



BIBLE RADIO PRODUCTIONS

www.bibleradio.org.au

BIBLE ADVENTURES SCRIPT:

A2367 ~ Jesus Heals a Leper.

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

One of the most prolific Christian hymn writers in history was a blind lady called Fanny Crosby. As a six-week-old baby, she was given some harmful ointment for her eyes in the mistaken belief that it would cure her. However, it caused her to go blind. But she didn't let this setback deter her from her life's work. She accepted her blindness and said in her later years that she wouldn't want her sight back, as she would have so many distractions to compete with her work. And she spoke of the joy she would have when one day she would see her Saviour in heaven.

When we have some setback in life, do we let it conquer us and cause us to sit back helplessly? We're called to persevere no matter what the odds are. In today's Bible Adventure, an unnamed man contracted leprosy and had to leave his home and family to live in a leper colony, which was in the city dump where sufferers waited for a long slow, downward decline in health until death claimed them.

Leprosy has affected people for over 4,000 years and was considered a highly contagious disease with no cure. No one in Israel is known to have been cured of the disease since Elisha the prophet cured Naaman the Syrian in 2 Kings, Chapter 5. That was 700 before Jesus' time.

Anyone who caught leprosy had to stay well away from healthy people in case they spread their disease. In Jesus' time, leprosy was dreaded and because the ways of transmission were unknown, people lived in fear, especially if a relative contracted it.

Leprosy was considered to be the physical counterpart of the spiritual problem of sin. People mistakenly thought that if a person contracted leprosy, he was being punished for his sins. When a leper was healed, he had to go to the priest and be pronounced clean before he could go back to his home and family.

Modern medicine has discovered there are different types of leprosy. The cause is bacteria which, if untreated, results in permanent damage to the skin, nerves, limbs and eyes. Most investigators think that the bacteria is spread from person to person in droplets breathed out by the sufferer. However, it's now been found that 95% of people are naturally immune to the disease and even sufferers are no longer contagious after 2 weeks of treatment.

Sufferers have always been given social outcast status and often, have been abandoned by their relatives. Countries in Asia, India and China have had large numbers of sufferers. Health workers today visit villages looking for people showing signs of early symptoms, which are successfully treated with a multi-drug therapy.

Today's drama is from the last verses in Mark's Gospel, Chapter 1.

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

Having heard how Jesus had healed people of all sorts of diseases and health problems, the leper believed in his heart that Jesus could cleanse him of his leprosy too. So he went to Jesus and begged Him to heal him. The leper said: "If You are willing, You are able to make me clean."

He asked Jesus humbly and knelt down before Him, worshipping Him. In the Gospel written by Doctor Luke, in Chapter 5, it says that the leper was by then in an advanced stage of the disease and he would have been covered with sores. As a leper, he should have remained six feet away from Jesus and everyone else in the crowd. But he was so desperate and he didn't follow the rules!

The people in the crowd knew God could heal leprosy but was Jesus able to, and if He could, would He be willing to do so?

The leper voiced a question people are still faced with today. We know that Jesus as the Son of God can heal. That's the theory, but our faith doesn't quite make it sure that He will heal. People often have more faith in medical science than in divine intervention.

Is God always willing to heal people? The short answer is "No". God has always known the end point of each person's life before the creation of the world. Elderly Christian people often don't want prayer for healing when they have multiple health problems. They just want to go home to be with Jesus.

As we live our lives, we need to be willing to accept God's will for us. A short-term missionary was about to fly home from the highlands of Papua New Guinea. She didn't know what God's next step for her life would be. She told a number of possibilities to someone who asked her. She finished by saying that God might even call her home to heaven. She was willing to accept God's will just as the leper had. That young woman was flying home in a plane that crashed into a mountain side. She was in heaven much sooner than she had expected.

In the case of this leper, Jesus was moved with pity and compassion and reached out, touching the leper. Jesus didn't always use touch to heal a person, but touching the leper made Jesus unclean according to the Mosaic Law. The leper, however, was made completely clean from the disease. The Greek word used means that the leper was literally "made clean, cleansed and purified." In an instant, the man was physically healed and spiritually cleansed. He was made whole!

Jesus warned the man not to say anything about his healing to anyone. But the healed man didn't obey Jesus. The man was so overwhelmed, he couldn't keep quiet about being cleansed of that terrible disease and so he told everyone.

As a result of this man's disobedience, Jesus couldn't go into the towns, for the crowds wanting to see Him grew so large. Instead, Jesus had to stay out in desert places. Even then, people made the effort to find Jesus and see Him. The consequences of the healed man's disobedience are not listed in Matthew's Gospel, Chapter 8, but there are three accounts in the Gospels all about the same man.

Jesus' primary role at that time in His ministry was preaching and having crowds coming for healing distracted from this. Leprosy was incurable by human ability, so when the man cured of the disease came to the priests to be declared clean, they should have recognized at that point the healing of a leper was a sign that the Messiah was present.

Faith in Jesus needs to be followed by obedience. The spiritual parallel is that healing isn't enough to be saved. We must go on to serve Him, obey and live for Him the rest of our lives. In Colossians, Chapter 1, it says: "You must, of course, continue faithful on a firm and sure foundation, and must not allow yourselves to be shaken from the hope you gained when you heard the gospel."

In our prayers, how many times do we ask God for something? Then when He answers, how many times do we remember to thank Him? We need to be thankful for the work of God in our lives. But before we can do this, we must understand that we don't deserve anything from God and that God doesn't owe us anything either.

Being thankful is very important to God. When we have a thankful heart, we are showing God that we recognize where our blessings come from. It also reminds us to keep our focus on God and give Him the glory for everything. The most important thing to be thankful for is our salvation.

Remember—we cannot save ourselves. Salvation is a free gift from God so that we can receive God's goodness in our lives because of what Jesus did for us on the cross. He died so that we might live. He was our substitute and became 'unclean' so that we might be healed in our hearts. As a result, we can be completely forgiven for our sins and receive eternal life. Have you received God's gift to mankind at all? If not, you can invite Christ into your heart today.

A precious verse of Scripture to remember is Philippians, Chapter 4, Verse 6: "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God."

The drama is from The Bible In Living Sound.

< END OF SCRIPT >
