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BIBLE ADVENTURES SCRIPT:

A 1541 ~ Elisha, the Boys and the Bears.

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

When tourists visit an imposing feature of natural beauty or some amazing building project, they are often over-awed by the size and extent of what they see. They may have seen photos of this object before but it's different when seeing the real thing. There's an English expression that says: "Seeing is believing," but as we hear today, this is not always true.

In today's *Bible Adventure* taken from 2nd Kings, Chapter 2, 50 men from the Jericho school of prophets who saw Elijah carried up to heaven in a chariot of fire, found this vision very hard to believe. Earlier that day, these same men came to Elisha to tell him that Elijah would be taken from him that day. But although the 50 men saw Elijah disappear into the clouds and out of their sight, they also believed that every person had to leave this earth by means of a grave. So unbelieving were they of Elisha's explanation about Elijah's departure that they demanded a search be made for him. Just in case the chariot of fire put him back down on the earth in another city. How often do we also limit our acceptance of God's ways by insisting that things be done one certain way!

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

After Elisha received Elijah's mantle, Elisha returned to the Jordan River. He called upon Elijah's God and struck the waters just as Elijah had done only a little while before. The waters parted and he was able to cross back. When the Jericho sons of the prophets saw what Elisha had done, they believed then that the spirit of Elijah was resting on Elisha. Elisha's first miracle had already happened.

Elisha didn't build a monument to Elijah at the place where he was taken up to heaven. Instead, Elisha trusted Elijah's God and did miracles to help people. We cannot live in the past, on the past or for the past. We must accept the heritage of the past and trust God for power for living today. For Elisha, there were problems to solve and needs to be met and he trusted God to help him do this. God's servants may leave us here on earth but God's Spirit keeps on working.

Elisha returned with the 50 witnesses to Elijah's ascension to Jericho. The city of Jericho is about 8 miles north-west of the most northerly part of the Dead Sea. At that time, the people in Jericho had a problem with their water supply. The water was bad for their health and farming so they asked Elisha to help them. He poured salt into the water as he spoke aloud God's words of promise. God healed the water and the people had no more trouble with it. Salt is the symbol of God's purifying power but it was God who healed the waters and not the salt.

When Elisha then set out from Jericho to Bethel, a group of boys came out of the city and mocked him. They showed him great disrespect. Although Elisha had just done a miracle to fix their water supply, they weren't grateful at all. Those boys were old enough to know better. They mocked Elijah's going to heaven and Elisha's personal appearance, and God rightly judged them for it. These days, God appears more patient with mockers but one day He promises that His judgment will fall on them. In the New Testament letter to the Galatians, Chapter 6, it says: "Do not deceive yourselves! No one makes a fool of God. You will reap exactly what you plant."

A young Australian man was living a wild and reckless life back in the 1950's and 60's. He thought he was tough and invincible but the police finally caught up with him and he did jail time for a range of offences. After a criminal career of 25 years, the man found himself tired of his bouts of drunkenness and decided to give God a chance. God revealed Himself to the man, who was then middle-aged. He felt God's peace and freedom from guilt in his heart. He found a new set of values and later on, trained as a pastor to work with other prisoners in jail. The man wrote down his life experiences in a book called "Too Tough for Tears." He regretted that his mother hadn't taught him how to behave properly. Although he was the eldest of eleven children, he thought she should have made more effort to see he grew up to be an honest citizen. Then so many things he had learnt in his life of crime had to be unlearnt.

It's true that children don't need to be taught to do bad things, as these come naturally from their internal sin nature even when they are still too young to walk or talk. Parents need to spend vast amounts of time teaching their children good manners and respect for other people, alongside a good understanding of Bible knowledge. How terrible it will be for neglectful parents on judgment day when they see their children condemned to punishment because of their own bad example, carelessness or wrong teaching!

Elisha had been the new prophet of God for only a few days. Why didn't these mocking boys show respect for him? They had, after all, seen Elisha and Elijah many times as they had travelled together from city to city.

It might have been Elisha's young age that caused these boys' families to be less than accepting of him. Wrong attitudes and prejudices held by parents can be passed down to the next generation very easily.

In the New Testament the Apostle Paul spoke to young Timothy in the 1st letter to Timothy, Chapter 4, saying: “Do not let anyone look down on you because you are young, but be an example for the believers in your speech, your conduct, your love, faith and purity.” We gain respect in much the same way we give it – by building our lives on God’s Word, treating others the same way we would like to be treated, standing up for the truth no matter what and not compromising our character.

When the Lord Jesus had been condemned to death and handed over to the Roman soldiers for crucifixion, the soldiers also mocked Jesus. They took off Jesus’ clothes and put a purple robe on Him instead as a symbol of kingship, a crown of thorny branches on His head and a stick for a sceptre in His right hand. Then they knelt before Him and made fun of Him, saying: “Long live the King of the Jews!” What utter disrespect for the Creator of the universe! Later after being nailed to a cross, Jesus prayed: “Forgive them, Father! They don’t know what they are doing.”

We show our respect for God by giving Him honour and worshipping Him. In 1st Chronicles, Chapter 16, it says: “Give thanks to the Lord and proclaim His greatness. Let the whole world know what He has done.” Seeking God’s guidance shows that we respect God’s ways and desire to follow them.

Have you ever given any thought to the unequalled greatness of God? His ability to know everything, to be everywhere and having no possibility of ever sinning, makes Him the very greatest and over everything. He knew about the end of the world before it began! Give Him praise and respect today!

The drama is from The Bible In Living Sound.

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