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BIBLE ADVENTURES SCRIPT:

A2325 ~ Doubting Thomas.

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

You may have heard of the book 'Pilgrim's Progress – One Man's Search for Eternal Life' by John Bunyan. This book has become a classic and published in over 100 languages since it was first printed in 1678. It's called the most well-known allegory ever written. An allegory is a story with an underlying meaning as well as the literal one. Bunyan wrote it while in jail for preaching the Gospel without having a licence to preach.

A man called Christian is the central character of the story as well as the hero of a long pilgrimage. He represents just one profound aspect of the human experience: the search for religious truth. At times along his journey, Christian is accompanied by others who try to help him find the way.

In one part, Christian and his travelling partner Hopeful, find shelter and rest from a storm on land near Doubting Castle, which is owned by Giant Despair. The giant finds them and says they must be punished for trespassing. The men are imprisoned and beaten severely, and left to die for some days. Giant Despair gives them all the tools they need to commit suicide, but the men remind themselves that killing is a sin. Christian then remembers that he has a key called Promise that will open any door in Despair's castle. Christian and Hopeful finally escape and mount a sign on the roadside warning future travelers away from the danger of Doubting Castle.

Isn’t it true that most of us at some stage of our lives have been full of doubt about something? How long we stay doubting varies according to our determination to get beyond it. The disciple known as Thomas the Twin was not present that first night when Jesus made Himself known to the disciples in the upper room.

The disciples tried to convince Thomas that Jesus had truly risen. But Thomas insisted that he would not believe such a thing until certain conditions were met.

DRAMA - The Bible In Living Sound.

How glad we all are that the story of Doubting Thomas was included in the Scriptures! When Thomas did see Jesus a week later, Jesus knew exactly what Thomas had said. (He also knows every doubting thought that we might have too!) Jesus invited Thomas to examine His wounds. When Thomas realised that Jesus was indeed risen, he exclaimed, “My Lord and my God!” None of the disciples had ever called Jesus “God” before. Thomas had come to understand that Jesus was more than the Lord, more than the Messiah; He was Almighty God Himself.

While Thomas doubted at first, he came through to produce great spiritual fruit for the Lord later in life. Yet he wasn’t the only disciple to doubt. Except for John, the other disciples didn’t believe Jesus had risen either until they had seen Him in the flesh for themselves.

Jesus gave all who have lived from that time onwards as followers of Jesus a most precious promise: “Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”

There are many truths we cannot see unless God reveals them to us by His Holy Spirit. We are blind about spiritual things apart from revelation. We have total inability to work out the things of God by ourselves.

After the eyewitness generation of Christians, the following generation of Jewish believers started to give into growing doubts too. They were wavering in their faith and had become discouraged. They wanted to go back to the Judaism system of rituals and ceremonies, which they knew well rather than to hold fast to the new Christian beliefs.

In the New Testament section of the Bible, there are books about what Jesus did on earth, the history of the early church and the problems it faced, encouragement to all Christians on how to follow Jesus, and a revelation to John of the things to come at the end of the world.

One book is about the Lord Jesus Christ and His supremacy over all the great godly men of the past. This book is called Hebrews. Its author is unknown but it's thought to have been written about 10 years before Jerusalem was destroyed by Titus and his Roman soldiers in AD 70. Hebrews has been called the 5th Gospel. The first four record Jesus Christ's ministry on earth, while Hebrews describes His ministry in heaven at God's right hand.

The Jewish believers in Jesus were beginning to think that by accepting Jesus, they'd lost all their Jewish sacrifices, Temple services and priestly roles. They were undervaluing their privileges in Christ and started turning to uncertainty and self-pity. Although they had started out well, they'd not continued to make progress in maintaining a steadfast faith. The Christian life is like riding a bicycle – if you do not want to go on, you will go off. The writer of Hebrews was trying to lead the Jewish Christians from elementary knowledge to become mature in the faith. He showed them the superiority of Christ over all previous revelation and urged them to be loyal to Jesus first and foremost.

The Lord Jesus is greater than any human leader; He is God's Son and the heir of all things. He created the universe and is Himself part of the Godhead, sustaining all things by His Word. As sin-bearer, He cleansed us from sin and now sits at the right hand of God interceding for us.

The Lord Jesus Christ is far greater than the angels who worship Him. He has the more excellent name of 'Son' and His throne lasts forever. He is greater than faithful Moses and Joshua, the leader of the Children of Israel entering into the Promised Land.

When God wanted to send a saviour to earth, He didn't send an angel but His only and dearly loved Son. Jesus didn't come in the form of an angel either, but in the form of a lowly man to redeem all mankind. Angels are a separate creation of God and will be our servants in heaven. We cannot turn into angels when we die, nor should we worship them while we're here on earth. Yet they do God's bidding, protect believers on earth and continually praise God in the heavenly realms, bringing God great glory.

The early Jewish Christians who wanted to go back to the rituals of animal sacrifices had to be taught that Jesus came from a superior priesthood than the priesthood of Aaron, the first high priest of the Levites. Animal sacrifices could never take away sin, but the shed blood of Jesus could redeem all those wanting to be free from their sin. Jesus, being from the tribe of Judah, could never serve as priest while on earth; only the Levites were appointed for this role. However, Jesus became our great High Priest in heaven after He rose from the dead. Jesus was appointed to this highest role by His Father, because Jesus alone is the only one acceptable to His Father and capable of ministering to all believers from His place in heaven.

The Jewish Christians who wanted to go back to the Temple worship services in Jerusalem didn't understand that the Temple on earth was only a copy of the one that's in heaven. It was said that there were no chairs in the earthly Temple for the priests to sit down on because their work was never finished. But the Lord Jesus Christ, having offered Himself as a perfect sacrifice for sin once, is now sitting down at the right hand of God, for He has finished His work of perfect salvation for everyone prepared to believe in Him.

The new covenant of the Lord Jesus Christ was a better way for all people, not just the Jews. Jesus is now the high priest in the heavenly sanctuary in God's presence for ever and ever, and He'll have no successor. Because Christ has made this new and living way for any person to enter into the presence of His Father, let believers stop doubting about their acceptance to God and come boldly to His throne of grace. Jesus has settled the sin question for ever. The Holy Spirit teaches us that the secret of living for God is faith in Jesus' work that He did on our behalf; we're to rely on our faithful God to meet all our needs.

The book of Hebrews has two great warnings: We're not to neglect so great a salvation as is offered to us from heaven; it is not by the angels but by the Lord Jesus Himself. We must listen to what Christ says in the Bible. The second warning is to not depart from the living God to serve an earthly god or idol. Let God's Word have its proper place in your life. It searches out every motive, desire and purpose of your life and helps you to evaluate them. Christ is the living Word of God. He is alive, powerful, all-wise and all-knowing.

In the last New Testament book called The Revelation to John, the supremacy of the Lord Jesus Christ as the Lamb of God is shown in Chapter 5, where no one else can be found worthy to open the scroll and its seven seals of judgment on the earth for all the people's continued wickedness.

In the present day, Christians often display doubt in doubting prayers, particularly in public prayers. The words spoken aloud sound so good but do these people have faith to really believe that God will answer the prayers they're asking for?

In James, Chapter 1, it says: "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. For let not that man suppose that he will received anything from the Lord: he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways."

Doubting prayers are useless to us and an insult to God. Doubting God and His Word can easily progress into unbelief, which is like hardening our hearts against God. If we're really seeking to know the truth and we're honest with ourselves and others about our struggles and doubts, God will faithfully meet us and reveal Himself to us, just as He did to Doubting Thomas. Jesus in the heavenly sanctuary invites us to come into His presence to worship and intercede for our needs.

In Hebrews, Chapter 11, Verse 6, it says: "No one can please God without faith, for whoever comes to God must have faith that God exists and rewards those who seek Him."

The drama is from The Bible In Living Sound.

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