



BIBLE RADIO PRODUCTIONS

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BIBLE ADVENTURES SCRIPT:

A1636 ~ Jesus Raises a Widow's Son.

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

In the late 18th Century, a famous British preacher named Charles Haddon Spurgeon preached to thousands of people in London. He was well known and respected as the 'Prince of Preachers'. His wife kept a flock of hens and sold the eggs. Yet even close relatives had to pay for eggs if they wanted any. People whispered behind their backs that the Spurgeons were a bit mean. But the Spurgeons didn't change their way of selling the eggs.

After Mrs Spurgeon died, it came out that all the money raised from the sale of eggs went to support two elderly women. The problem of income for sick and old people has given rise to a number of different methods in different cultures for looking after those who can no longer look after themselves. It's only been in the last couple of centuries that governments in some countries have paid their elderly citizens a pension to help them to survive.

In many countries, there's still no pension scheme so when parents become too old or sick to work, it becomes the responsibility of the children to care for their needs. What happens to those who have no living children to do this? Getting old is dreaded and aging people become anxious as to what will become of them.

In today's Bible Adventure from Luke, Chapter 7, a widow's only son dies. What will become of her now there is no one to care for her?

The day after Jesus had healed the sick servant of the centurion, Jesus and many of His disciples as well as a large crowd travelled with Him about 30 km from Capernaum southwest to the city of Nain, in Galilee. When they reached the city gate, they were met there by a large crowd in funeral procession for the widow's son.

Jesus saw the widow and had compassion on her. He told her not to weep. Then he touched the open coffin and told the dead man to arise. The young man sat up and began to speak. Jesus then presented the living young man back to his mother. There were many witnesses to this and fear came upon them all. They glorified God and said: "A great prophet has risen up among us," "God has visited His people."

Just imagine the mixed emotions those people went through that day. Grief turned into joy at seeing the young man alive again; then the scary feeling that they were in the presence of a truly great Man. If He could raise a dead person back to life, was there anything that He couldn't do?

This report about Jesus was taken south to Jerusalem and all Judea. There was no way anyone hearing this account of Jesus raising a dead man in front of so many people could be denied or refuted. The only people who didn't believe in Him were the ones who refused to believe in Him. The scribes and teachers of the Law must have felt that they had their backs against the wall. How could they stop Jesus from having the people declare Him to be the Messiah and the Son of God?

Soon after the initial bad news is received, there are plans to be made. Some older people try to ease this decision making by preparing for their burial years in advance. Remember the tomb Jesus' body was laid in? It had been made ready by a rich man called Joseph of Arimathea for himself in case he died at any time as a result of accident or sudden illness. This particular grave had been talked about more than any other over these last 2,000 years. Why? Not because Jesus' body is there BUT because it was empty after only 3 days.

Although the widow's son had a coffin, it didn't get put into a grave that day because the divine intervention of the Lord Jesus made that unnecessary. How very thankful that widow must have been that Jesus came to Nain that particular time!

When the Lord Jesus died on the cross at Calvary at that same time the Passover lambs were being killed at the Temple, there was no coffin ready for him. His body was hurriedly wrapped in strips of linen with spices in the Jewish manner and placed in the unused tomb belonging to Joseph. Grieving women planned to return to the tomb as soon as the Passover Sabbath and the weekly Sabbath had passed.

It's recorded in Matthew's Gospel, Chapter 27, that when the Lord Jesus died, the heavy veil in front of the Holy of Holies in the Temple was torn in two from top to bottom and there was an earthquake. The graves were opened and many of the bodies of the saints were raised. After Jesus' resurrection, they went into Jerusalem and appeared to many people.

But like the widow's son, they all at some point died again. There has been only One who died and rose from the grave, never to die again. In 1 Corinthians, Chapter 15, it says: "But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep (or died.)"

Each of us needs to do some preparation for the time when we will leave this earth. Do you have any assurance that when you die you (including your personality, will and soul) will go to be with the Lord Jesus in heaven? At some funerals, it's said that the person is now safe in heaven with Jesus even when the person who has died never took the slightest interest in Jesus while living here on earth. The idea of 'everyone is going to heaven' is untrue to the Scriptures and only false comfort.

Grief is a mixture of emotions coming from a sudden change in circumstances. Not only does death of a loved one cause us to grieve but the loss of our work or a broken relationship that can leave us unsure of the way forward.

We cannot insulate ourselves from experiencing grief at some time or other. We cannot stop the march of time so that we never grow old and die. Many fear death because they have no idea of what's on the other side of death. If they open their Bibles and learn from the Saviour, their fear would be gone. Genuine Christians are good at dying. Their inner peace gives them the confidence that Jesus Christ, for whom they have lived, is waiting to welcome them home.

A famous Russian writer rejected Christianity as a child. He went off to study at university with the aim of becoming wealthy and famous. He lived an undisciplined life yet nothing satisfied him. He married a wonderful woman and they had 13 children. He had everything yet he was so unhappy that he was on the edge of killing himself.

He asked himself, "Is there any meaning in my life which will not be wiped out by the inevitability of death, which awaits me?"

The writer searched for the answer in every field of science and philosophy. As he looked around, he saw that people were not facing up to the basic questions of life, such as: Where did I come from? Where am I going? Who am I? What is life all about?

Eventually he found the peasant people of Russia answered these questions through their Christian faith, and he too, came to realise that only in Jesus Christ do we find true meaning of life.

Although Jesus comforted the widow by restoring her dead son to full health, such things are not expected these days. How can we help ourselves through grief while comforting those who grieve over the loss of a loved one? After the initial shock and maybe anger at how things have turned out, there comes a time to say “Goodbye.” Sometimes it helps the grieving person to accept the reality of the situation by helping to make the funeral arrangements.

One of the greatest comforts for the grieving person is to read the words of comfort from the Bible. Thinking about heaven helps as well. In the Lamentations of Jeremiah, Chapter 3, it says: “I will never forget this awful time, as I grieve over my loss. Yet I still dare to hope when I remember this: The faithful love of the Lord never ends! His mercies never cease.”

Encourage the grieving person you know to speak with the Lord Jesus in prayer on a regular basis. May Jesus become so very close to the grieving person as a personal Saviour yet a supreme Master, both now and for eternity. Jesus Himself said in the book of 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.” This invitation is open to anyone willing to give themselves to Him. It’s the promise of all who accept Him.

The drama is from The Bible In Living Sound.

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