

Sleeping with a Snake

by Celene Melenciano

Good morning boys and girls Happy Sabbath. I hope you guys had a wonderful Thanksgiving week that you enjoyed your dinner and your family and your friends.

Today I want to talk to you about Merritt. Merritt was enjoying a really nice now, you know, on the field by a creek, it was just a very nice day the sun was shining. And he thought this is an amazing Sabbath. I really, you know, I have my Bible with me. I've done my worship, and I might take a little nap here. So he did. He was taking a little nap and enjoying the sun. When all of a sudden in his dream, he heard this sssssssssss sound in his dream, he was thinking what was making a weird noise and again, he heard it, sssssssssssss. So he finally opened his eyes. He was kind of drowsy, of course, because he has taken his nap. But he saw a big snake head hissing right at him. And it was probably about three inches away from his face. And this thing was probably three inches wide, five inches long. That was just the size of the head. It was a big head. And when he finally realized, you know, oh my goodness, he jumped up and started hitting that snake until he killed it. And then when he finally kind of calmed down, he looked back, he looked at the snake and the snake was about six feet tall, which is bigger than me because I'm only five feet tall. So he was so happy. Nothing happened to him that he was fine. He's like, Oh my goodness, a snake just messed up my nice nap. But he was happy that it didn't bite him and he was fine.

He picked up his Bible, and he had a rifle with him and his lunch and he continued to walk. Now this was back in 1859. And Merritt was only 27 years old. He was from Michigan, that's where he lived. He decided to sell his home and just keep his wagon and his horses and some pots and pans and things needed for a trip and loaded his wagon with his family and decided to move to California. It was about the time it was a time of the gold rush back in those days. So as he was traveling, he met a captain, Captain Parks who needed a wagon to help him move his things to California because he was going to the gold rush too. I think they were all looking for gold. So Merritt, okay, I will help you. We can use my wagon. But he said, Let's make a contract because I am Seventh-day Adventist is that's my faith. And on Sabbath. I keep it holy and I rest so Captain Parks went ahead and signed the contract. And everybody with them signed the contract because he had other people with him. And at the beginning on Sabbath, they would stop and rest. But then and very soon actually Captain parks forgot about it. And he just kept saying no, we gotta keep going by keep going. You gotta reach California, and Merritt said but remember that we made a contract, we rest on Sabbath. And Captain kept saying no, no, no, we have to go.

So he spoke to his wife and scared her you convinced her that they couldn't just leave the wagon there. It was very dangerous. So they continued on that Sabbath day to move in the wagon with the people. But Merritt did not go he stayed behind with his Bible with one rifle and his lunch. And that's where we find him in the story. You know, taking that nap. So he got up after his scare with a snake after his little nap and he continued trying following the trail over the wagon the people have gone in front of him that morning.

And as he was going there was a wolf that showed up and he was so scared but remember he had a rifle so he shot up in the air and scared the wolf. And he continued to walk a little bit later another two wolves showed up and again they were following his trail when you know they were looking for him they might have been hungry. But Merritt again shot his rifle in the air and completely scared them. And so they left him alone. And right after that. He just ran. It was already sunset so he just ran ran ran ran until he reached the trail the wagon that had left him in the morning. So he ran from sundown all the way to about 10:30 at night, which is when he reached everybody in the wagon.

Merritt and his family, they were the first Adventists in California. And he was super happy, you know that he was there that he could share his faith with others. After some time though, he went back to the east, the East Coast and decided to become a doctor. So as a doctor, he had a bit more influence and was able to send missionaries to California, and start a little church. He then went back to California himself, and started the first Seventh-day Adventist church in the state of California. Him and his brother both became doctors. He was a doctor and his brother John was a doctor. And then he also had a brother, Will. Well, his brother John, who was a doctor and his brother Will invented what we know now as Corn Flakes. And then altogether, the brothers began the Kellogg company, that you probably know for corn flakes and a bunch of other cereals that we eat now.

So just to let you know, Merritt's last name is Kellogg, Merritt Kellogg. And he was one of the pioneers in starting that corn flake company, so that we could have something better, more nutritious to eat.

Just a little story, boys and girls remind you that even though we might have a lot of changes in our lives, that things might scare us. Because things are different. We have to move we have to make all these changes. God is always with us. God was with Merritt took care of his family and that whole trip from Michigan to California. He took care of Merritt when he was by himself there with the snake with the woods. And then with Captain Park, who never again asked to travel on a Saturday after that time, and he was very much welcoming and respecting of the seventh day with Merritt and his family. So just remember that God always gives us what we need because He loves us, and He protects us at all times. And guess what? We enjoy your corn flakes.

Let's bow our heads for prayer. Dear Heavenly Father, we thank you so much for the beautiful day for the beautiful week, for allowing us to spend time with their families and with our friends and to have a little reminder to be grateful to you for all that you give in all that you do for us. Please stay with these boys and girls this week and protect them from anything they may encounter. Your name we pray, amen.

Bye boys and girls. Have a great weekend.