



BIBLE RADIO PRODUCTIONS

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BIBLE ADVENTURES SCRIPT:

A1972 ~ Jesus' Mother and Brothers.

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

In modern times, good communication is considered very important. Whether between members of a family, a business or internationally, good interaction is needed to reduce confusion and misunderstanding as much as possible.

How we relate to other people causes them to respond accordingly. If we speak aggressively to someone, their response can be hostile or fault-finding. Conversely, if we don't express our thoughts and ideas at all, other people may think that we're weak and passive. This situation can be an invitation for others to make excessive demands on us.

A better way is to have a discussion on how all needs can be met without anyone making demands that their way is the only way. The need to avoid conflict and maintain good relationships with others is important. Not everyone is forgiving of other people's mistakes and some can hold grudges against others for years. In Proverbs, Chapter 15, it says: "A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. The tongue of the wise uses knowledge rightly."

The meanings of Jesus' teaching were often missed by the people in the crowd. Jesus' instructions for living were a threat to the existing Temple system because the scribes and priests didn't want to see change come to their comfortable lifestyle. The same day that the Pharisees claimed Jesus did His miracles through the devil's power, Jesus increased the number of parables He gave. The disciples noticed this and in Matthew, Chapter 13, they asked Jesus why He spoke to the crowds in this way. Before this change, Jesus had taught in a clear understandable way. Yet the Pharisees and scribes had heard the clear teachings of Jesus but had rejected them.

Jesus answered the disciples: "Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries (or hidden truths) of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given." "Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand." (These words are a prophecy from the book of Isaiah, Chapter 6.) Only those people who sought clear teaching would be given the understanding. To the rest, the meanings were veiled.

We tend to think that parables help our understanding, but Jesus said, and the disciples seemed to agree, that parables hindered understanding. The main reason for this is that Jesus didn't reveal their meanings to the crowd. If the proper explanation to a parable is given, then yes, parables are a great help in understanding spiritual things. This is because parables take the ordinary things of life and compare them to spiritual concepts.

In the Scriptures, there are some parables for which Jesus never gave any explanation, and over the centuries, extremely different views of what He meant have been interpreted by theologians.

Jesus' brothers didn't believe that Jesus was the Messiah for whom the Israelite people had looked so long. They seemed embarrassed about some of the things Jesus said publicly. Because they didn't understand His meaning, for spiritual things have to be spiritually discerned, they thought Jesus had gone out of His mind. Even His aging mother, Mary seemed to be less convinced of His calling at this point now than earlier in His life.

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This last quote of Jesus came at the end of Matthew, Chapter 12. There is no record in the Scriptures that Jesus went outside and spoke to His family. Yet He didn't want them to be a tool of the devil against Him and create public division in His own family.

Only the day before the visit of Mary and Jesus' half-brothers, Jesus healed a man with a paralysed hand on the Sabbath day. The Pharisees were furious at Him for breaking their rules and started to plot to kill Him. When Jesus heard about the plot, He moved away from that area but still a large crowd followed Him.

Jesus healed all the sick and gave them orders not to tell others about Him, to fulfil the prophecy in Isaiah, Chapter 42, which said: "Here is my servant, whom I have chosen, the one I love, and with whom I am pleased. I will send my Spirit upon him, and he will announce my judgment to the nations. He will not argue or shout, or make loud speeches in the streets. He will not break off a bent reed, nor put out a flickering lamp. He will persist until he causes justice to triumph, and on him all the peoples will put their hope."

Evidently the Pharisees didn't think this prophecy should be connected to Jesus of Nazareth. Was it possible for them to settle the matter of Jesus being the Messiah once and for all? It's much easier for us to hold fast to this truth with the benefit of the Bible in our homes, which we can check in the prophecies and Gospels. The ordinary Jewish people in Jesus' time didn't have this option, as the Bible was yet to be assembled. However, the scribes and teachers of the Law of Moses had some clues from the writings of Moses, if they had taken notice of them.

Moses, the great leader of Israel when God delivered the people out of Egypt, had continued to be respected by everyone down through the centuries. In Deuteronomy, Chapter 18, Moses told the people while they were still in the wilderness what God had told him: "I (that is God) will send them a prophet like you (Moses) from among their own people. I will tell him what to say, and he will tell the people everything I command. He will speak in my name and I will punish anyone who refuses to obey him."

Jesus claimed to be the Messiah and He rebuked the people in John, Chapter 5, when He said: "If you had really believed Moses, you would have believed me, because he wrote about me." And the Apostle Peter in Acts, Chapter 3, preached on the same quote from Deuteronomy, bringing the people's attention to that prophecy and how Jesus had fulfilled it.

What similarities are there between Jesus and Moses? When Moses was born, the king of Egypt was killing all the little baby boys belonging to the Israelites. He was afraid that even though slaves, they were becoming so numerous and they would overrule the Egyptians in their own country. Not long after the Lord Jesus was born, King Herod too gave orders to kill all the baby boys in Bethlehem. Herod feared for his family line on the throne as well.

Both Moses and the Lord Jesus spent time in Egypt, and God called Jesus out of Egypt when King Herod died. God said: "Out of Egypt I called my Son." This is recorded in Matthew's Gospel, Chapter 2.

Moses was adopted by Pharaoh's daughter and had Pharaoh as an adoptive father. Jesus also had an adoptive father in Joseph, who reared Jesus as his own son. Both men descended from Adam via Abraham and Jacob. Moses fed the multitudes in the wilderness with the manna God provided for them. Jesus also miraculously fed crowds of people who had walked a long way to hear Him speak.

Both men exercised authority over the seas. Moses at God's command opened up the Red Sea so the Children of Israel could cross and escape Pharaoh's army as it was chasing after them. Jesus was fast asleep in his disciples' boat. A big storm blew up and the fishermen became terrified. They anxiously woke up Jesus, who calmed the Sea of Galilee.

In Numbers, Chapter 21, the Israelites became discouraged with the trials of their wilderness wanderings. They wanted food the same as what they ate in Egypt and abundant supplies of water. They expressed their dislike for the manna God sent each day. When they spoke against God and Moses, God sent poisonous snakes and many of the people were bitten and died. Then some of the people came to Moses, saying they had sinned and asked him to pray for them. This Moses did and God instructed Moses to make a bronze snake and put it up on a pole. Then if any person was bitten, he could look at the bronze snake in faith and he lived.

In John's Gospel, Chapter 3, the Lord Jesus said: "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life."

In Deuteronomy, Chapter 34, it says that when Moses died, God buried him. No one knows where his grave is. The Israelites might have erected a big monument to Moses and gone regularly to his grave to worship him instead of God. And no one on this earth could find Jesus' body either.

The words of Scripture are clear: Jesus said that those who believe in Him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they haven't believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. Anyone who rejects Jesus as the Prophet spoken of by Moses will be cut off from among the believers in Christ.

There is a happy ending to this Bible Adventure. Over time, the half-brothers of Jesus came to believe in Him as the Messiah. James was among the group gathered on Pentecost, the day the Holy Spirit was given. He took over leadership of the Jerusalem church after Peter left the region, just after he was freed from prison by an angel. James wrote to the churches a letter which is called after him. His brother Jude also wrote the small book of Jude that's found just before the last book of the Bible, The Revelation to John.

Does your personality show traces of stubbornness and resistance to change, the same way the Pharisees did? Stubbornness is a self-centred attitude against change, although life is one of continual change. Stubbornness is a self-defeating narrow-mindedness that requires a person to have their way without regard to the feelings or needs of others.

A small school boy was guilty of doing the wrong thing at school. He brought a card for his teacher and put it on her desk. Then he went down to the basement and set fire to the school by lighting wastepaper in the boiler room. After the fire had been put out, an enquiry was held into the matter, and the evidence pointed to that boy. He readily admitted that he had set fire to the school. When he was asked why, he explained with childish simplicity, as the news report had, "In class yesterday, they took away my bubble gum."

The child was saying in effect: "I am on the throne in my life, and I want everyone else to bow down before me. I want to rule. When I want anything, I want it, and that's sufficient reason for my having it. If I want bubble gum, I am to have it. If anybody takes it away from me, I have a right to take revenge and I will lash out and destroy anything that stands in the way of my wishes and desire."

There is only one way to curb this stubbornness which rises up even in small children. The answer is to plant the new life of the Lord Jesus Christ in a person. Through the new birth our hearts are recreated in Christ and we're made "partakers of the divine nature", as listed in 2 Peter, Chapter 1. Day by day we must submit our lives to the control of the Lord Jesus so that the old stubborn nature remains crucified by Jesus' power.

Here's what we should be striving for, as given in 2 Peter, Chapter 1, verse 5 to 7: "Do your best to add goodness to your faith; to your goodness add knowledge; to your knowledge add self-control; to your self-control add endurance; to your endurance add godliness; to your godliness add Christian affection; and to your Christian affection add love."

The drama is from The Bible In Living Sound.

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