



## BIBLE RADIO PRODUCTIONS

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BIBLE ADVENTURES SCRIPT:

**A1709 ~ Peter and John Imprisoned.**

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

A few years ago, a pastor was running an orphanage for 55 children. He and his helpers cared for the children by providing them with shelter, food and clothing. He also taught them about the Lord Jesus.

Neighbours from another religion heard about this teaching of Jesus. Two of them came to the pastor and started beating him. When he asked them why, they claimed the pastor was doing the children harm. Then the two men threatened the children and told them that they had to go back to the traditions of their country. But they replied, “No, we belong to Jesus.” The pastor was taken to the local police station and beaten again. Many more people from the traditional religion gathered and made accusations. When a number of local pastors from other churches heard about their situation, they went immediately to the police station and intervened on the pastor’s behalf. When the pastor was released and returned home, the children hugged him. They’d been very scared but were learning how to be strong in faith in the Lord Jesus.

God is giving grace and strength to persecuted Christians. One pastor’s wife said: “I pray for the salvation of the people who are persecuting our church.” And in many countries around the world Christian groups, individuals and churches are being attacked for no other reason than belonging to Jesus Christ.

Ever since the Lord Jesus ascended back into heaven, there's a spiritual battle raging between the followers of Jesus and those of Satan. When Peter and John healed a crippled man in Jesus' Name by the power of the Holy Spirit, they soon found themselves in trouble with the Jewish rulers and high priests.

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

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When Peter told the people gathered at Solomon's Porch at the Temple that Jesus Christ had made the man born crippled to walk like a normal person, some people believed in Jesus. But soon a group of priests, the captain of the temple guard and the Sadducees found them and stopped Peter from speaking about Jesus further. This is recorded in Acts, Chapter 4. Although the Sadducees' party was much smaller than the Pharisees' party, it was the Sadducees who ruled in power at the time of Jesus. They denied that there was any life after a person died. Was this a reasonable position for them to take? Are there any places in the Old Testament where it tells of a person being resurrected?

In 1<sup>st</sup> Kings, Chapter 17, the great prophet Elijah was sent by God to stay with a poor widow in Zarephath. She and her son were starving to death but when Elijah requested her make him a cake from the little flour and oil that she had left, she obeyed and did so. As a result, God continually replenished the flour and oil in her containers so that she could provide for herself, her son and Elijah. But the widow's son became sick and died. Elijah went up to the boy's room in the loft. He laid himself over the boy's body three times and then prayed that God would allow the boy's soul to come back into him. The boy was raised from the dead and returned to his mother.

Then in 2<sup>nd</sup> Kings, Chapter 4, the prophet Elisha stayed with a woman and her elderly husband whenever he passed through the town of Shunem. This couple built a room for Elisha's sole use on the side of their house. Elisha wanted to give the woman something for her hospitality. He promised that she would have a son in a year's time. She did have the promised son, but when he had grown and was harvesting with his father, he got a terrible headache. His dad sent him home. The mother held her boy as he died in her arms. The woman put the boy on Elisha's bed and went to get Elisha. When Elisha arrived, he prayed and laid himself over the boy's body. God heard Elisha's prayers and the boy came back to life.

In 2<sup>nd</sup> Kings, Chapter 13, it's recounted that a dead man was raised by God's Spirit. A group of people were about to bury a man, but when they saw a band of raiders coming, they simply threw the dead man's body into Elisha's tomb. The Bible says that when the corpse touched Elisha's bones, it revived and the man became alive again. Could not the chief priests and Sadducees believe that these resurrections were done by the power of God? And that with God, all things are possible?

The Old Testament prophecy which most commonly interpreted to be a reference to the resurrection of the dead is in Daniel, Chapter 12, which reads: "Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt." This prophecy of Daniel is lacking specific details but like some other Old Testament passages, it does point to a future time when the dead will be raised to an eternal future.

Thus, even though the Jewish people had a limited understanding of death and a future life, they weren't left without a future hope. And that hope was focused on the coming Messiah, the person of Jesus Christ. Jesus alone was able to conquer the enemy of all people – death itself.

The Sadducees must have heard of all the resurrection miracles Jesus performed while teaching in places around Galilee and Judea. In Luke, Chapter 7, Jesus stopped a funeral procession as they were carrying the casket to the cemetery. Jesus had compassion on the weeping mother. He told her to stop crying and then brought her son back to life in front of all the mourners.

In Mark, Chapter 5, Jairus asked Jesus to come and heal his dying daughter. By the time Jesus arrived, the girl had already died. However, Jesus sent the mourners out of the house and took the girls' parents and Peter, James and John into the room where the dead girl lay. He said, "Little girl, get up." And she did.

In John, Chapter 11, Lazarus had been in the grave for four days when Jesus approached his tomb. Jesus asked the people to roll away the tomb stone. The stench of Lazarus' body was hard to bear. But Jesus called out, "Lazarus, come forth." Lazarus did come out, still wrapped in strips of grave cloth and people had to help him out of them. This miracle was done publicly while crowds of mourners watched. So it was very hard for the Sadducees to deny or refute what had happened in any way. But in clinging to their beliefs despite the evidence, they then planned to kill both Jesus and Lazarus.

Jesus condemned the Sadducees for their denial of the resurrection. In Mark, Chapter 12, Jesus said that God is not the God of the dead but the God of the living. He told the Sadducees that they were greatly mistaken. And some people still make that same mistake these days. Rather than admit that their thinking is wrong according to the Scriptures, they close their minds and they don't care about the consequences of calling God a liar. Death is considered to be the most powerful enemy of a person but Jesus changed all that when He rose from the grave. Here are some of the sayings of godly people over the centuries:

“To the good man to die is gain.”

“The foolish fear death as the greatest of evils, the wise desire it as a rest after labours and the end of ills.”

“The value of life doesn’t lie in the number of days lived, but in the use we make of them.”

“Whatever you are doing, in company or alone, do it all to the glory of God. Otherwise, it is unacceptable to God.”

Although Peter and John had done a good thing for the formerly crippled man, they were put in prison for the night. This reaction doesn’t seem fair or just! But the next day, Peter and John were brought before the ruling council to have the case heard. They were asked, “By what power or by what name have you done this?”

Peter addressed the council members. When they saw the healed man standing beside Peter and John, the council couldn’t say anything against the good deed done to the man. What could they do to Peter and John to stop them from spreading the good news of Jesus’ resurrection to everyone? They had to give it some thought. And consider if killing them as they had done with Jesus of Nazareth a possible option?

In recent times, the story of a farmer from Vietnam became widely known. The 56-year-old farmer had only known the Lord for a year but during this year, he was arrested and severely beaten. When the authorities shouted at him to renounce his faith, he told them, “You can beat me as much as you want; you can even kill me. But if I should die today, I know that I will live forever because my Lord has given me eternal life.” The police were stunned into silence and let him go free. That man didn’t let anything discourage him from following Christ.

How do we feel about giving up our physical life for Jesus? When threatened with death and harm, devout Christians aren't afraid. This continually surprises those who don't believe in God, and those who think that when you're dead, your life is over. Justin Martyr who was killed in Rome in 165 AD said: "You can kill us, but you cannot do us any real harm."

What would it have taken to get the Sadducees to believe in Jesus? They seemed so determined to disbelieve what they'd heard and seen of the Lord Jesus, preferring to stick with their old traditions.

Last century, an American man was involved in an illegal plot. He said that there were only around 10 people who knew about the plot. If all of the 10 people had kept quiet for three months, they would have gotten away with their shameful deed. But their secret came out quickly and the man was caught and sentenced to time in jail for his part in the crime. The man realised while in prison that if the Biblical account of 500 witnesses to the Lord Jesus' ascension had been made up and therefore untrue, it would have become evident very quickly. The man became convicted that the Lord Jesus had really risen from being dead in a grave. And so he became a Christian.

How about you? Does believing in Jesus seem a difficult thing for you to do? Of course, believing in Him is only the first step. Believing must move on to being converted from the old ways of sin to the new way of trusting Jesus for forgiveness of all the wrong things you've done. Trusting in Jesus's forgiveness must also extend to our forgiving of those who have wronged us. The next step after this is to study Jesus' words in the Bible and live a pure, obedient and loving life for God's glory. No matter what happens to us physically, we can believe what Psalm 49, Verse 15, says: "But God will redeem my life from the grave; He will surely take me to Himself."

*The drama is from The Bible In Living Sound.*

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