods, we can evaluate our goals in life and what's most important to us.

In Egypt during Old Testament times, the ruler of Egypt, Joseph, was managing the country's storehouses during a time of severe famine. Of those coming to Egypt to buy food grain to stay alive were Joseph's step-brothers. Joseph recognised his brothers but they didn't recognise him. The second time the brothers came, they brought their youngest brother, Benjamin, as Joseph had requested them to do so, and they were all invited to eat at Joseph's house. The brothers felt rather uneasy when Joseph seated them at his table in order of their ages. Joseph's hospitality was very generous, with Benjamin, who was Joseph's full brother, receiving 5 times more than the others.

After the meal, all the brothers' sacks were filled with as much grain as they could carry and they were sent back to return to Canaan and their families. Unbeknown to them, Joseph had instructed his steward to put his own silver cup in the top of Benjamin's sack. Joseph had set up a crisis for them to see what they would do.

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

In Genesis, Chapter 44, Joseph told his steward to chase after his brothers and say: “Why have you repaid evil for good?” He himself could have asked the same question to his step-brothers when they threw him into a pit after he’d carried food to them from home 65 miles away. The Bible says we’re not to repay evil with evil; but with good. In Proverbs, Chapter 20, it says: “Don’t take it on yourself to repay a wrong. Trust the Lord and He will make it right.” And in Chapter 17, it says: “If you repay good with evil, you will never get evil out of your house.”

This makes us remember Jesus’ words in Luke, Chapter 6: “Do to others as you would have them do to you.” In reality, Joseph’s brothers were very safe with Joseph, who was now a powerful ruler. Joseph knew what it was like to receive no mercy from them but he didn’t plan to treat them in the same bad way that they had treated him. The brothers had been so sure that no one in their group had Joseph’s silver cup on them, that they rashly promised that if anyone was found to have the cup, that person would be put to death and the rest would become Joseph’s slaves. However, the steward restricted the punishment to only the one who may be found to have had the cup.

When the cup was found in Benjamin’s sack, the brothers were in despair. They didn’t want to return to their father and explain how Benjamin had to be retained in Egypt. When they once again stood before Joseph, this time they didn’t try to hide their guilt. However, their guilt wasn’t about the stolen cup but selling their brother Joseph into slavery 22 years before. They realised that they were now being called to account for that terrible crime. Overwhelmed with guilt, they offered themselves as slaves to Joseph. At this point, the brothers still didn’t know that the Egyptian ruler standing in front of them was indeed Joseph.

To compound their grief, Joseph said only Benjamin had to stay behind and the rest of them were free to return home. This put the brothers into a new predicament, as their father would be beside himself with grief if Benjamin wasn't with them. The purpose of Joseph's testing wasn't to gain revenge, but to bring his brothers to repentance. On returning home, they would have had to relive the very crime that they had committed against Joseph.

And this the brothers didn't want to do. As spokesman of the group, Judah gave Joseph an explanation of how distressing the loss of Benjamin would be to their father and that he had personally promised to see that Benjamin would return home. Judah offered to take Benjamin's punishment as a slave. Up until that time, Judah was considered a hard-hearted man. He was the one who had proposed selling Joseph into slavery in the first place. But now, his heart was softened from past guilt and these current circumstances.

It is sometimes taught by humanistic teachers that we shouldn't talk about sin and guilt. But there's no other way to clear our conscience of the distress of sin than to admit what we have done so that we can find forgiveness and healing. Hiding their sin about selling Joseph, as these sons of Jacob had done now for 22 years, didn't take away the sin of the past or clear them. Sometimes people think that time will erase the memories of guilt of doing evil to others. But only God can fully forgive sin and wash every guilty sinner clean. This repentance then leads to a personal transformation in Jesus Christ of purity and holiness.

The choice is ours: we can choose to respond to God's undeserved favour of forgiving our sins through Christ's offer of salvation or we can resist it. Those who accept God's kindness and forgiveness will be changed and made useful for the good works that God has appointed them to do. It's a great mistake to resist God's love and turn away from Him, for there may never be another opportunity to call on the name of the Lord for His salvation.

After Joseph heard Judah's confession and his sincere expressions of repentance, his love for his father and a willingness to take Benjamin's place as a slave, Joseph could no longer keep silent. The way had been opened for complete reconciliation. Joseph's conduct had shown earlier that he had already forgiven his brothers, but full restoration of their relationship had to wait until the brothers confessed their sin and agreed to make amends for it.

This same pattern should hold true for all of the wrongs that we endure in life. We ourselves must forgive those who've wronged us, as soon as possible and unconditionally. But that alone doesn't restore a broken relationship, because the one who did the wrong must confess it and do the work of repentance, which is to make things right.

What is commonly accepted as sin has been considered small and limited by the 'let's all get along' crowd. Jesus never changed His teachings to 'get along'. He might have lived a longer and more peaceful life if He had, but then His message of repentance to make peace with God would not have had the same effect on the world. The church, in doing things like becoming tolerant of abortion and same-sex marriage among anyone in society, is often guilty of watering down the message of the Lord Jesus.

There is nothing worldly that the church can use to advance the cause of Christ. If people want worldly things, they have access to every single worldly thing that they want without setting foot inside a church. If a church tries to entice the world into the church through the worldly things such as feel-good services instead of preaching the truth of Jesus Christ crucified, buried and risen again, then they're basing Christianity on the wrong foundation, which is a lie. Liars never prosper. Telling people to "Come to Jesus" because "He accepts you just as you are", gives people a very good reason NOT to come to Jesus. After all, if Jesus requires no repentance and change in a person's life and they can get everything that the world offers without even going to Jesus, then exactly why is there any reason to go to Jesus?

Now is the time for Christians to determine in their own hearts whether they actually know Jesus or if they only know about Jesus. We all know about a lot of people that we've never personally met. There is a huge difference in knowing about Jesus and actually knowing Jesus in one's heart.

True Christians need to set their mind on doing the work of Christ and live a life free of the dominion and power of sin. We're to live like the Christians that we claim to be. This includes telling the truth, loving justice, showing mercy and walking humbly with our God. God Himself takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked and neither should we. Instead our privilege is to share God's truth with unsaved people so that they will have an opportunity to make an informed decision to turn to Christ and receive His gift of eternal life.

After Judah's plea for Benjamin to return home, Joseph started weeping for joy so loudly that even the Egyptians outside the room heard him. But the brothers went into shock when they learnt that this Egyptian ruler was actually their brother Joseph. No doubt they now thought that he had the upper hand to meter vengeance on them. But Joseph tried to reassure them that he wouldn't harm them. He said it was God's plan to send him to Egypt ahead of them to save many lives during this time of this terrible famine.

In Genesis, Chapter 50, Joseph said to his brothers who had betrayed him, "You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good." God had a long-term plan for Joseph's family – to reconcile Joseph with his father Jacob and all his brothers.

Joseph was soon called before Pharaoh, who wanted to know what was happening. When Pharaoh learnt that Joseph's brothers had come, he invited them and Joseph's father and all their families to come and live in the best part of Egypt's land. As commanded by Pharaoh, Joseph sent carts and provisions with his brothers as they travelled back to famine-stricken Canaan to help with the journey back for elderly Jacob and the little children.

What a good outcome the brothers received from the crisis Joseph had created for them to reveal what type of character they now had. Knowing human nature well, Joseph sent them home with the good advice not to argue with each other on the way. Blaming one another for the past wouldn't be helpful. Nevertheless, they still had to admit to their father when they arrived home, that Joseph wasn't dead, but that he was actually alive and ruling in Egypt.

Comfort for us in our troubles comes from Romans, Chapter 8, Verse 28: "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose." God in His sovereignty can take the very events that are meant to harm or defeat us and use them for His ultimate good and the good of others and ourselves. Let us praise Him for such a wonderful work in our lives and for what He has in store for us!

The drama is from The Bible In Living Sound.

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