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BIBLE ADVENTURES SCRIPT:

A2008 ~ The Widow and the Judge.

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

Have you ever thought about writing a book? If you ever have, you will know just how extremely difficult it is to find a publisher to publish and distribute it. One author who became a household name in the literary world learnt the value of persistence when publishing his first book.

His first novel was rejected by 28 agents and publishers. When an agent finally did take him on as a client, the book's first print run was for only 5,000 copies. Of these, the author purchased 1,000 copies himself and drove them around to bookstores in his car. Only after his second book became a best seller did that author get his big break. His books went on to sell a 100 million copies by the end of his career.

To test the acceptance and rejection of the publishing system, one writer typed out the first 21 pages of a novel that won a national book award six years earlier. He sent them to four publishers using a made-up name. They all rejected the novel. Two years later and using the same name, the writer typed out the entire novel and submitted it to several more publishers, including the one that had originally published it.

All told, 14 publishers and 13 literary agents failed to recognise a book that had already been published and had won an important award. This shows just how fickle the book market is for new authors. A few writers win through to a successful writing career but even with a lot of persistence, many don't.

In today's *Bible Adventure*, the Lord Jesus told a parable about a widow trying to get justice from a judge who wanted first for her to pay him a bribe.

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

This parable is sometimes called the Parable of the Persistent Widow and is told at the beginning of Luke, Chapter 18. Unlike many other parables Jesus taught, He told this one's meaning and its purpose before he told the story: "Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up."

The judge in this parable had no fairness, honesty or justice in him. If he could make some money from each case for himself, he was happy to accept a bribe to bring down a verdict in favour of the one prepared to pay him.

God condemned the taking of bribes in Amos, Chapter 5, when He spoke to the Israeli people: "I know how terrible your sins are and how many crimes you have committed. You persecute good people, take bribes and prevent the poor from getting justice in the courts." In Jesus' parable, the widow wouldn't or couldn't pay a bribe to the judge. Her only avenue for getting justice was to persist in asking for help against her adversary.

Most Christians know the verse of Scripture, "Pray without ceasing." But for how long does each Christian actually pray? In some countries, even full-time workers in ministry average less than five minutes of prayer a day. This explains why the Church is so powerless. All disciples of the Lord Jesus should be spending many moments each day to say quick prayers to the Lord or longer dedicated time with the Lord when they can. God knows all things and we can trust Him in everything.

In this parable, we don't know if Jesus was making up a story or telling a real life situation which He knew about. However, it shows that we can ask God for anything we want. We are to pray about anything and everything, yes, everything! In Proverbs, Chapter 3, it says: "In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths."

The widow kept up her requests to the judge until he grew sick of seeing her in his court. He didn't grant her what she asked because he cared about her but because he was annoyed with her constant coming back to ask. But the widow didn't mind how much effort it took to be so persistent – she got what she wanted in the end.

Then Jesus made the application. If an unloving judge who doesn't care about a poor widow finally said yes to her, how much more will our loving heavenly Father say yes to His beloved children who keep crying to Him day and night. Our heavenly Father will not hold back anything good from us that forms part of His perfect plan for us or His Kingdom. This shows the importance of prayer, and even fasting and praying through our deepest needs. We should never give up when God doesn't answer our prayers as soon as we pray them.

Imagine if God gave us everything we asked for straight away – people wouldn't be encouraged to pray. Even people who weren't Christians would pray with the wrong motive to receive what they wanted. But God is sovereign. He wants to develop our faith and character, and show us how much or little we love Him and trust Him in all things. Yet we need to be careful what we ask for. Some of our prayers could be harmful to us if they were granted. Later when we look back, we can sometimes see how good it was that God didn't answer a certain prayer request that we made. But in eternity, we'll know all these unknowns and will rejoice in the Lord's wisdom and providence at that time. However, God wants us to thank Him for His answers to prayer without that knowledge, irrespective of the outcome.

The Parable of the Widow is proof that God does answer prayer. When we receive answers to our prayers, we must make sure that we thank Him because we are so grateful. When the answer to prayer doesn't come after a period of time, should we give up and just forget about it? Are we praying in faith that God will answer? Jesus says not to stop praying until He says no. And if the answer is no, then accept it with thanks to Him that He knows best. Do we trust Him in this? Don't argue with God. In Psalm 84, it says: "no good thing will he withhold from those who walk uprightly."

In 1 John, Chapter 5, it also says: "This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us."

How then do we know what God's will is in a situation? Sometimes a verse of Scripture comes to mind through the Holy Spirit that shows us that what we are asking for is against Scriptural teaching. Some people pray often for revival to come to the churches and in isolated instances, God grants this in answer to fervent prayer. But the overall teaching of the Bible speaks about a great falling away, or apostasy in the churches, that will occur in the last days of the church age.

Two couples wanted to start a new church in their area. They invited people to join them and when there were 11 in their group, they rented a garage to hold their meetings. The man whose vision it was to start the church had some disagreements with others in town. He didn't get his way and so he left the group angrily. A few years later a new church building was ready and dedicated. But the man who had the original vision of a new church in the area didn't come. His prayer for a new church was answered even though he was no longer involved.

The Lord Jesus finished this parable with this saying: "When the Son of Man (that's Jesus) comes, will He really find faith on the earth?" When Jesus does come back for His loved ones, He wants to find you waiting and living in faith. Have you have stopped praying that the Lord Jesus will keep you faithful until the end of your life? It's time to start asking for this again.

Not only do we need to pray for ourselves but for all those around us. A fisherman was out trying to catch some fish when he saw a plastic bag floating in the water. Inside he found about 300 requests for prayer that had been mailed to a local pastor. Many of the letters were unopened. The pastor had died two years earlier and authorities speculated that the letters had been dumped as garbage after his house was cleaned out.

Some of the prayer requests were foolish but many letters were heartbreaking. Family members were crying out to God for relatives lost in the addictions of the world. One teenager was begging God to forgive her for having an abortion and asking for a second chance. There were so many prayer requests in that batch not prayed. And it isn't hard for us to find people to pray for. When we read the newspaper and see the tragedies of damaged lives in there, there is time to whisper to God asking that He might intervene to bring good out of those bad situations.

Unanswered prayer can also be a test of our faith. God wants us to experience some kind of injustice and persecution. He wants us to share in the suffering of Christ in this life, so that we might share in His glory in the next. If God allows us to suffer injustice for some period of time, it's for our good.

When we hear of others in trouble or sick, let's rush to pray for them. Government officials persecuting Christians in 2005 made a raid on a Sunday school room in a church. They found 30 children inside and herded them into a van. Despite the scary situation, one child started to sing. In a few moments, all the children were singing.

Upon arrival at the police station, the children marched bravely into the interrogation room, still singing to the Lord. The officials tried to force the children to write, "I do not believe in Jesus," telling them that they had to write it a hundred times before they would be released. Instead, the children wrote: "I believe in Jesus today. I will believe in Jesus tomorrow. I will believe in Jesus forever!"

Exasperated, the officials called the children's parents, some of whom quite sadly renounced Christ. However, one widow refused to deny Jesus when she came to pick up her twin boys. The officers threatened her, saying, "If you don't deny Jesus, we will not release your sons."

She replied, "Well, I guess you'll just have to keep them, because without Jesus, there would be no way for me to take care of them!" The frustrated officials sent her and her boys home. How many people heard of the raid and were praying about this difficult situation God only knows; for we are told in the Scriptures to bear one another's burdens.

In the letter of James, Chapter 1, verses 2 and 3, it says: "My friends, consider yourselves fortunate when all kinds of trials come your way, for you know that when your faith succeeds in facing such trials, the result is the ability to endure."

The drama is from The Bible In Living Sound.

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