



Bible Stories Alive for All the World

First Version written and told by Kitty Anna Griffiths

Second Version written by Gerald Griffiths

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Ministry Updates

Persian

The Persian team of Trans World Radio Canada has now printed in colour four of our books (1,000 copies each). They were printed by a courageous Christian printer and will be distributed by a network of house churches. These will be of great help to children and adults.

Ethiopia

SIM Ethiopia will digitize Mrs. G's books, printed in Amharic 30 years ago, to meet the demand for her

stories. Also, a denomination founded by SIM will use Mrs. G's voiced stories and digitize her English and Amharic books. This project will reach 100,000 school children from elementary to high school. These children could well become future Christian leaders in Ethiopia and beyond.

Helping to Teach Bible Stories Fully to Children

Here is a sample story written for children to be adapted by teachers for their listeners.

Jesus Washes His Followers' Feet

John 13:1-17, 34 made clear for teaching children

It was the day before the Passover Festival. Jesus knew that the time had come for Him to leave this world and go back to God His Father in heaven. While He was in this world, He had always loved His twelve special followers, and He loved them to the very end. Jesus and His followers were now having supper together.

The devil had already put it into the heart of one of Jesus' followers to turn against Him. His name was Judas Iscariot. Jesus knew this, but Jesus still loved Judas.

The supper was a Passover Supper.¹ Jesus and His followers were not sitting on chairs, with their feet under a table, as we do. They were resting on thin mats on the floor, around a low table. They were leaning on one arm, keeping the other hand free to take the food from the low table. Their feet were spread out away from the table, like a circle of bare feet.

Jesus knew that His Father had given Him power over everything. He knew that He had come from God and He was going back to God. He knew how great He was. Yet, He now humbled Himself.

Jesus got up from the table and took off His outer clothes, so that He was dressed only in His tunic like a servant. He took a towel and wrapped it around His waist. He poured water into a bowl. Then He went back to His followers and began to wash their feet and dry them with the towel.

His followers were shocked. Only the lowest of servants washed people's feet from the dust of the dusty roads. Yet Jesus, their Lord, was now lowering Himself as a servant to wash their feet. His followers were

stunned. Nobody spoke until Jesus came to Peter. When Jesus bent down to wash Peter's feet, Peter asked Him, "Lord, are *You* going to wash *my* feet?"

Jesus answered, "You don't understand now what I am doing, but you will understand later."

Peter thought that what Jesus was doing was not proper. No master ever washed the feet of His servants. Peter couldn't bear to see His Lord and Master bowing down like a servant to wash his feet. Peter said to Jesus, "No! You shall never wash my feet!"

Jesus said, "If I don't wash you, you won't belong to me."

Peter now knew that the washing Jesus was talking about had a spiritual meaning: If Jesus did not wash him from his sins, Peter could not belong to Jesus. So Peter said to Jesus, "Then, Lord, do not wash only my feet. Wash my hands and my head as well."

Jesus said to him, "A person who has had a bath is completely clean, and he does not have to wash himself, except his feet [when they are dirty]." When Jesus washed their feet, it pointed to the complete cleansing from evil which Jesus would give by dying on the cross. And all who trust in Him receive this cleansing.

Jesus said to His twelve followers, "All of you are clean – except one." Jesus knew that Judas Iscariot had turned against Him. When Jesus said to His other followers, "You are clean", He meant that their sins were forgiven forever.

After this, they would still do bad things at times, as we all do. But God will cleanse us from every evil thing if we admit our sins and ask Him to forgive us.²

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Now Jesus had something else to say to His followers. When He had finished washing their feet, He put on His outer clothes and went back to the table. He asked them, "Do you understand what I have done for you? You call Me 'Teacher' and 'Lord', and you are right, for that is what I am. Then if I, as your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash each other's feet. I have given you an example so that you should do for each other what I have done for you. I am telling you the truth: no servant is greater than his master."

Jesus was saying: Because He, as their master, had humbled Himself to serve them and save them, they should humble themselves to serve and help each other.

Jesus said, "If you do this, you will be happyAnd now I give you a new commandment: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another." Jesus loved us so much that He died for us on the cross. And we must love and serve each other, even when it costs us a lot.

The Bible says, "...as often as we have the chance,

we should do good to everyone, especially those in the family of the faith."³ When we put our trust in Jesus, we join a new family. We have new brothers and sisters, and we must love them all. We must always love and help each other. The Bible says, "Get rid of all bitterness, passion, and anger. No more shouting and insults, no more hateful feelings of any sort. Instead, be kind and tender-hearted to one another, and forgive one another, as God has forgiven you through Christ."⁴

¹ Luke 22:15

² 1 John 1:9

³ Galatians 6:10 (Good News Bible)

⁴ Ephesians 4:31-32 (Good News Bible)

This story will be sent to Trans World Radio Canada for translation into Spanish for broadcasting on TWR stations in South America. The story will also be sent to Trans World Radio Kenya for broadcasting in Swahili. A gifted African producer will adapt the story for her listeners, and then tell it and make it come alive.

Lives Are Changed by the Swahili Broadcasts

Parents and children love the stories. One mother writes, "The Bible says that parents are to instruct their children using the Scriptures, and I am so grateful for the help of your program." Another parent says, "Ever since the program was introduced, we have enjoyed it as parents. Our children have learned how to be kind to others, to respect elderly people, and help us as parents with chores at home. They have grown." Another parent writes, "Your stories are making my boy grow up as a godly young man."

Children and teens also comment. "I've come to understand that believing in Jesus Christ is a wonderful and wise thing." A teenager writes, "The tale of

Jesus is incredibly touching. I keep on listening to it. I am a child of God. Thank you."

Another comment from a parent. "As a parent, I must confess that this show has significantly impacted my children since they began listening. I am thrilled, and I know they are growing because they understand that Christ is the centre of everything. Thank you for this amazing program. Thank you for thinking of our children. May your pockets never dry as you continue spreading the word to the small ones. God bless you."

If God can do this in Swahili with the stories that we write for children, He can do it in every other language.

Our Goals

1. To make our Swahili stories available to missionaries and national pastors in East Africa. One estimate suggests that almost 100 million people speak Swahili.
2. To repeat in other languages what we are now doing in Swahili.
3. To write all the stories about Jesus and told by Jesus for teachers to adapt for their listeners.
4. To make the stories available in English to all who tell Bible stories. Our aim is to help to tell stories which are true to Scripture and which grip children

so that they may believe in Jesus Christ as their Saviour and serve Him as their Lord.

Billions of children have never heard the name of Jesus, and God is calling us to tell them the Good News about Jesus in many languages. We value your prayers and support.

Thank you for reading this report. The Lord bless you as you celebrate the Saviour's birth.



Gerald Griffiths, President

Donations:

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NEW: You may now e-Transfer to mrsg@biblestoriesalive.org

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