

I Dream of Jeannie

Back in the late 1960s, I enjoyed watching *I Dream of Jeannie*, a fantasy sitcom television series starring Barbara Eden as a 2,000-year-old genie and Larry Hagman as an astronaut who became her master, with whom she falls in love and eventually marries.

The show originally aired from Sept. 18, 1965, until May 26, 1970. A total of 139 episodes were produced.

In the pilot episode, *The Lady in the Bottle*, astronaut captain Tony Nelson, United States Air Force, is on a space flight when his one-man capsule *Stardust One* comes down far from the planned recovery area near a deserted island in the South Pacific.

On the beach, Tony notices a strange bottle that rolls by itself. When he rubs it after removing the stopper, smoke starts shooting out, and a Persian-speaking female genie materializes and kisses Tony on the lips, shocking him. That's how their relationship in the series began.

In one episode, Tony's friend Roger wanted Jeannie to do her genie magic and produce a copy of a current newspaper. Aiming to please, she said she would, but she needed to know the day's date. Roger told her the date, and with that, she blinked her eyes and a paper magically appeared.

Roger turned to the sports page and started reading. Soon, he realized he had given Jeannie tomorrow's date, and what he was looking at were the results of that evening's races at the dog track before they had even been run.

Roger quickly made his way to the track and placed bets on dogs he knew were going to win. A big payout was guaranteed.

Of course, the television show was entertaining, but fictitious. The principle that episode portrayed, however, holds true in real life. What's that? you say.

When we know something in advance, we act with greater assurance and confidence. For example, take these words of Jesus:

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. I and the Father are one (John 10:27-30 ESV).

What blessed assurance and a confidence-builder for the people in the Lord's family!

Christians can live with full faith in God, knowing their present and eternity are in the hands of their heavenly Father. That comes by grace, through faith that Jesus is the Son of God and by surrendering one's life to Him as Lord.