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BIBLE ADVENTURES SCRIPT:

A1650 ~ Jesus Talks with Moses and Elijah.

Welcome to Bible Adventures. Help for today. Hope for tomorrow. Jesus is Lord of all.

In today's Bible Adventure, we'll be looking at the 'glory of God'. The term 'glory of God' in the Bible generally refers to the beauty of God as described by His numerous and varied perfections. God is full of all goodness. His glory is the perfect harmony of all His attributes into one very beautiful and awe-inspiring being.

In the Old Testament, 'glory' points to the greatness of God's very bright appearance! In the New Testament, however, glorifying God meant to acknowledge His greatness and give Him honour with praise and worship, because He and He alone, deserves to be praised, honoured and worshipped.

We need to ask ourselves what is God's goal in the history of the universe – from its beginning at creation to its coming climax with a new heaven and a new earth. It would be very arrogant and ungrateful of us if we say we love Jesus yet not have a keen interest in what God's goals are. The Scriptures consistently teach that all the works of God have an ultimate goal of displaying God's glory.

In Isaiah, Chapter 42, God declares, "I am the Lord God. I created the heavens like an open tent above. I made the earth and everything that grows in it. I am the source of life for all who live on this earth, so listen to what I say." "I am the Lord, that is My name; And My glory I will not give to another, nor My praise to carved images."

In Isaiah, Chapter 46, God also declares, “I am God and there is no other; I am God and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times, things not yet done, saying, ‘My counsel shall stand and I will accomplish all My purpose’.” The enemies of God do not frustrate God’s decrees; they perform them. In Proverbs, Chapter 19, it says, “People may plan all kinds of things, but the Lord’s will is going to be done.”

After Jesus’ disciples had agreed that Jesus was really the Christ, Jesus taught them that He must suffer many things, including being rejected and killed, yet after 3 days he would rise again! At this point, Peter took Jesus aside and told Him such things as He was saying should never happen to the Christ. But Jesus openly rebuked Peter, because such thinking was not part of God’s plan and Peter didn’t know God’s plan for Jesus.

Jesus taught the people about living for self or living for God, and the difference this would make in this world and also the next. Jesus prophesied that some of the people standing around Him would not die before they had seen the Kingdom of God come with power. He was speaking about the Day of Pentecost.

Six days later, Jesus took Peter, James and John away from the rest of the group to climb up a high mountain to experience what is called ‘The Transfiguration’.

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The account of the Transfiguration of Jesus is recorded in Matthew 17, Mark 9 and Luke 9. Jesus often went away to pray to His Father, as prayer was an important part of His life. So there would be no interruptions, Jesus often sought a time and place away from the others where He could have some privacy. On top of the mountain, Jesus was praying when His face was changed and His clothing became dazzling white.

As this happened, the prophets Moses and Elijah appeared in majestic brightness and started talking with Jesus. Moses had been chosen by God to pass His Law onto the Children of Israel. Elijah on the other hand, was one of the most prominent prophets of the Old Testament. Together, they discussed with Jesus His coming death in Jerusalem.

What was the relationship between Jesus' death and the work of Moses and Elijah? His death ended the power of law revealed and taught by these Old Testament prophets. But these two men weren't hostile or opposed to Christ's death. Jesus' work was not a contradiction of what they had done but rather, a fulfilment of it and in complete harmony with God's plan as revealed through the Old Testament prophets. Evidently, Moses and Elijah understood the necessity of Jesus' death.

The external appearance of Jesus as He went about teaching the people was that of a humble carpenter. Yet Jesus' divine nature was inside Him. In Philippians, Chapter 2, it says: "He always had the nature of God, but he did not think that by force he should try to remain equal with God. Instead of this, of his own free will he gave up all he had, and took the nature of a servant. He became like a human being and appeared in human likeness. He was humble and walked the path of obedience all the way to death – his death on the cross."

Jesus' divine nature was hidden in a human body and His transfiguration on the mountain was just a glimpse of that glory. Jesus' transfiguration displayed the visible presence and glory of God possessing human form through His Son. When God spoke to the disciples at the transfiguration, it was a second time that He had commended Jesus out aloud to people. The first time was at Jesus' baptism, when Jesus entered into His public ministry through the work of John the Baptist.

Peter, James and John seem to feature as the most important of Jesus' disciples. Their names are mentioned more frequently in the New Testament than the others. They were also the three human witnesses to Jesus' transfiguration. The three heavenly witnesses were Moses, Elijah and the voice of God the Father. The keeping of the Old Testament law of having three witnesses was required as proof of the truth, which satisfied God on earth and also in heaven.

When Peter, James and John woke up from their sleep and saw the brilliant light before them, they were very frightened. Peter suggested to Jesus that they make three dwelling places for each of the great teachers. He didn't know what to say but what he did say was a mistake. If he had had time to fully understand the significance of the event, he would not have said as much. Peter likely put Moses and Elijah as being equal with Jesus. He also didn't want Moses and Elijah to go away but instead, stay on earth so people could benefit from their teaching. But Peter's thoughts weren't part of God's plan. Moses and Elijah disappeared, leaving Jesus only. God instructed the three disciples to listen to Jesus, not Moses or Elijah.

Jesus was bringing in a new covenant that was different from the Old Testament one. Many people make the same mistake as Peter. They want to bind together the New Testament with parts of the Old one. Yet Jesus' teaching is not in conflict with that of Moses and Elijah and it isn't an addition to their words. We do not follow the commands given through Moses and then the commands given through Jesus. Rather, we are to listen to Jesus only.

God caused the change in Jesus' appearance and the presence of Moses and Elijah as signs that God was speaking through Jesus, just as surely as He had spoken through the prophets in previous times. This was a miraculous confirmation of Jesus' work. Those three disciples should never again doubt that Jesus' words were from God Himself. As they trekked down the mountain side, Jesus warned the three not to tell anyone what they had seen until after He had risen from the dead.

The new covenant teaching that Jesus brought into the world is listed in John, Chapter 13: “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another as I have loved you, that you also love one another.” We are to care for and to watch out for the good of our neighbours, family and friends. Jesus said: “By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you love one another.”

Showing love for others is one way to glorify God. In Philippians, Chapter 1, it says: “And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent, in order that you may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruits of righteousness, which come through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.”

As well as being disciplined and self-controlled, believers in the Lord Jesus are to check that all their conduct shows the characteristics of God and so displays Christ to those around them.

The best known text about this is in 1 Corinthians, Chapter 10: “So whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.” If what we eat damages another’s faith, or wounds their conscience or puts a stumbling block in their way, we are not to eat it. And the same applies for any action. Believers in Christ are to seek the advantage of the other person, even if it means self-denial. Such loving behaviour may well help others to be drawn to Jesus and to be saved because they see God’s unselfish love in believers’ lives.

So many people in this day and age have very little knowledge and respect for our Creator God. If only they would read the Scriptures that speak about His greatness, they would have a new appreciation of His authority and plan for the world. This willing ignorance of God’s loving kindness to people everywhere will one day cost them the hope of anything good in the next life.

Every living person needs to prepare for their future life after death while there is still time. Eternity is for ever, which is a long, long time. We need four protections for the future: a clear conscience free of accusations, trust in Jesus for the forgiveness of our sin, the certainty that Jesus holds the key of death and will meet us on the other side, and a good report to give of our life's work for God on earth.

People who trust in their own goodness and good works to satisfy the price that they owe for their sins will not be enough payment to God on Judgment Day. They don't understand or seem to want to understand that hell is a very terrible place and is to be avoided at all costs. There is no other way to heaven's joys than through spiritual rebirth by God's Holy Spirit. This is done by trusting in the Lord Jesus' work on the cross to redeem all guilty sinners, including you and I. May all the glory for this amazing pardon be given to God.

Psalm 115, Verse 1 says: "Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to your name be the glory, because of your love and faithfulness." Let us praise God and give Him the glory that is due to His name.

The drama is from The Bible In Living Sound.

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