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BIBLE ADVENTURES SCRIPT:

A1693 ~ Laid in the Tomb.

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

Caiaphas, the Jewish high priest who had so desperately wanted the Lord Jesus killed on a Roman cross, soon found himself facing another problem in the Jewish law. In Deuteronomy, Chapter 21, Moses had instructed the people that if a man committed a sin deserving of death, he was put to death by hanging on a tree (including a cross). His body wasn't to remain there overnight. He was to be buried that day or the land would be defiled because anyone hanged is detestable to God and so under a curse. The Jews preferred to stone to death their prisoners while the Romans hung their worst criminals on crosses.

Jesus and the two robbers beside Him were crucified on a day of preparation before the important Passover Sabbath. The Jewish rulers wanted these men's bodies off the crosses before sunset, which is when the actual day of Passover started. Because a strong healthy man could survive on his cross for up to two or three days before dying, the Romans had a cruel way of reducing the time of suffering by breaking the crucified man's legs so he couldn't lift himself up to breathe.

Caiaphas and the Jewish rulers had to petition Pilate for this to be done. In John, Chapter 19, it's recorded that the soldiers broke the legs of both robbers but not Jesus' as He was already dead when they approached Him. This fulfilled the prediction in Psalm 34 that not one of His bones will be broken. Instead, they speared Jesus' side and water and blood gushed out, a medical sign of the severe anguish and conditions Jesus had endured in the last hours of His life.

In today's *Bible Adventure*, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a member of the ruling Jewish council and a secret disciple of Jesus, shows the extent of his commitment to his Lord.

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

Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus took Jesus' body down from the cross and in accordance with Jewish burial customs, they wrapped it in spices and linen before placing it in Joseph's own tomb not too far away. A very large stone was rolled across the entrance of the tomb. Just as Jesus had no place to lay His head while He was alive, He also had no tomb in which to lay His body after He was dead.

Joseph of Arimathea didn't know that Jesus wouldn't need that tomb after that weekend. The time was getting late and they and the women watching had to leave so that they could keep the Sabbath.

Executed criminals weren't given a funeral, as funerals were usually a celebration of the dead person's successes in life.

Many people may believe that the death of our body means the end of our identity, the end of our thoughts and memories, and the end of our consciousness. Can such be true? Atheists for one believe this. An atheist, through his limited reasoning powers, says that he knows exactly what happens to the mind, will and emotions when the body dies. If he doubts and entertains the possibility that death is a great unknown, he's no longer an atheist but instead an agnostic.

It doesn't make any difference if an atheist says, "When you're dead, you're dead and that's it! The end!" or an agnostic says, "There's no way a person can be sure about the future after death." Both kinds of people will still be judged worthy of eternal punishment because God has revealed Himself through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. Such people and more, dismiss the Bible to be a lot of myths and legends. But Jesus never dismissed the value of the Scriptures! He learnt the Old Testament off by heart and quoted it to His enemies. In Jeremiah, Chapter 29, the Lord says to us: "You will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart."

Although every living thing on earth ultimately dies, human beings are the ones who know that such death includes themselves. Nothing on this earth is more generally feared than death. So when someone dies, what happens to their consciousness? As early as Job's time in the book of Job, God had revealed the existence of the Redeemer Christ and the physical resurrection of the dead. Job not only expected to see Christ with his physical eyes but also that his physical body would be changed. This is recorded in Job, Chapter 19.

Physical death is not the end of consciousness. In Luke, Chapter 16, the Lord Jesus Himself taught about a rich Jewish man and a poor beggar named Lazarus. This was a warning for all rich people of what they might expect in the future if they didn't humble themselves and seek God.

When the rich man and the beggar died, they both knew where they were in the afterlife and could think for themselves and carry on a conversation. The rich man was suffering in agony and wanted relief, but after his death, it wasn't possible for him to overturn God's judgment on him. In his lifetime, he lived for his money, pride and himself instead of living for God. He had shown no mercy to others while on earth. If a person doesn't care for God and his neighbour while alive in this life, God will not care for him in the next one; instead he will be sent after judgement to the lake of fire for all eternity. A terrible prospect!

It's very important to settle this matter now before you die, and make peace with God. Repent of your sins and turn to Jesus. After your body dies, the Bible says you will never have another chance. In Daniel, Chapter 12, it says: "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."

The Apostle Paul extends Job's theme of being changed. He said in 1 Corinthians, Chapter 15, "Listen to this secret truth: we shall not all die, but when the last trumpet sounds, we shall all be changed in an instant, as quickly as the blinking of an eye. For when the trumpet sounds, the dead (in Christ) will be raised, never to die again, and we shall all be changed." Paul had said previously that flesh and blood cannot share in God's Kingdom and what is mortal and subject to death cannot possess immortality. So our bodies must be changed into what cannot die.

When this transfer takes place, the Scripture will come true: "O death, where is your sting? O Grave, where is your victory?" Death will be destroyed and victory will be complete!"

At the time the Lord Jesus calls His faithful ones away from the earth, some will not have yet experienced physical death. They will be instantly changed into their indestructible bodies. And those who have experienced physical death will be reunited with their bodies, which will have been raised and changed as well. We know that those who loved the Lord Jesus here on earth and then died, only have their physical bodies buried in the grave. Their real selves are already in heaven in the Lord's presence, enjoying and worshipping God.

Before Jesus' resurrection happened, the suddenness of Jesus' trial and death must have left His followers extremely confused and unsure of what to do next. Joseph and those who had wept and grieved near the cross earlier in the day must have been in great shock over the day's proceedings and how much Jesus had suffered. It was less than a whole day since Jesus had been actively teaching and healing. The disciples may have been angry at the shabby way Jesus had been treated following all the good things and kind things He'd done for people in need.

Death can come unexpectedly to people of any age. We grieve greatly for a young person who has survived childhood but not accomplished much before their life is over. But this wasn't the case with the Lord Jesus. He did so much in His short 33 years on earth that if everything He had done had been written down, the Apostle John supposed there wouldn't be room in the all the world for all the books that could be written.

Grieving over our losses is necessary and important. This takes time, as we need to release the emotional pressure of our sorrow before healing somewhat and going on with life. We grieve because we have lost something important to us. Grief has its season and many seem to last a long time. But eventually, God want us to let go of our grief over someone's passing so that we can comfort others. Some people have difficulty getting past their grief and need professional help so they don't fall into such a sorrow-filled depression that they can't function in life.

Give your time, attention, sympathy and comfort to those who are in the grieving process. Often words aren't necessary and care should be taken that you don't say something that would be like rubbing salt into a wound for the grieving person. Your presence and concern will help and comfort as they pass through a black time of their life.

In 1871, the inland city of Chicago in the United States had a terrible fire that destroyed many homes and killed a few hundred people. One lawyer named Horatio Spafford lost a fortune in real estate as a result of the blaze. But he worked tirelessly to help rebuild the city and house 100,000 homeless people. About the same time, his only son aged 4, also died. In November two years later, Spafford decided to take his wife and four remaining daughters to Europe. At the last minute, he was detained by some urgent work and so he sent his wife and daughters on ahead of him. They were travelling on a luxury French ocean liner from New York.

In the middle of the night on November 21, as the liner was steaming on calm seas in the mid-Atlantic Ocean, there came a violent shock. The liner had collided with another ship. Passengers were thrown from beds, screams filled the air, fires broke out, masts crashed to the deck, and within 12 minutes, the liner sank into the black icy water. Mrs Spafford sank with the ship but floated up to the surface again. She was found nearly unconscious, clinging to a piece of the wreckage. But her four daughters were all lost that night. Less than a fifth of the passengers were saved.

When she reached Wales, Spafford's wife cabled her husband with the sad news. Horatio immediately booked a passage to set out and join his wife. On the way there on one cold night, the captain of the ship that he was on took him aside and said, "I believe we are now passing over the place where the French liner went down." Horatio went to his cabin and found it hard to sleep. He said to himself, "It is well; the will of God be done." He later wrote the famous hymn, "It is well with my soul." The words, "Whatever my lot, You have taught me to say: It is well, it is well, with my soul," have been a great comfort to many others distressed by their own circumstances.

God doesn't promise to protect us from grief, but He does promise to help us through it. In Revelation, Chapter 21, Verse 4, it says that one day: "He (that's Jesus) will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever." Take heart that there will be no grieving in heaven.

The drama is from The Bible In Living Sound.

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