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BIBLE ADVENTURES SCRIPT:

A1560 ~ The Sun Turns Back for Hezekiah.

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

Many years ago, a boy of seven lost his left arm at the shoulder. Until he was twelve, he cried himself to sleep every night. It was hard for him to regard this amputation as part of the good, well-pleasing and perfect will of God. The boy then began to conquer his handicap. By tucking a long handled hoe under his armpit, he learned to hoe as many rows as his brothers did. He didn't get as tired as them, for in using two arms, they overworked their wrists. Later in his life, this disabled man sold life insurance and was a real success. He learned to play handball and soon beat all of his competitors, and went on to hold the national championship for many years.

One day, this man heard that a thirteen-year old boy had just gone through the same amputation that he did. The young boy had no will to live and his condition was rapidly worsening. The older man took his newspaper clippings of the achievements he'd made to the hospital and saw the boy. Nothing was said between them about their missing arms. The boy looked at the various newspaper articles that told of the one-armed champion's ability at golf, hunting and fishing. Finally he asked if it was really true. The armless man removed his shirt and showed him. The boy sighed deeply and soon fell asleep.

The boy recovered and before long he left hospital. The older man had testified many times of his satisfaction with the life and the will of God for him. It was not well-pleasing at first to be the town cripple, but the long-term compensations were so great that he soon learnt that God's way was the best way for him and he would not have it any other way.

In today's Bible Adventure found in Isaiah Chapter 38, King Hezekiah of Judah became very sick.

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Hezekiah was so upset when the prophet Isaiah told him he was going to die. He had no son to succeed him on the throne of Judah. In the extra 15 years that God gave him, Hezekiah had a son called Manasseh. Manasseh was only 12 years old when he started to reign as king in his father's place.

While sick and dying 15 years earlier, should Hezekiah have asked Isaiah for a sign that God would heal him? All his life Hezekiah had faithfully trusted in God. Why did he need physical proof of God's word for him?

Hezekiah's sign for healing caused the sun to go backwards in the sky ten degrees, and God granted him this request. This sign is one of the more famous miracles performed by God in the Old Testament and remembered throughout history. It really showed God as the controlling power of all the universe.

A famous Norwegian explorer frequently went on trips abroad and was away from home for many months at a time. Once, he took a homing pigeon with him. When he reached his destination, he set the bird free. His wife back in Norway was delighted to see the bird return. It was a sign to her that her husband was still alive.

Should we ask God for signs? For all those who love the Lord and trust and rely on Him, we have the most important sign already: God's Holy Spirit in our hearts. After Jesus' death and resurrection, He ascended back to heaven. His disciples stayed in Jerusalem waiting for the sign of the Comforter, the Holy Spirit Jesus had promised them. The Holy Spirit came at the Feast of Pentecost and is given to each new believer when they put their trust in the Lord Jesus.

The indwelling Holy Spirit is the sign that the believer has become a new creation and now a child of God. The Holy Spirit brings forth the fruit of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, humility and self-control into the person's life. This evidence of God's Spirit in a believer's life is often shown by the peaceful way the believer dies. There is a joyful anticipation of a new life of happiness with the Lord Jesus just ahead.

A famous Christian pastor in Germany during the dark days of World War II, said there are five different deaths every Christian should die. Christ must be first in a person's life, even over the natural close bonds of family. Therefore Christians must die to their fleshly desires and not fear suffering or death, for they are already dead to themselves. Christians must also die to success, envy of others and the love of money. Later when this pastor was hanged in his own country, he died with the peace of God in his heart.

An old Scottish man was fearful of dying. His understanding minister asked him if he'd been a shepherd. The old man replied that he had watched the sheep many a day. The minister asked if the shepherd had ever watched the wind drive a cloud across the valley. "Many a time," was the reply.

"And when the shadow of the cloud came racing along towards you and your flock, were you afraid?" The old man drew himself up onto his elbow and cried, "Afraid of the shadow?" The minister read from Psalm 23: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil." Then the dying man understood. It is only the shadow of death that can touch the believer in Christ, for life in Christ continues beyond the grave and into eternity with God.

The grim reality of death that was laid upon our Shepherd, the Lord Jesus, is the same that must one day, lay hold of those unbelievers who are not His sheep.

But for Christ's believers, the shadow of death is all that can ever touch them, since they've been given joyful and abundant eternal life.

Some people find it interesting to read the last words famous people said before they died. Some statements show no respect or concern that they were stepping out of this life into a new eternal existence. Such words show a great ignorance of God and arrogance in their own importance. Many seemed to have a total lack of preparation for what lies ahead but without concern about it. This is foolishness indeed. After death, there will be no further time to make things right or have a change of heart.

The Lord Jesus said in Revelation, Chapter 3: “Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.”

The Apostle Paul says in Romans, Chapter 10: “Whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.” If you do this, you can be assured that the Lord Jesus will hear you and answer. He said in John’s Gospel, Chapter 5: “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.”

Does belief in the Lord Jesus make any difference in a person’s life when faced with an early death? A young man of 25 was dying of cancer. He met up with a friend that he hadn’t seen for some time. When he told the friend of his approaching death, the friend was stunned. He asked, “What do you do when you realize you are about to die?”

The dying man said: “It’s really simple. You get things right with God, and you spend as much time with those you love as you can. Then you settle up with everyone else.” He added: “You know, really, you ought to live every day like you have only a few more days to live.” That deeply impressed his friend. Few things impart more wisdom than to face up to the fact that we will all die sooner or later.

Don’t be caught unprepared. Make your peace with God today.

The drama is from The Bible In Living Sound.

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