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BIBLE ADVENTURES SCRIPT:

A2277 ~ David Flees from Saul.

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

Israel's first king, Saul, had progressively become more mentally unstable as he feared David, the man that everyone knew had been anointed to be the next king of Israel. Under the normal ways of royalty, Saul's first son, Jonathan, should have succeeded Saul as king and Saul was determined that this should happen. Saul made many attempts on David's life, even though David was his own son-in-law. In the end, David became a fugitive, who moved from place to place ahead of Saul and his soldiers to save his life.

While Saul spent a day and night prophesying, David fled from Ramah and went back to visit his close friend and Saul's son, Jonathan. David tried to keep his conscience clear, so he asked Jonathan what he'd done to deserve his father's death sentence. Jonathan had every confidence that his father would tell him everything that Saul planned to do, because Saul was training Jonathan to be the next king. Jonathan was also confident that Saul would not kill David. But David wasn't so sure that this was the case, so he devised a test to see what Saul's opinion of him really was.

Saul soon proved to Jonathan that he hadn't changed at all in his hateful attitude towards David. So Jonathan sadly relayed this information to David, cut to the heart at what his father's intentions really were. As very close friends, Jonathan and David had made a solemn pact in the name of the Lord to care for each other and their descendants. In those days, it was common that when a new royal family came to power, the new king would kill off any potential heirs to the throne of the old king.

However, the test David used to check Saul's attitude towards him had an element of untruth in it. David lied when he didn't go to visit his family in Bethlehem and stayed out in the fields for two days. Maybe David didn't want soldiers troubling his family. But this was the start of a season of lies that David made up to try to protect himself. After saying a very moving and sad farewell to Jonathan, David went to the high priest, Ahimelech, in the town of Nob.

The Tabernacle of the Lord had been located at Shiloh for more than 300 years but when Shiloh was destroyed, it was moved to the town of Nob, which was a short way east of Jerusalem. When David met Ahimelech, David continued to tell a series of lies to cover up the fact that he was fleeing from King Saul. He may also have been trying to keep the high priest from knowing David's movements so that Ahimelech couldn't be accused by King Saul of helping Saul's enemy. If Ahimelech had knowingly assisted David, Saul would have reason to kill him.

In response, Ahimelech was afraid that there was something wrong, as David was travelling alone, even though he said his men would be meeting him in another place. David also asked Ahimelech for food and a weapon.

The only bread that Ahimelech had on hand was consecrated bread that had been set aside for the Lord and could only be eaten by priests. Ahimelech made an exception for David to eat this, provided he and his supposed men were ceremonially clean. David assured him that they were. While David was speaking to Ahimelech, a servant of Saul's came in and saw them talking. He was Doeg, an Edomite who was the chief of Saul's herdsmen.

Ahimelech also gave David the sword of Goliath, the Philistine giant whom David had fought. This weapon had been wrapped up and not used, as there were no other weapons there. David fled from there and travelled to the Philistine territory and their city of Gath. He reasoned that he would be safer with Saul's enemies than he would be in Saul's territory. We can all make reasoned decisions as to what serves our best interests, but it's far safer and wiser to pray to the Lord and ask Him what we should be doing.

When David arrived at the king of Gath's court, the king learnt that David was the person who had slain their champion Goliath. David quickly realised that he was in dire peril, so he pretended to be insane in front of the king and was soon thrown out of the king's court. Where could David go next? He went to a cave in Adullam, in the Judean hills a good distance south of Jerusalem. And this is where we learn that very little can be kept secret for very long. David's family heard where he was and they joined him there. So did a number of other people who were escaping their debts or discontented with Saul as their king.

Before long, David had about 400 men living with him in the cave. David took his parents to Moab and made arrangements with the king of Moab to allow his parents to live in Moab until things were settled for David in Israel. The king agreed. As soon as that was accomplished, a prophet named Gad told David to leave the stronghold of his Adullam cave and to go to a forest in Judah.

Meanwhile, King Saul was holding court at Gibeah, giving his servants a lecture on how good a king he was to them and how no one was keeping him informed on David's whereabouts. Then Doeg the Edomite told Saul that he saw David speaking with the high priest at Nob and that Ahimelech had helped David. So Saul sent for Ahimelech and all the priests in his family at Nob.

When they arrived and Saul made his accusations, Ahimelech defended David, assuring the king that he had no knowledge of any conspiracy. This was true, as David had told him nothing. But Saul wouldn't listen. He ordered his men to kill Ahimelech and his family. But Saul's men refused to strike the priests of the Lord. So Saul called on Doeg the Edomite to do so and Doeg killed them all. Not only that, Doeg went to Nob and also killed all the people and animals living there.

In such a terrible manner, the earlier prophecy by an unnamed prophet regarding the house of Israel's high priest, Eli, was fulfilled. However, one of Ahimelech's sons, Abiathar, escaped and he fled to join David. In this way, God provided David with a priest who could pray to the Lord on his behalf and provide divine guidance. So now the future king and the future high priest were fellow outlaws together. Because David felt responsible for the massacre of Abiathar's family, he was more than happy to take Abiathar into his band and provide for his protection. Abiathar served as the high priest during all of David's reign when king.

However, David was indeed ultimately responsible for the murder of those 85 priests; it was through his lies to Ahimelech that the priest didn't realise what he was doing when he assisted David. Yet David confessed his sins, as he did on this occasion to Abiathar. This readiness to confess his sin was a hallmark of David's life. Yes, he sinned many times, but he always confessed to God. Surely this was one of the many reasons why he was called a 'man after God's own heart'.

While David was suffering the uncertainty of where he should live with his men to avoid death at Saul's hand, his sins caused suffering to others too. Can we hope to escape suffering of any sort in this life? Most of us can accept the idea of suffering, especially when it comes as a consequence of bad behaviour. We don't have a problem with that. What we do have a problem with is when bad things happen to people who are godly or don't deserve it. It's not so much suffering in itself that troubles us; it's undeserved suffering.

There are two outstanding examples of righteous people going through undeserved suffering in the Bible. The first, Job, a blameless and upright man was doing right. In fact, Job was doing so well spiritually that God actually boasted about him up in Heaven. Then one day, without warning, the bottom dropped out of Job's world. The problem for poor Job was that he had never read the book of Job! He had to live through it in real time. And all Job knew was that one day when he woke up, everything bad that could ever happen to him, happened – followed by even more bad things.

Sometimes God will use the worst situations to accomplish the best in our lives. During times of complete downturns and weakness, it's then that we must fully trust Him for deliverance and restoration. If you have faith, your faith will grow stronger while persevering through very tough times. If your faith doesn't grow stronger as times get tougher, you need to ask yourself what kind of faith you have. A faith that cannot be tested and proven established is a faith that cannot be trusted. If your faith cannot survive adversity, then your faith isn't real or deep enough.

It's through adversity that real faith grows stronger, and Job continued to trust God despite losing everything and being in immense pain. Job showed that he really was the man of integrity that God said that he was.

The other righteous person who suffered terribly was the Lord Jesus Himself when He lived on earth. Jesus was God in human flesh, yet sinless and all-knowing. It was not right or fair that He be flogged and then nailed to a rough wooden cross so that every person prepared to trust Him with their lives could be redeemed of their sin and reconciled back to God their loving heavenly Father. But there was no one else righteous enough to pay the price of our sin and the curse of death in this world. Jesus was the only one who could unlock the gate of heaven and let us in.

Apart from the physical suffering the Lord Jesus endured, the intense grief He must have suffered when His own Heavenly Father turned His back on Him while on the cross, bearing the whole world's sin on His shoulders. The fellowship that Jesus and His Father had always had since before the foundation of the world was broken by your and my sin. But Jesus was faithful and true to His Father's will, so Jesus is now exalted higher in heaven than all others in that realm.

Jesus' victorious death and resurrection gave Him the right to sit at His Father's right side as the heir to all things while all earthly prophecies are fulfilled. In the book of Revelation, Chapter 5, the Apostle John saw future events in heaven. At one point, John saw 24 elders worship Jesus, crying out: "You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power; for You created all things, and by Your will they exist and were created."

John also saw a scroll written on both sides but sealed with 7 seals. An angel called out, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?" No one in heaven but the Lord Jesus, who has been slain and His blood shed for the remission of human sin, was found worthy.

Following this, it was revealed to John the predictions of what would happen during the end times on the earth. John recorded everything down in the book of Revelation for people to read and study. God warns that perilous times are coming. Yet so many people are totally ignorant of the great sorrows to come on those who are rebellious and unrighteous. Every day, confess your sins to the Lord Jesus Christ and ask for forgiveness. Don't let yourself be deceived by untrue teachings not found in the Bible. Pray and intercede on behalf of others that you know are not ready to meet their Lord yet.

In Revelation Chapter 19 Verse 1b a great crowd of people in heaven say: "Praise God! Salvation and glory and honour and power belong to the Lord our God!"

The drama is from The Bible In Living Sound.

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