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BIBLE ADVENTURES SCRIPT:

A1900 ~ Elisha, the Boys and the Bears.

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

After God had taken His prophet, Elijah, up into heaven in a whirlwind while Elisha was watching, Elisha picked up Elijah's cloak and walked back to the Jordan River. There, he struck the river with Elijah's cloak, just as Elijah had done when first crossing over. Elisha then cried out, "Where is the Lord, the God of Elijah?" The waters immediately parted for him, allowing Elisha to cross over on dry ground. He returned to the school of the prophets six miles away in Jericho. They saw that Elisha had become Elijah's successor and that he had God's Spirit in him to do all the work that God had appointed him to do.

The prophets, however, had trouble believing that Elijah's body had really gone to heaven and that it didn't need burying. Although they knew that God was going to take Elijah home to heaven that day, they couldn't fathom that Elijah's body had gone up into heaven too – a miraculous thing indeed! Instead, they thought it possible that God's Spirit might have taken Elijah's body to somewhere else on earth.

The prophets asked Elisha for permission to search for Elijah. But Elisha knew very well what had happened to Elijah and that he would not be found, so he told them "No!" But the prophets persisted asking him until Elisha felt embarrassed and he agreed that they could look.

DRAMA - [The Bible In Living Sound.](#)

Are we like those undiscerning prophets who couldn't believe that God would perform a miracle in whatever way He wished? Are we guilty of believing God's Word until it comes to pass but then disbelieving what we know and have seen? In the past few years, there've been many Biblical prophecies fulfilled, but they're often not noticed or accepted as being a prophecy of God that has come to pass.

In the Old Testament book of Jeremiah, Chapter 16, the prophet Jeremiah wrote: "The days are coming," declares the LORD, "when it will no longer be said, 'As surely as the LORD lives, who brought the Israelites up out of Egypt,' but it will be said, 'As surely as the LORD lives, who brought the Israelites up out of the land of the north and out of all the countries where he had banished them.' For I will restore them to the land I gave their ancestors."

And even today, we can see that God has brought them back to their own land of Israel. The other nations that lived round about Israel in the times of King David, like the Canaanites, Amalekites, Hittites and Philistines, have all disappeared. From the complete destruction of Jerusalem in AD 135 and Jews being banned permanently from entering the city, for 1,900 years, the Israelites were scattered all over the world. They suffered much persecution in the places they lived during those years. Yet God said He would bring them back and it's happening. There are still many more to return to Israel, but God's work of doing this can be seen in the present time.

Furthermore, the prophet Isaiah wrote in Chapter 35 of his book, that a time was coming when "the wilderness and the wasteland shall be glad for them and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose." The famous American writer Mark Twain visited the land of Israel in 1867 and published his impressions of it being a desolate country, devoid of both vegetation and human population. However, by 1948, Israel had regrouped and became a nation again. By using revolutionary agricultural methods, the people are producing good crops and are even able to export roses to Europe.

Most importantly for the new nation of Israel, the Hebrew language has been revived to give the returning exiles a common language to use. In the Old Testament book of Zephaniah, in Chapter 3, Zephaniah said that God would “restore to the peoples a pure language that they all may call on the name of the LORD, to serve Him with one accord.”

In 1881, a Russian immigrant writer moved to Israel and founded the Rebirth of Israel society to create modern Hebrew literature. Within 40 years, he’d written a Complete Dictionary of Ancient and Modern Hebrew; and in 1920, he had Hebrew accepted by the British High Commissioner as one of the three official languages of the region.

Do people now living on this planet see God’s hand in all of this? So many are hostile to the Jewish nation and all the benefits those people have brought to the world. However, Christians are so thankful for God’s holy book, The Bible, which has come to us through the Jewish people! The idea that the church has replaced the Jews in God’s sight is obviously untrue. Yes, the Jews are returning to Israel without believing in the Lord Jesus Christ as their Saviour, but there is a growing interest in Israelite people reading the Bible. Those who oppose Israel at every turn and try to interfere in their national affairs need to understand the warning God gave to Abraham in Genesis, Chapter 12. God said: “I will bless those who bless you and curse those who treat you with contempt.” Although they might not know it, those who harm Israel in some way will be punished by God when He deems it to be the right time.

While Elisha was still with the school of the prophets in Jericho, the men of the city came to him to say that they had a problem with their water supply, which was making the people sick and the land unproductive. Jericho’s problems had started after the Israelites reached their Promised Land. Under the leadership of Joshua they marched around the city and its massive walls had fallen down by God’s own hand.

Joshua cursed it. He prophesied that whoever rebuilt Jericho would lose his elder son when the foundations were being laid and his younger son when the gates were being set up. After the site had laid waste for about five and a half centuries, old Jericho was rebuilt during King Ahab's reign by a man from Bethel, named Hiel. He did lose his two sons in the manner that Joshua had predicted.

God gave promises to the Israelites. In Leviticus, Chapter 26, the Lord says: "If you follow my decrees and are careful to obey my commands, I will send you the seasonal rains. The land will then yield its crops, and the trees of the field will produce their fruit." In Exodus, Chapter 23, the Lord says: "You must serve only the Lord your God. If you do I will bless you with food and water, and I will protect you from illness." Jericho's water problems came also from the Israelite people failing to keep God's covenant commandments, thus forfeiting the covenant blessings of protection that God had promised them.

However, God, through Elisha, showed mercy to the Israelites living in Jericho. In 2nd Kings, Chapter 2, Elisha performed his first miracle. He asked for a new bowl, one that hadn't been used before (as any item used specifically in God's service had to be set apart as being sacred). The people filled it with salt, which Elisha threw into the water spring. Then he told to the people what the Lord had said: "I have healed this water." The water remained pure after this. It wasn't the salt that purified the water; for it could never have purified the water source of an underground spring. Nor did the salt contain a missing element that was lacking in the water. No, the Lord Himself healed the waters while the salt was only a symbol of the Lord's healing power and His covenant faithfulness to those Israelites.

Elisha then departed from Jericho and headed for Bethel. Along the way, he met a large group of young men who came out and insulted him. They rudely called him a baldhead and they told him to go up to heaven in the same way that they'd heard that Elijah had done. These young men were expressing contempt not only for Elisha, but for the Lord as well. Because Bethel was one of two pagan worship centres in the northern kingdom of Israel, their contempt was very serious and evil. Elisha's authority as God's true representative was at stake. So Elisha called down a curse on them in the Lord's name. The curse came in the form of two female bears, which inflicted injuries on 42 of these young men. This gave warning to all Israel that if God's covenant requirements continued to be ignored, then God's judgment would fall on the entire nation.

Through Elisha's first two public acts, God demonstrated that He would show mercy to those who turned to Him and kept His covenant, but He would bring punishment on those who didn't. And God confirmed Elisha's position as the true successor of Elijah.

In Ezekiel, Chapter 33, God says: "As surely as I live, says the Sovereign LORD, I take no pleasure in the death of wicked people. I only want them to turn from their wicked ways so they can live. Turn! Turn from your wickedness, O people of Israel! Why should you die?" In Ecclesiastes, Chapter 8, it says: "When a crime is not punished quickly, people feel it is safe to do wrong." If we get away with something, we often think we'll never get caught. But one thing is certain: God will keep His Word. We **will** reap what we sow. And the young men who were rude to Elisha quickly found out this truth.

There are many prophetic truths like this that God has given us in the Scriptures. Here are some that we should be careful to keep in these last days before Jesus returns for His followers: Christians are to stay alert and watch for signs of Christ's return. No one knows when He'll actually come but He said it could well be at any unexpected time. This encourages holy living. In the story of an evil servant in Matthew, Chapter 24, Jesus warns us about the dangers of thinking He'll delay His return. Jesus said that the evil servant thinks, "My master won't be back for a while," and he goes on sinning.

Instead, we who have committed our lives to Christ should live our life as if He could come at any moment. This mindset leads to patience, disciplined prayers, love and an eagerness to use our spiritual gifts and talents for the glory of God. And while we wait for the return of Jesus, we should live peaceful, pure and blameless lives. We are to read all of the Scriptures, including Revelation, where Jesus gives us a message about the end times of the world. It's so important that God says He'll bless anyone who reads this book to the church! God will also bless anyone who listens to it and obeys what it says. In heaven, some will wear "a crown of righteousness" because they eagerly waited for the return of Jesus Christ.

Jesus has told us that many people will be caught unprepared when He suddenly returns and given the examples of Noah and Lot. Although Noah preached about God's judgment coming as a flood for 120 years prior it happening, the people only laughed and mocked him. They'd never seen rain or a flood and they didn't believe God's message through Noah. People went on living their daily lives as normal, right up until their destruction. The Bible also tells us of Lot, his wife and two daughters, who were dragged out of the city of Sodom by two angels because the angels were about to send down fire from heaven to destroy the city once all the righteous people had left. Lot tried to warn his relatives but they wouldn't listen to his words.

Bible prophecy is behind most promises Christians hold dear: the promise of heaven, the hope of salvation, the joy of eternity with Jesus. The last thing God wants to do is see people go to hell, or your life wasted and thrown away. You were made in God's image and He cares for you. That's why He sent His own Son, Jesus Christ, to die on the cross in your place and mine. The Bible says that God "does not want anyone to be destroyed, but wants everyone to repent."

In Luke's Gospel, Chapter 21, Verse 36, the Lord Jesus said: "Watch therefore and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man (that's Jesus)."

The drama is from The Bible In Living Sound.

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