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BIBLE ADVENTURES SCRIPT:

A1898 ~ Ahaziah's Three Captains.

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

Following on from our last *Bible Adventure*, after King Ahab of Israel died in battle, his son Ahaziah became king. In the last chapter of 1st Kings in the Bible, it says that Ahaziah did evil in the sight of the Lord and followed in the ways of his parents, Ahab and Jezebel, and also Jeroboam, the very first king of Israel. King Ahaziah reigned for two years in Samaria before he had a very serious fall in his palace.

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The book of 2nd Kings continues on from where the book of 1st Kings left off, and it deals with the remaining years of the divided kingdoms of Israel and Judah. The northern kingdom of Israel steadily declined both politically and spiritually; as all its succeeding kings were ungodly men and no religious revival ever occurred in the kingdom.

Ahaziah served and worshipped Baal, just as his father Ahab had done. Despite his poor health after his accident in his palace at Samaria, Ahaziah didn't enquire of the Lord for help. Instead, he sent messengers on his behalf to the idol Baal-Zebub, the chief pagan god worshipped in the city of Ekron about 70 kilometres south in neighbouring Philistine country. A return journey there and back would have taken about 3 days. An angel of the Lord appeared to God's prophet Elijah and told him to intercept the king's messengers on their way to Ekron and give them a true message from the Lord to take to Ahaziah. Ahaziah was very surprised to see his messengers return home so soon, but he wasn't pleased at all to hear God's message through Elijah that he would die soon from his injuries.

Thinking he could stop or change God's message by killing or capturing Elijah, Ahaziah sent a captain with fifty men to find Elijah and bring him before him. Elijah was faced with arrest and he turned to God for protection. God sent down fire from heaven which killed the captain and his men. When Ahaziah sent a second captain and group of men, the same thing happened. It seemed a harsh punishment for God to impose on soldiers for doing their duty, but their disrespect towards Elijah indicated that they had rejected the authority of the Lord God through Elijah, His prophet and messenger.

God wanted to establish beyond doubt who the true king of Israel was: Himself and not a man. Ahaziah, like all the other kings of Israel, was meant to serve the Lord - not live independently of Him and worship false gods. Ahaziah was wrong to put himself above God's prophet and his men paid the price for it.

When Ahaziah determined to send a captain of a third group of soldiers to capture Elijah, the captain knew the fate of his fellow captains. He recognised that he was dealing with a powerful man of God who deserved respect, so on behalf of himself and his men he humbly begged mercy from Elijah to save their lives, as they were only following the king's orders. This time, God showed mercy and spared their lives, revealing Himself not only as a God of judgment, but also as a God of grace.

An angel appeared to Elijah and assured him that this time the soldiers would do him no harm. So Elijah went with them to meet the king. When before Ahaziah, Elijah gave the very same message that he had previously. And true to the Word of the Lord, Ahaziah died. His scheme to reverse God's prophetic word had failed. Because Ahaziah had no son and heir to the throne, his younger brother, Joram, succeeded him as the king of Israel.

Have you ever asked yourself why there are so many people in the world who, like Ahaziah, have no respect for God or fear of Him? Some make a choice – shall I please myself or please God? And they choose to disregard God and plan their own way in life. Others have no knowledge of God apart from what they see in nature; but even this is enough to show the existence of God. In the New Testament book of Romans, Chapter 1, the Apostle Paul said:

“But God shows his anger from heaven against all sinful, wicked people who suppress the truth by their wickedness (and prevent the truth from being made known). They know the truth about God because he has made it obvious to them. For ever since the world was created, people have seen the earth and sky. Through everything God made, they can clearly see his invisible qualities – his eternal power and divine nature. So they have no excuse for not knowing God. Yes, they knew God, but they wouldn’t worship him as God or even give him thanks. And they began to think up foolish ideas of what God was like. As a result, their minds became dark and confused. Claiming to be wise, they instead became utter fools. And instead of worshipping the glorious, ever-living God, they worshipped idols made to look like mere people and birds and animals and reptiles.”

The Bible is clear: the person who wants to save their life for their own pursuits will lose it for eternity in the next life. The Lord Jesus said in Matthew, Chapter 16: “If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it.”

For those people who don't accept the Bible as God's truth, is there any other way to help them to see and understand God's authority over everything? Firstly, nothing can create nothing, as nothing produces nothing at all. God is a necessary being because if God didn't exist, then neither would anything else. Furthermore, God is a purposeful being who has a will, creates and directs all events to suit Him and one future day, He'll bring all things under the authority of His risen Son, Jesus Christ. God alone is a self-existent being and the first cause of everything else that exists. In John, Chapter 5, Jesus said: "The Father has life in Himself." Paul preached in Acts, Chapter 17: "He (that's God) is not served by human hands, as if He needed anything, because He Himself gives all men life and breath and everything else."

Another aspect of life is justice. The Bible is very clear that there is coming a time of judgment. The Lord Jesus said in Luke's Gospel, Chapter 12: "The time is coming when everything that is covered up will be revealed, and all that is secret will be made known to all. Whatever you have said in the dark will be heard in the light, and what you have whispered behind closed doors will be shouted from the housetops for all to hear!" You may believe that some criminals have gotten away with their crimes by not coming to a court of law here on earth, but do not be deceived, absolutely nothing will be missed out in God's court in the next life. Non-Christians will be judged for their sins and lack of belief in Jesus as their Saviour and Lord; Christians will be judged by how they have lived their lives as spiritually reborn people in Christ, as Christ is the only One who establishes and perfects faith and good works that count for God's eternal approval.

In Daniel, Chapter 2, it says: "Praise the name of God forever and ever, for he has all wisdom and power; He controls the course of world events, he removes kings and sets up other kings." If only King Ahaziah of Israel had humbled himself before God, his life and rule over the nation might have lasted longer. But God removed him for his rebellious wickedness.

For Christians, respect for God is more than just honouring and valuing Him. A biblical fear of God for the believer includes understanding just how much God hates sin and fearing His judgment on sin—even in the life of the believer. The Lord disciplines those whom He loves; and part of living as examples of Christ before a watching world is by showing respect to others. The gospel not only shapes what we say, but how we say it. There should be a distinct flavour in the way that Christians speak. Every argument, every conversation, every social media post, should display grace. In Colossians, Chapter 4, it says: "Your speech should always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you will have the right response for everyone."

People don't have worth just because they agree with our views; they have worth because they're humans created in the image of God. We demonstrate our love for God by loving others. When Jesus called Peter back to ministry in John, Chapter 21, He told Peter to show his love for Christ by taking care of God's people.

In John's Gospel, Chapter 3, Verse 16, Jesus said: "For God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life." Do you believe this and as a result you're walking in Christ's power over sin in your life?

The drama is from The Bible In Living Sound.

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