

# Bible Stories Alive for All the World

Originally written and told by Kitty Anna Griffiths  
Edited and expanded by Gerald Griffiths

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## From Friday to Friday

My wife and I were blessed with eleven grandchildren. They all listened to her Bible stories and loved them. One day she asked them which story they loved best, and one of them said, "The story of Jesus on the cross." This is the most important of all stories, and we should tell all of it to children and young people. This means that we should tell the whole story of the last week of the life of Jesus.

As you know, we are writing Bible stories for translation and telling in eight languages, in partnership with Trans World Radio Canada. Our aim is to provide the translators and storytellers with the details stated and implied in the Bible. This will help them to tell Bible stories which are true to the facts and the teaching of Scripture and reach the hearts of children and young people. It is then the storyteller's job to adapt the stories to the age, language, and culture of their listeners.

We want children to hear and understand what happened during this last, all-important week of the suffering and death of the Lord Jesus. The first story will take them from Friday to Sunday. We have printed it here for you.

### From Friday to Sunday

## Jesus Enters Jerusalem as the Promised King

It was Friday. Jesus set out from Jericho to attend the Feast of Passover in Jerusalem, and a great crowd followed Him. After seven hours of walking, mostly uphill, Jesus arrived in the village of Bethany. It was late in the day. Soon the sun would go down and the Sabbath day would begin. So Jesus stopped and spent the Sabbath in Bethany. When the Sabbath ended at sundown (on Saturday), a friend called Simon made a dinner to honour Jesus.

Jesus' twelve followers were at the dinner, so were Jesus' friends Martha and Mary and their brother Lazarus – Jesus had recently raised Lazarus from the dead. Martha served the food, and Mary gave great honour to Jesus. At special dinners, Jews poured perfume on the heads of guests to honour them. Mary had bought a very expensive perfume to honour Jesus.

Mary went to where Jesus was eating at the table. She held in her hand an alabaster jar full of this very expensive perfume. The jar had a slender neck. Instead of opening it at the top, Mary broke off the neck of it and poured the perfume on Jesus' head. What was left she poured on His feet. She even dried His feet with her hair. Mary showed Jesus great devotion and homage as if He was a king.

When Jesus' followers saw what Mary had done, they were angry. "Why was this perfume wasted like this?" they muttered to each other. And they spoke sharply to Mary. Judas Iscariot complained, "This perfume was worth a whole year's wages! It should have been sold and the money given to poor people!"

But Judas never did anything to help the poor. He was a greedy man and a thief. Jesus and His twelve put their money together in one bag. Part of the money was to be given to the poor. Judas always carried this bag and he stole from it.

Jesus told Judas and His other followers, "You will always have the poor with you and you can help them

at any time. But you will not always have me. Leave this woman alone! She has done a good deed for me. When she poured this perfume on me she prepared my body to be buried." The Jews put perfume on the body of their loved ones when they died. Jesus was going to die soon on a cross. Mary would not be able to cover His body with perfume then. So instead, she showed Him great honour and love by pouring such expensive perfume on Him at the dinner. "She did what she could," Jesus said. "She poured perfume on my body beforehand."

It was now Sunday morning. Jesus got ready to go into Jerusalem. The road from Bethany sloped up to the top of the mountain, the Mount of Olives, and down on the other side to Jerusalem. It was a walk of about two miles, but Jesus was not going to walk. Jesus was going to enter Jerusalem as God's king.

The Bible had said that God's king would come to Jerusalem as a humble, gentle person, riding on a young donkey (Zechariah 9:9).

So Jesus said to two of His followers, "Go to the village there in front of you. As you go in, you will find a young donkey tied up. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, 'Why are you taking the donkey?' tell him, 'The Master needs it.'" The two followers went and found the donkey just as Jesus had said, and they took it to Him. Then they threw their coats on its back as a saddle, and Jesus sat on the donkey.

As Jesus rode on towards Jerusalem, the crowd following Him grew quickly. Many people came from Jerusalem to welcome Jesus. They knew that He had raised Lazarus from the dead, and they wanted to meet Jesus. The crowd spread their coats like a carpet on the road in front of Jesus. This was to say, "Jesus, You are our king!" (2 Kings 9:13). Others cut branches from the palm trees and spread them on the road.

Jesus was now on the downward slope to Jerusalem.

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Photo taken from the base of the Mount of Olives, looking towards Jerusalem's Old City Wall.

Some of the crowd were walking in front of Him and some were behind. All were shouting joyfully, "God bless the king who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest heaven!"

Some Pharisees were upset because the crowd was calling Jesus king. They said to Jesus, "Teacher, tell Your followers not to say these things!"

But Jesus answered, "I tell you, if my followers don't say these things, the stones around here will shout." That is, the stones would shout, "Jesus is king!" Jesus must be called king.

The crowd and Jesus' twelve special followers thought that Jesus had come to set them free from their enemies, the Romans. But Jesus had come to do something much greater: to set people free from their sins.

Jesus came closer to Jerusalem and He saw the city. The splendid buildings! The majestic Temple! It dazzled in the sunshine with its sun-white marble walls and sparkling gold! It all looked glorious.

But Jesus' eyes filled with tears. He knew what was going to happen to the city and to the people in it. He cried out to the people, "I wish that you knew today what would bring you peace. But you cannot see it. Your enemies will completely destroy your city and everybody in it. And they will tear down your buildings until there is not one stone standing on another. All this will happen

because you did not know the time when God came to save you."

God had sent Jesus to save His people, the Jews. If they had accepted Jesus, God would have forgiven their sins and welcomed them into His family. Jesus had warned the Jews, "If you don't change your hearts and your lives, you will be destroyed" (Luke 13:3). Yet, most of the Jews did not listen. They rejected Jesus.

Now Jesus saw the terrible punishment that would come to the Jews and their city. His heart was so broken that He burst into tears.

*Question: What does this story tell you about Jesus?*

(This story was put together from Matthew 21:1-11, 26:6-13; Mark 11:1-10, 14:3-9; Luke 19:28-44; John 12:1-19.)

## Those Who Tell Bible Stories Need Help

The story you have just read is a story children can enjoy. More importantly, it is a story which shows them what Jesus is like. He did not enter Jerusalem on a war horse. He came humbly on a donkey, as a gentle person, a man of peace. The picture of Jesus bursting into tears shows His loving heart. Jesus loves everybody even though they reject Him. Jesus wants everybody to be saved.

Every word of this story is true to what the Bible says. But it took time to put it all together. We had to collect passages from Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and fit them together like a jigsaw puzzle to get the whole story. Now it is ready for the storyteller to tell.

In order to tell children the full story of the cross, we will begin with Jesus' triumphant entrance into Jerusalem. Then we will follow the story, day by day, until Jesus shouts triumphantly from the cross, with His dying breath, "IT IS FINISHED." The story of the cross is a big story, and we plan to tell it in a series that will reach the hearts of children.

To do this demands close knowledge of Scripture and its background, and the available time to think and pray. Not everyone can do this. It is our goal as a ministry to write Bible stories to assist Bible storytellers who need help.

If you would like to read these, we would be glad to send them to you by email from time to time. Please send your email to [info@biblestoriesalive.org](mailto:info@biblestoriesalive.org). If you know of others who would like to have these stories, please ask them to email us. Thank you for your prayers and partnership with us.

Yours in Christ,

**Gerald Griffiths, President**

## A Wide Open Door

Every Saturday morning 700 children in Kenya listen to Bible Stories Alive in Swahili. All we have done is to send the script to a gifted African lady and her TWR staff. They have done everything else. This can be done in many other languages. Please pray.

### Prayer and Praise

- For all TWR's translators and storytellers.
- For the Arabic team who are now completing the Bible stories for distribution.
- For the printed stories in Farsi that have been distributed.
- For new talent to form a new team to carry on our expanding ministry.

## Donations:

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