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BIBLE ADVENTURES SCRIPT:

A1580 ~ Work on the Temple Hindered.

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

In early 1956, five young missionary men visited an unreached tribe in South America to begin an evangelistic ministry there. They were soon killed by the local savage tribesmen, who disliked outsiders in their territory. Would this discourage others from trying to help that tribe? Were their lives lost in vain?

One of those five men had a famous saying: “He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep, to gain what he cannot lose.” In other words, you are wise if you give your life in service to God because you cannot keep yourself from dying. Eternity is the place where God will reward you.

The sister of one of those men and the widow of another were working with a different tribe. Two women from the unreached tribe came to visit. These women taught the missionary ladies their language. When they returned home to the unreached tribe, they made possible an invitation for the missionary ladies to move into that savage tribe. It had been little more than two and a half years since the tragic deaths of the five men. The women both went without bitterness; the widow taking along her three-year-old daughter with her. In time, these two women had translated the Scriptures into the local language and shared the Gospel with the tribal people. Some of those who murdered the five young missionaries also became Christians. God is ever watching over us His servants and moves His work forward in ways that are amazing to us, even after great setbacks or discouragement.

Discouragement can come in many different ways. In today's Bible Adventure, the people of Israel were working hard to build a new Temple in Jerusalem. The neighbouring people, however, didn't like the return of all those people from Babylon and resolved to make things as difficult for them as possible.

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

When the northern kingdom of Israel fell to the Assyrians in 721 BC, the important Jewish people were deported to Assyria and never returned. But the Assyrians brought other people to inhabit that region, which was called Samaria. These people intermarried with the local poor Jewish people. Their descendents considered themselves to be Jewish and the rightful inhabitants of all Palestine. If they had welcomed the exiles back as brother Jews, the Samaritans would have been blessed. But they didn't want to share Judah again after accessing the land for the prior 75 years.

The Samaritans would have done well to remember the words of God in the Bible book of Numbers, Chapter 24, which say: "Whoever blesses Israel will be blessed, and whoever curses Israel will be cursed." This statement has held true through all generations since. When a powerful nation has double crossed Israel, God has brought that nation to poverty. In Psalm 122, we are instructed to "pray for the peace of Jerusalem."

The Samaritans certainly broke God's commandment about not bringing false testimony against their neighbours. Zerubbabel, the governor of the returning exiles, however, conducted himself wisely and well in the encounter with the delegation from Samaria.

There are a number of sins against truth and honesty. One is exaggeration or saying things are bigger or worse than they actually are. Saying that one has had the worst day in their life when they encounter a problem is a form of exaggeration. Exaggeration is a form of lying and can cause misleading and dishonest information, especially if used in a law of court.

The Samaritans hadn't been harmed by the Israelites in any way by them returning to Judah. So sending a letter to the king of Persia saying that the people in Jerusalem were always making trouble wasn't true.

Worse than this, the Samaritans told the king of Persia that the Israelite people would refuse to continue paying taxes to him once back living in the land! How would the Samaritans know this? Their case against the Israelites before the king was so weak that they padded it out with assumptions, lies and fear tactics. There were no grounds for the charges of rebellion the Samaritans cited against the Jews to the new king.

Money matters are always important to a king and Darius, on hearing the Samaritan's complaints, didn't want an expensive war subduing some distant people. So he played it safe and told the Israelites to stop building the Temple. Although the people obeyed the king, while the Temple remained unfinished, God did not prosper Israel.

For a few years the Samaritans' evil speaking about the Israelites to the Persian king succeeded in stopping the rebuilding of the Temple. In the New Testament letter of James, Chapter 4, it says: "Do not speak evil of one another."

The Person the most evil has been spoken about is the Lord Jesus Christ. In the time before the universe was made, the Lord Jesus was given the task of creating the world. In Colossians 1, it says: "God created the whole universe through Him (the Lord Jesus) and for Him." Yet millions of people have called the Lord Jesus a liar, preferring to believe the world came into existence differently from what the Bible says. They've denied Christ's initial work of creation and His superiority over all created things.

When Jesus walked on earth as a visible likeness of the invisible God, He healed the sick. But the rulers said Jesus did His miracles through the power of Satan. How could the fallen angel known as a liar and a murderer help the Lord of glory do anything? The rulers spoke evil of Jesus because they were jealous to see the crowds give more attention to the teachings of Jesus than to theirs. They also tried to get Him answering difficult questions so they could condemn Him for His understanding of the Mosaic Law.

After the Lord Jesus was arrested, the rulers brought charges against Jesus saying that He was an evil doer. They did this despite an earlier disagreement with Him in John's Gospel, Chapter 8. The Lord Jesus asked them, "Which one of you can prove that I am guilty of sin?" They hadn't been able to. Yet after Jesus's crucifixion, the rulers did believe His words that Jesus would rise again on the third day. They asked for a guard to be placed over His grave. But doing this made no difference! Jesus came back to life and one day, will be Judge of all of those people who have spoken evil of Him.

Have you ever said words that devalued the Lord Jesus? Ask now for the forgiveness that He is only too willing to give. Pray that He will bring good out of evil. Then give Him the respect and honour that is due to Him. Start a life-long loving relationship with Him but don't put it off.

The drama is from The Bible In Living Sound.

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