



We all love a story. Film stories are usually about the important things in life – good and evil, love and friendship, finding meaning and purpose. Often there is a message in a film story which goes further than the story itself. Next time you watch a film, think hard. What view of the world – of right and wrong, of meaning and purpose – is the film showing? Can you see other meanings too?

things that must happen...  
**FREE** every three months  
**soon!** No. 172  
 The SOON paper — helping to make sense of life

## Film changes student's life

Watching a film changed Kentaro's life. It happened when he was a student living far away from his family and home.

Five years earlier, when he was studying at a university in his own country of Japan, Kentaro met some Christians. He was **impressed** with all that they told him about Jesus and taught him about the Bible. After he finished his course at university, he married and soon they had a baby daughter. At this time he lost all contact with his Christian friends.

Five years after he had finished his university course, he went for **further** studies in Sheffield, England. His wife and daughter stayed in Japan. While he was studying, his wife became ill. They were both worried.

Kentaro became friends with a Christian man in Sheffield. His new friend invited him to see a film in Japanese, along with other students from Japan. The film was called *Jesus* and was about the life of Jesus. He learned that Jesus was a friend to people who were sad and lonely. He healed sick people and helped them. He was killed by the rulers of that time but he did not stay dead. Three days after he died, he came back to life again. Now he is alive in **heaven**.

As he watched the film, Kentaro remembered the things he heard from his Christian friends in Japan. "The film reminded me of many things I used to read in the Bible," he says. He saw how Jesus told the people not to worry, he would take care of them. As Kentaro thought about his wife, he **realised** Jesus could help her.

Kentaro began to study the Bible again with his new Christian friends. They answered his questions gently and did not **force** him to accept their ideas.

On 12 March 2000, Kentaro began to tell people that he now believed Jesus was his special friend. The film had showed him that this was possible. He knew that Jesus would help his sick wife too, even though she was far away in Japan. He now says, "I am very sure that I have been led to Jesus and I can ask God for my family to be led to Jesus too."



### Words for English learners

- impress(ed):** like or respect something or someone you see or hear
- further:** more
- heaven:** the place where God is. Jesus offers us a free place in heaven - we cannot earn it
- realise(d):** understand and take as a fact
- force:** make you do something you do not want to do
- convince(d):** be sure something is true
- mercy:** not receiving the punishment we deserve

## and others say . . .

**Malawi:** the *Jesus* film was shown one time in a field of maize stalks. Two young men saw the film, then one said, "We have killed many people, young and old, ever since we began practising witchcraft. We ask Jesus to forgive us and make in us a new heart".

**A city in South Asia:** a police inspector writes, "My wife and I were very happy to see the *Jesus* film. We were **convinced** and now believe that Jesus suffered for our sins."

**A village in South-east Asia:** "A group came into my village to show the *Jesus* film. One night, I went and watched secretly from the back. I saw how Jesus, a sinless man and God, suffered for all men. God changed me and I shouted with a loud voice, 'Jesus, have **mercy** on me, I am a sinner.'"

**Chile:** 65-year-old Luisa writes, "My biggest desire was to kill myself. I went to the *Jesus* film without much hope. I began to watch the film in the open air. Now I feel happiness and I want to live, but in a different way. I am still poor but I have hope that Jesus helps me each moment."

Send to SOON, Willington, Derby, DE65 6BN, England, or to a forwarding postbox in your nearest country (do not write to more than one):

- **India & Nepal:** SOON, POB 8436, Bangalore 560 084, India
- **CIS:** СНГ, 125047 РОССИЯ, Г. МОСКВА, А/Я 34, SOON
- **Ukraine:** 95000 Симферополь, А/Я 1334, SOON
- **Albania:** SOON, Kutia Postare No 23, Korçë, Albania
- **by email:** mail@soon.org.uk
- **Nigeria:** SOON, PO Box 9050, Enugu, Enugu State, Nigeria
- **South Africa:** SOON, PO Box 10288, Ashwood 3605, Natal, South Africa
- **Philippines:** SOON, ACPD Box 450, Cubao 1109, Quezon City, Philippines
- **China:** SOON, PO Box 73261, Kowloon Central Post Office, Kowloon, Hong Kong

Put your name and address below in CAPITAL LETTERS with letters like these



### Free papers and Study Course for You

Please write 'YES' next to what you want (you can ask for both).

- Copies of SOON
- A SOON Bible Course by post

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Your full postal address: \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_

WRITE IN BIG CLEAR LETTERS. ONE LETTER IN EACH BOX. If you have a postcode, fill it in.

172

## NEW SONG FOR FILM SINGER

The Indian film industry is the biggest in the world – it made over 800 new films last year. Indian film stories often use singing, but film stars do not always have good singing voices. Also film soundtracks are often **dubbed** into several languages. So the songs are recorded by 'playback singers' and the actors **mimic** the words in the film. In India, playback singers are as popular as the film actors.

Vijay Benedict is one of Bollywood's favourite playback singers. In 1981 he finished a course in Business Management, but he loved music. "I was singing in many places when I got the chance to sing in films in Mumbai," he says. His first film was *Disco Dancer*. He provided the singing voice for the **leading character**, played by actor Mithun Chakraborty. The film was very successful: Chakraborty and Benedict won many **awards**. Vijay went on to sing in 40 other films and became popular across India.



### DEATH HITS FAMILY

Then came **tragedy** – Vijay's brother died. "My brother's death just kept me thinking that if he could die, so could I," he remembers. "There had to be something more." Then Vijay discovered that it is possible to know Jesus as a friend. He was no longer alone. "That was the way to fullness of life," he says.

Vijay still works for Bollywood and on Indian TV, but now he also has a new interest – singing 'gospel music'. "In India, a lot of people see me on TV. Now they want to know why I'm singing gospel songs." He also travels around the world – recent trips have included Britain, Indonesia and a two-week tour of Australia.

Indian films are usually about the search for love and happiness. Vijay has now found this happiness with Jesus as his friend. He says this is much better than being famous and rich.

story and picture: Christian Herald

### Words for English learners

- dub/dubbed:** words (often in a different language) added later to film soundtrack
- mimic:** move the lips as if singing or talking
- (leading) character:** (most important) person in a story
- awards:** prizes
- tragedy:** something very bad and sad
- gospel music:** gospel means 'good news'. Music about the Christian good news.

### Filling in the coupon

ABCDEFGHIJKLMN OPQRSTUVWXYZ  
 1234567890 Write / as /

Every country has different ways of writing letters and numbers. Sometimes we cannot read the writing on the coupon. Please make letters and numbers exactly like these ones. Put one in each 'box'.

CIS readers may use Cyrillic letters for your address only. Please write what you want to say to us in English

- Send us this coupon (or write us a letter) and we will send you FREE copies of SOON for a year.
- Do you want us to send SOON to your friends? Write their names and addresses clearly on a separate piece of paper. Do NOT use the coupon for this.
- Would you like to know how to find real peace and happiness? There is a FREE postal Bible course for you to study. If you do well, you will receive a free certificate. Write 'YES' on the coupon.
- If you do not want to spoil your copy of SOON, write a letter to us without the coupon. Put your name, address & country clearly.

# 'The Green Mile'

WHO IS THIS  
MAN IN  
THE PRISON?



Who is John Coffey, the main character in this film, *The Green Mile*? We know that he is an African-American, in prison for murder, and waiting to be executed. (Michael Duncan **plays** this part in a very gentle way.) But why do the prison guards believe that he has done no wrong? One guard, Paul

Edgecomb (**played** by Tom Hanks), gets to know the man well, and is sure that he is **innocent**. Coffey even heals him from a painful illness. It seems that those who meet Coffey must make a choice about him, about the way that they see him. Who is he? There are some unusual things about him.

- He is gentle and kind.
- He hates evil.
- Yet he somehow takes evil back on himself.
- He is able to heal others.
- He sees into the hearts of men.

- He is punished by death for something he did not do.
- He accepts the punishment.
- People wait to see him killed and laugh at him. He dies a terrible death.
- There are two prisoners with him – one (called Delacroix) is sorry for what he has done, the other (Wharton) is not sorry.
- Yet somehow, he gives a new sort of life to those he meets.

Coffey is not an ordinary man. Even the first letters of his name – 'J.C.' – may make us think of someone else.

2700 years ago, a prophet wrote some strange and powerful words, about this same 'someone else' who would come later, a 'suffering servant'. (See his words below: *They killed the wrong man.*)



These words point to only one person – Jesus Christ. All these things happened to him exactly as they were written hundreds of years before. He too was punished by a wrong use of the law, in the same way as John Coffey. Yet we see that his suffering had a reason. Everything that we have done wrong – and all our sufferings and hurts too – were placed on Jesus. He took them – so we can go free. Completely free. Wonderfully free. Free from punishment for what we have done wrong. Free from the things that have hurt us in the past. Free from fear. Free from evil powers. Free from worry. Free from trying to 'earn' God's love and help, or a place in heaven. Free to be the 'real us' – the people we always wanted to be. It is a new life, waiting – just round the corner.

## They killed the *wrong* man

His servant grew up like (the same as) a small young plant.

He was like a root growing in dry ground. He did not have any beauty or **majesty** that made us notice him.

There was nothing special about the way he looked, that **drew** us to him.

Men **looked down** on him. They did not accept him. He knew all about sadness and suffering. He was like someone people turn their faces away from. We looked down on him. We did not have any respect for him.

He suffered the things we should have suffered. He took on himself the pain that should have been ours. But we thought God was punishing him. We thought God was wounding him and making him suffer. But he was given pain to suffer for the wrong things we did.

He was **crushed** for our guilt. A debt we owed – our punishment – was given to him. We were healed (forgiven) because of his pain. All of us are like sheep. We have gone away from God. All of us have turned to our own way. And the Lord has placed on his servant the sins of all of us.

He was beaten down and made to suffer. But he did not open his mouth.

He was led away like a sheep to be killed.

He was like a lamb that makes no sound when someone cuts off its wool.

He never opened his mouth to defend himself. Men used force and took him – and they did not judge him fairly.

He was cut off from this life.

He was punished to pay for the sins of my people. Who among those who were living at that time could understand those things?

He died and was buried with the rich. He was buried with evil men.

He was killed even though he had not hurt anyone. And he had never lied to anyone.

You can read these words in the Bible's book of Isaiah, chapter 53.

# 'SHOLAY'

INDIA'S MOST  
POPULAR FILM

"We will never let our friendship come to an end, no matter what happens."

These song words come from India's most popular film ever – *Sholay*, made in 1975. It brings together all the things that people like – an exciting story, fighting, love, sadness, popular music and beautiful photography. There was great acting from India's best film-stars (with Sanjeev Kumar as Thakur, Dharmendra as Veeru, Amitabh Bachchan as Jaidev, Amjad Khan as Gabbar and Hema Malinia as Basanti). In fact a second *Sholay* film is now planned!



The story begins when ex-policeman Thakur Baldev Singh asks two men to help him catch the dangerous and evil Gabbar Singh. This is the start of many adventures for these two heroes, Veeru and Jaidev. In one scene, Gabbar's men attack a village. Veeru and Jaidev need help to protect the village – and they get it from the beautiful Basanti – a brave woman driving a horse-drawn carriage. Together they fight the men away. Soon, Veeru falls in love with Basanti. When he goes to meet her one evening, he finds that she is captured by Gabbar's men. Jaidev helps Veeru to rescue the girl, but he is badly hurt. Telling Veeru to take the girl to safety, he



blows up a bridge and kills most of the enemy. Veeru returns to find his friend dying. Now that the evil Gabbar has no men to help him, he is caught by Thakur. Veeru is so sad about losing his friend that he decides to leave the town for ever, on a train. But there is a beautiful ending – in the train coach waiting for him, is his girl, Basanti.

### THE MESSAGE

The film is wonderful and exciting, but if we take time to think, it has another message for us. We can see how Thakur's wish to defeat Gabbar is the same as God's fight against evil and wrongdoing. Jaidev chooses to give his life to defeat evil and save Basanti. Then Veeru is able to have a love relationship with her. In the same way, Jesus gave his life so that we can be friends with God. This friendship is so special that the Bible says it is the same as marriage.

## Words for English learners

**plays/played:** here this means – act the part of a person in film or play

**innocent:** done nothing wrong

**majesty:** greatness – like a king

**drew:** pull – here it means to attract, to like

**look(ed) down on:** think that someone is not important, have no respect for a person

**crush:** squash, break into pieces

## FILM FACT FILE

- The world's first full-length film was *The Story of the Kelly Gang* made in Australia, 1906.
- The largest studios for making films are Hollywood Studios in Los Angeles, USA. But more films are made in India, in what is called 'Bollywood' – the studios in the Mumbai area.
- Film seen by the most people: the film *Jesus*, made in 1979, has been seen by over two billion people in their own language. It has been translated into over 600 languages.

## Marcia says



Toto Winarno

"What do these films mean?"

## FEBE Radio Programmes Indian subcontinent

Country	Language	Day	Time UTC*	Khz
N India/Pak	Urdu	every day	0200-0215	11640
N India/Pak	Urdu	every day	1400-1440	9485
N India/Nepal	Nepali	sm.....	1330-1345	15445
N India	Hindi	every day	0030-0100	7265
N India	Bangla	smtwt..	0100-0115	7265
N India	Punjabi	.mtwt..	1245-1300	15445
N India	Gujerati	every day	1315-1330	15445
N India	English	Friday	1445-1500	11600
S India/Lanka	Tamil	every day	0100-0145	7265
S India/Lanka	Tamil	every day	1330-1400	11880
S India/Lanka	Sinhala	every day	1330-1400	9795
S India	Telegu	every day	0130-0200	9465
S India	Malayalam	every day	1345-1415	15445
S India	Kannada	sm.wtf.	1500-1515	11600
S India/Lanka	English	every day	1515-or 1530-	11600

\*UTC (GMT) is not the same as local time. India time: usually 5½ hours ahead, so 0030 UTC is 0600 local time. Programmes not every day are shown by letters of day: smtwtfs.

FEBE broadcasts at other times in these languages and many other Asian languages.

Details on Web: [www.feba.org.uk/schedule/brodschd.htm](http://www.feba.org.uk/schedule/brodschd.htm)

## helping us... helping you... helping them...

### Use the right stamps!

When you write to us, please place the correct value of stamps on your letter. If you do not do this, your letter may not reach us.

It will take 3 or 4 months for your first copy of *SOON* to reach you by surface mail.

### Tell us!

This is your magazine. What would you like to read in *SOON*? What would help you?

### The Internet

*SOON* is available on computer via the Internet: [www.soon.org.uk](http://www.soon.org.uk)

To receive *SOON* by email, send a blank email to: [soon-subscribe@soon.org](mailto:soon-subscribe@soon.org)

To request copies of *SOON* to be posted to you, write to: [mail@soon.org.uk](mailto:mail@soon.org.uk) with your postal address.

We also recommend: **Powerto Change** in many languages: [www.powertochange.com](http://www.powertochange.com) **IamNext** for teens: [www.iamnext.com](http://www.iamnext.com)

### SOON in other languages

If you are learning or can speak:

- French
- German (Der Weg)
- Gujarati
- Italian
- Nepali
- Portuguese
- Russian
- Shona
- Swahili
- Urdu

write for free copies.

### Help your friends

● When you have read your copies of *SOON*, give them to your friends.

● Would you like us to post *SOON* to your friends? Send us their names and address.

Please also send us addresses of English teachers.

● Would you like to have more copies of *SOON* to give to your friends? Tell us how many copies you would like each time.

### Teachers

Can you use *SOON* in your class to teach English? Tell us how many copies you need. Please also send us addresses of teachers magazines in your country.

### Learners

Look at Words for English learners. Write each word in a sentence of your own to practice your English. Do not send your answers to us—show them to your English teacher, if you have one.