

## **Joshua & the Book**

Joshua was a tall black man, a Zulu in Africa. He wore a long, white robe, and always carried a Bible in his hand or under his arm. But Joshua was in prison.

One day, a few years ago, a Christian man visited the prison. He asked to have a talk with Joshua. The jailer brought the prisoner into the reception room. Joshua squatted down on the floor in front of the gentleman, as is the custom of the natives of Africa at that time.

"Why are you in this prison?" the man asked.

"I was working in a coal mine," said Joshua, "and there a voice came to me, saying, 'Joshua, you must go out and preach to your people.' But I said to this voice, 'I cannot read well, I am not able to write, I have no clothes to wear.' For three years after that I was unable to speak aloud. Then the same voice came to me again. 'Yes, I will go,' I said. Then my voice was partly restored."

"But what brought you here?" the gentleman asked.

"I was preaching in the north of Zululand, near the coast," he replied, "and there I told the people that times of trouble were before us, and there would be war and bloodshed. Some of my enemies told the white government that I was stirring up sedition. The country had just had a Zulu rebellion, so the officers took me and put me in prison."

"Joshua, what gospel do you teach? Where do you get your message?" the man asked.

Joshua opened his Bible to the fourteenth chapter of Revelation, and read from the sixth to the twelfth verses. "This," he said, "is the message the voice told me to preach."

The gentleman knew that this was God's message for these last days. He was astonished to find a Zulu in this prison who had no education, but who was preaching this truth to his own people whenever he had opportunity.

"How do you preach that gospel?" the gentleman asked.

"I now speak with a whisper," Joshua answered. "But when I was in Zululand, the Spirit of God came down upon me, and God gave me a strong voice to speak to thousands of natives. No white people live in that neighborhood."

"Did any of your people believe your message?" the man asked.

"There were hundreds who changed their habits and were leading different lives," Joshua answered. "Where my knees rest on the ground when I pray no grass grows."

"What kind of man is Joshua?" the gentleman asked the jailer, as he was leaving the prison.

"He is the best man we have had in prison," the jailer replied. "We had a lunatic here who would not permit us to bring his food into the cell. We put Joshua in with him. Joshua would sit in his cell reading the Bible. The lunatic would rush at him as if about to tear him in pieces, but Joshua would not lift his eyes from the Bible. He would keep on reading. The second or third day this lunatic said to him, 'Do you enjoy that Book?' Then Joshua began to explain to him what is in the Bible, and that lunatic was converted there in prison, and to-day he is a changed man."

So far as we know, Joshua is still preaching this truth. Does not this experience show how God can carry His truth to every dark corner in this world?