

CLIMBING BIBLE MOUNTAINS

Lesson One Moses on Mount Sinai

Text: Exodus 3 – 4; 19 – 20

Plan of Salvation: *Hearing*

Introduction:

1. Two of the most important events in the life of Moses, and in the history of God's people, happened upon Mount Sinai.
2. In Exodus 3, the Lord appeared to Moses in a burning bush and instructed him to return to Egypt to deliver Israel from bondage.
3. In Exodus 19 and 20, God again appeared to Moses – this time to give him the Law of God, including the Ten Commandments.
4. Both of these events teach us the importance of hearing – listening to God and obeying His Word.

I. Moses and the Burning Bush (Exodus 3 – 4)

- A. While Moses was living in Midian and working as a shepherd, he traveled toward Mount Sinai.
 1. The mountain is known by two different names, probably because it had two prominent peaks.
 2. Sinai – the word seems to mean “thorny,” though it is not certain
 3. Horeb – meaning “desert” or “desolate”
 4. It is also called the “Mountain of God” due to God's manifestations of Himself and His power upon it.
 5. Remember that the book of Exodus likely was written after the events recorded in it had occurred.
- B. As Moses journeyed closer to the mountain, the Lord appeared to him as a flame of fire in the middle of a bush that burned, but was not consumed by the flame.
 1. Of course, this was a miraculous display of the power of God.
 2. However, when Moses first saw it, he did not recognize it as a miracle.
 3. Instead, he said, “I will turn aside and see ...why the bush is not burnt.”
- C. Upon approaching this wonderful sight, God spoke to Moses.
 1. First, He called Moses by name, indicating that God knew Moses and everything about him.
 2. Then, He informed Moses that he was approaching “holy ground” because he was coming into the presence of Almighty God. *{This is why Moses was required to remove his shoes.}*
 3. Next, He declared unto Moses that He was God and identified Himself as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.
- D. Moses showed himself to be both submissive (by answering, “Here am I”) and humble (by fearing to look upon God).

- E. As God spoke, He declared His purpose in appearing to Moses.
1. God was concerned about the suffering of His people in Egypt and desired to deliver them.
 2. He planned to lead them out of Egypt and into the land of promise, Canaan.
 3. In order to accomplish this, God had chosen Moses to speak to Pharaoh and to lead the Israelites from bondage to freedom.
- F. Sadly, even though Moses saw a miracle and heard the voice of God, he began to make excuses for not obeying what God had said.
1. Vs. 11 – FIRST EXCUSE – “Who am I?”
 - a. He was 80 years old.
 - b. He had been gone from Egypt for 40 years.
 - c. When he left, he was fleeing for his life for killing an Egyptian.
 2. Vs. 12 – FIRST ANSWER – “Certainly I will be with thee.”
 - a. It does not matter who we are or what we have done if God is with us.
 - b. Our strength comes from the Lord (Philippians 4:13).
 3. Vs. 13 – SECOND EXCUSE – “What shall I say unto them?”
 4. Vs. 14 – SECOND ANSWER – “Thus shalt thou say...”
 - a. Moses did not have to worry about what to say, for God would be with him and give him the words he needed.
 - b. We should not worry about what to teach others, but simply show them what the Bible says.
 5. 4:1 – THIRD EXCUSE – “They will not believe me, nor hearken...”
 6. 4:2 – THIRD ANSWER – “What is that in thine hand?”
 - a. God would provide Moses with the means to confirm that his words were true.
 - b. Moses would be able to perform miracles to help the people to believe his words.
 7. 4:10 – FOURTH EXCUSE – “I am slow of speech.”
 8. 4:12 – FOURTH ANSWER – “I will be with thy mouth...”
 9. 4:13 – THE REAL REASON – Moses is essentially saying, “Can’t You find someone else?”
- G. This made God angry, but Moses finally accepted his role and traveled to Egypt.
- II. Moses and the Law of God (Exodus 19 – 20)
- A. After Moses, with God’s help, had delivered the Israelites from slavery in Egypt, God led them back to Mount Sinai.
1. This lesson skips over the ten plagues, the Passover, and the crossing of the Red Sea.
 2. If desired, they can be studied in the class (especially the younger classes).
 3. But, in the older classes, our focus is on the importance of hearing.
- B. As the tribes of Israel camped in the wilderness around Sinai, Moses went up into the mountain to hear the Word of God.
- C. God’s First Speech (19:3-6)
1. He reminded them of His mercy in delivering them from Egypt.
 2. He promised that if they would obey Him they would be His holy nation.

- D. When the children of Israel agreed to follow God's words, He warned them to prepare for His coming down upon the mountain.
 - 1. He would come in a thick cloud and speak so the people could hear His voice.
 - 2. The people were to sanctify themselves by washing their clothes.
 - 3. They were to set a boundary around the mountain that no one was to cross.
- E. On the third day after God first talked with Moses, He descended upon Mount Sinai.
 - 1. There were thunders and lightnings.
 - 2. There was a thick cloud upon the mountain.
 - 3. There was a sound like the call of a trumpet.
 - 4. There was smoke and fire upon the mountain.
 - 5. The mountain shook and quaked greatly.
 - 6. Moses brought the people out to witness this great event.
 - 7. The children of Israel trembled with fear.
- F. Out of this terrifying scene of awesome power, God spoke to Moses and the people the Ten Commandments (20:1-17).
 - 1. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.
 - 2. Thou shalt not make any graven image.
 - 3. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.
 - 4. Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.
 - 5. Honor thy father and thy mother.
 - 6. Thou shalt not kill.
 - 7. Thou shalt not commit adultery.
 - 8. Thou shalt not steal.
 - 9. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.
 - 10. Thou shalt not covet.
- G. Upon hearing the voice of God, the people begged Moses to speak to them in the place of God.
- H. So, Moses went up into the mountain to receive the rest of God's Law.

III. Moses and the Importance of Hearing

- A. These stories teach us how important it is for us to listen to the Word of God.
- B. God's instructions were for the salvation of lives and souls.
 - 1. When He spoke to Moses from the burning bush, He instructed him how to deliver Israel from slavery.
 - 2. When He spoke from Mount Sinai, He instructed the people in how to live so they would be saved from sin.
 - 3. If we want to know how to be saved, we must hear the Word of God.
- C. Today, God speaks to us through His Word, the Bible
 - 1. He does not appear in a burning bush to speak to us.
 - 2. He does not come down upon a mountain in fire and smoke to speak to us.
 - 3. Instead, He sent His Son, Jesus, to preach the Gospel (Hebrews 1:1-2).
 - 4. Jesus sent the apostles to preach and write His Word.
 - 5. This is the New Testament, the Gospel, God's Word for man today.
- D. When we hear God's Word, we must not make excuses like Moses did.

1. Moses did not want to obey, so he tried to get out of it with excuses.
 2. However, none of them was good enough to fool God.
 3. We must be willing to obey what God commands.
- E. When the Israelites heard God speak, they became afraid and did not want to listen.
1. We must not be afraid to learn what the Bible teaches.
 2. It may show us that we need to change things that we are doing.
 3. It may show us that we have sinned and that we are lost.
 4. But, God's Word also teaches us how to be forgiven and saved.
- F. How can you listen to God's Word?
1. Read the Bible in your spare time
 2. Study the Bible at home with your family
 3. Study and prepare your lessons for Bible Class
 4. Pay attention when the teacher is reading and teaching
 5. Listen and take notes when the preacher is preaching
 6. Come to VBS every day!

Conclusion:

1. We will be blessed if we will listen to the Word of God.
2. God will teach us how to be saved and how to get to Heaven.
3. Continue to read and study you Bible every day.

CLIMBING BIBLE MOUNTAINS

Lesson Two Elijah on Mount Carmel

Text: 1 Kings 18:17-46

Plan of Salvation: *Believing*

Introduction:

1. In our last lesson, we learned the importance of hearing the word of God.
 2. On Mount Sinai, Moses heard from God in a burning bush and when He gave the Ten Commandments.
 3. This lesson takes us to another mountain – Mount Carmel – almost 600 years after the time of Moses.
 4. On this mountain, the prophet Elijah would do battle with the prophets of the false god, Baal.
 5. From this event, we learn the importance of having faith in God.
- I. Elijah's Conflict with Ahab
- A. Ahab was the most wicked king to reign in Israel (1 Kings 16:30).
 - B. His wife was Jezebel, and she was even more wicked than he was.
 1. Jezebel was not a Jew, but the daughter of the pagan king of Zidon.
 2. He was called Ethbaal, meaning, "with Baal."
 3. They worshipped false gods and idols, especially Baal.
 - C. Together, they brought great sins into the northern kingdom of Israel.
 1. They worshipped the false god, Baal (1 Kings 16:31).
 2. They built a temple and altar to Baal (1 Kings 16:32).
 3. They built and worshipped the grove or Asherah (1 Kings 16:33).
 4. Jezebel attempted to kill all the prophets of God (1 Kings 18:4).
 - D. Because of the king's wickedness and idolatry, Elijah confronted him with the Word of the Lord.
 - E. He informed Ahab that there would be no rain or even dew in the land until God gave the word (1 Kings 17:1).
 - F. Following this, Elijah was told by God to hide in the wilderness – probably because Jezebel was trying to kill all the prophets (1 Kings 17:2-3).
 - G. While he was there, God miraculously provided for him.
 1. He was fed by ravens (1 Kings 17:4-6).
 2. He was fed by a widow whose supply of meal and oil was miraculously maintained (1 Kings 17:7-16).
 - H. Also, while he was living with the widow of Zarephath, he raised her son from the dead (1 Kings 17:17-24).
 - I. In the meantime, Israel suffered a terrible drought and a devastating famine.

- II. Elijah's Contest with the Prophets of Baal
- A. After three years and six months, God determined to send rain on Israel (1 Kings 18:1; James 5:17-18).
 - B. God sent Elijah to Ahab to offer a challenge to him and his false god (18:2).
 - C. Upon seeing Elijah, Ahab accused him of causing all the trouble in Israel (18:17).
 1. It was God who had sent the drought and famine upon Israel.
 2. Elijah was just the messenger – the one who informed the king of God's will
 3. Ahab may have thought he was attacking Elijah, but he was actually attacking and accusing God.
 4. Even today, those who tell others what God's Word teaches are often accused of causing trouble and attacked as enemies (cf. Gal. 4:16).
 - D. The truth was, God was punishing Israel because of the idolatry introduced by Ahab and Jezebel (18:18).
 - E. So, God – through Elijah – is going to prove to the king and the people that He is the one, true God and that Baal is powerless.
 - F. First, Elijah told the king to gather 450 prophets of Baal and bring them to Mount Carmel.
 1. Usually, when we think of this story we only mention the 450 prophets of Baal.
 2. However, there were also 400 prophets of the Asherah (the grove).
{According to verse 22, it is possible that only the prophets of Baal came up to Mount Carmel.}
 3. Baal was a male deity and worshipped by Ahab and the men.
 4. The Asherah was a female deity and worshipped by Jezebel and the women.
 5. Jezebel was so devoted to this false religion that she fed 400 of the prophets from her own table.
 - G. The location of Mount Carmel was significant.
 1. From this mountain, one could look to the west out over the Mediterranean Sea for any sign of rain.
 2. To the east was Jezreel, the place where Jezebel was residing at the time (cf. 18:44-46).
 3. Thus, even wicked Queen Jezebel would be able to see what God did on Mount Carmel.
 - H. When Elijah, the prophets of Baal and the people of Israel were assembled upon the mountain, Elijah issued the challenge.
 1. He told the people they must decide who they were going to follow – God or Baal.
 2. The people refused to choose, so Elijah would prove to them who they should follow.
 - I. He reminded them that the battle was 450 against 1 – Elijah was standing alone against the prophets of Baal.
 - J. Then, he established the rules for the competition.
 1. They would each choose a bullock to offer for a sacrifice.
 2. They would each lay the sacrifice on the wood of the altar, but neither would light a fire under it.

3. They, they would call on Baal and Elijah would call on Jehovah and it would be seen which one would answer by sending fire upon the altar.
- K. From the morning until noon, the prophets of Baal called upon him with no response or result.
- L. At noon, Elijah began to mock them and their god.
1. He said maybe Baal was talking to himself or to someone else and didn't hear them.
 2. He said perhaps Baal was gone to some private place and couldn't hear them.
 3. He said that it is possible that Baal is taking a trip – maybe he was on vacation.
 4. He said it could be that Baal was asleep and need to be awakened.
- M. The prophets of Baal began to cut themselves until the bled to try to gain the attention of their god.
- N. They continued to cry unto him until the time of the evening sacrifice, with no reply from Baal.
- O. Finally, Elijah began to repair the altar of God on the mountain.
1. He used 12 stones, one for each tribe of Israel.
 2. He arranged them into an altar according to God's instructions.
 3. Then, he dug a trench around the altar – deep enough to hold about 6 gallons of water.
 4. He arranged the wood on the altar and then placed the bullock upon it.
 5. Finally, they poured 12 barrels of water over the altar – so much so that the trench around the altar was filled.
- P. At the time of the evening sacrifice, Elijah prayed to God.
1. He prayed for God to let the people know that He was the true God.
 2. He prayed for God to demonstrate that Elijah was a true prophet and that he was simply obeying the Word of Jehovah.
- Q. When Elijah finished his prayer, God sent down fire from Heaven upon the altar.
1. So powerful was this fire that it consumed the sacrifice, the wood, the stones, the dust and even the water that was in the trench!
 2. This was not lightning.
 3. It was not a normal fire that burns upward.
 4. Adam Clarke wrote: "The action of this fire was in every case downward, contrary to the nature of all earthly and material fire."
- R. The people fell on their faces and began to proclaim the truth – Jehovah is God!
1. It is interesting to note that Elijah's name means, "Yah (Jehovah) is God."
 2. It is almost as if they began chanting Elijah's name – not to give the glory to him, but to acknowledge that he was right, Jehovah is God.
- S. Thus, the prophets of Baal were proved to be false prophets and Baal was proved to be no god at all.
- T. So, the prophets of Baal were captured and put to death.
- U. The story ends with Elijah warning Ahab that rain is coming and finally the drought in Israel is ended.

III. Elijah's Lesson on Faith

- A. Elijah teaches some very important lesson about faith – believing and trusting in God.
- B. True, Bible faith is trust joined with obedience.
- C. When Elijah heard the Word of God, he obeyed it.
 - 1. He gave Ahab the bad news that there would be no rain, even though it put his life in danger.
 - 2. He fled into the wilderness, trusting that God would provide for him.
 - 3. He returned to confront Ahab and the prophets of Baal, even though he was greatly outnumbered.
 - 4. He prayed for rain, knowing that God would hear and answer his prayer.
- D. When we learn God's Word – by studying the Bible – we must believe and obey it.
- E. If we do not obey, we do not have faith!
 - 1. Faith comes from hearing God's Word (Romans 10:17).
 - 2. Faith consists of belief, trust and obedience (Hebrews 11:6).
 - 3. Faith without obedience is dead (James 2:14-26).
 - 4. Faith leads to repentance, confession of faith and baptism (Acts 20:21; Acts 8:36-39; Mark 16:15-16).

Conclusion:

- 1. Do you have faith in God?
- 2. Are you obedient to His Word?
- 3. Let us learn from Elijah that God will take care of those who obey His commands.

CLIMBING BIBLE MOUNTAINS

Lesson Three

Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration

Text: Matthew 17:1-8; Mark 9:2-8; Luke 9:28-36

Plan of Salvation: *Repentance*

Introduction:

1. As we begin this lesson, let us reflect on the first two studies of this week.
 - a. Moses – on Mount Sinai, he learned the importance of hearing God’s Word.
 - b. Elijah – on Mount Carmel, he learned the importance of faith in God.
 2. These two men play an important role in today’s lesson, even though they had been dead for hundreds of years when our story takes place.
 3. With this lesson, we come to the New Testament and a monumental event in the life of Jesus.
 4. This study will focus on the glory of Jesus – the fact that He is the Son of God.
 5. Yet, it will also teach us the importance of repentance.
- I. The Transfiguration (Luke 9:28-31)
- A. Jesus took Peter, James and John with Him up on a mountain to pray.
 1. The Bible does not tell us the name of this mountain.
 2. Many have speculated, and most commentators think that it was Mount Hermon.
 3. Others have suggested Mount Tabor or even Jebel Jermuk (ISBE).
 4. The identity of the mountain is not important, but what transpired upon it is significant.
 - B. While He was praying, Jesus began to undergo a dramatic change.
 1. Matthew says that He was “transfigured before them.”
 2. The Greek word is *metamorphothe* (μεταμορφωθη) from which we get our word “metamorphosis.”
 3. This word was used by the Greeks in their mythology to refer to a god or goddess who changed into another form, such as an animal or man.
 4. Luke says that the form of His appearance became different – “the appearance of his face was altered” (ESV).
 5. Again, Matthew tells us how His appearance changed – “His face did shine as the sun.”
 - C. This change in appearance demonstrated the glory of Christ.
 1. This reminds us of Moses’ appearance after he had seen God on Mount Sinai.
 2. His face had begun to shine because he had been in the presence of God (Exodus 34:29-35).
 3. When Peter described this event later, he said that he was an eyewitness of Jesus’ majesty and glory (2 Peter 1:16-18).

4. In other words, the transfiguration revealed the true nature of Jesus – He is the Son of God (cf. John 1:1-3, 14).
- D. Not only did his face change, but also his clothing was altered.
1. Matthew says his clothing was as “white as the light.”
 2. Mark says it was “shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them.”
 3. Luke uses the words “white” and “glistening” to describe them.
 4. The word for “glistening” means, “to send forth like lightning; to shine, be radiant (Thayer); to lighten forth, glistening (Strong); flashing as with the brilliance of lightning (Vincent).”
- E. While Jesus’ appearance changed before the disciples, two more men appeared and began talking with Him – Moses and Elijah.
1. Imagine being able to see great heroes of the Bible like Moses and Elijah!
 2. Peter, James and John had never seen these two men before, but God enabled them to recognize both Moses and Elijah.
 3. There is a very important lesson in this event – THE DEAD STILL EXIST!
 4. Moses and Elijah had been dead for hundreds of years, yet they were still alive in the spiritual realm.
 5. Even though they had died, they did not cease to be themselves – Moses was still Moses and Elijah was still Elijah.
 6. Sometimes, people will wonder if we will know the people in Heaven and if we will still know our loved ones there.
 7. According to what happened on this occasion, we will!
- F. When they appeared, they appeared in glory.
1. This reminds us that the reward for the faithful is glory.
 2. “Heaven will surely be worth it all!”
- G. Only Luke records what Moses and Elijah were talking about with Jesus.
1. They were talking about His death that would take place in Jerusalem.
 2. The word “decease” is the Greek word *exodos* (εξοδος), meaning “exit, departing.” {*It is also the title of the book, Exodus.* }
 3. This pictures death as a “way out” for the faithful follower of God.
 4. It is a way out of this life and into eternal life with God.
 5. Certainly, this would be a source of great comfort and encouragement for Jesus as He prepared to face Calvary.

II. The Transition (Luke 9:32-36)

- A. Peter, James and John were very tired and “heavy with sleep” while Jesus prayed upon the mountain.
- B. However, when the transfiguration took place, they became “fully awake” (ASV).
1. Imagine climbing a mountain and being so exhausted from the climb that all you want to do is sleep.
 2. Then imagine being awakened to a sight such as they witnessed – Jesus in a glorified state speaking with Moses and Elijah!
- C. As Peter, James and John watched, Moses and Elijah began to depart.
- D. Apparently not wanting this amazing event to end, Peter spoke to the Lord.
1. First, Peter declared that it was good for them to be there.

- a. Anytime one can be in the presence of the Lord, it is a good thing.
 - b. This should cause us to have a desire to assemble and worship (Psalm 122:1; Hebrews 10:25).
 - c. This should cause us to have a desire to pray.
 - d. This should cause us to have a desire to study God's Word.
2. Then, Peter suggested building three tents or shelters – one for Moses, one for Elijah and one for Jesus.
 3. The Bible gives several reasons and indications as to why Peter made this suggestion.
 - a. First, he had seen that Moses and Elijah were departing and he likely wanted them to stay.
 - b. Second, he had just been awakened, which could have affected his thinking.
 - c. Third, Luke tells us that he made this suggestion “not knowing what he said.” *{Probably, he was overwhelmed by the situation.}*
 - d. Finally, Mark says that he did not know “what to say; for they were sore afraid.”
- E. While Peter was speaking, a cloud overshadowed the group.
1. Luke tells us that they feared as they entered into the cloud.
 2. Matthew tells us that it was a bright cloud that overshadowed them.
 3. This reminds us of God's presence descending upon Mount Sinai to speak to the Israelites (Exodus 19 – 20).
 4. We will see this idea again in Lesson Five, for Jesus ascended into a cloud (Acts 1:9).
 5. This cloud was a manifestation of the presence of God who needed to teach Peter and the others an important lesson.
- F. From within this cloud, God spoke and His voice was heard by the disciples.
1. God said, “This is my beloved Son.”
 - a. He had said this previously at Jesus' baptism (Matt. 3:17).
 - b. This is a statement about the true identity of Jesus – He is the only-begotten Son of God (John 3:16; etc.).
 - c. This also declares the difference between Jesus and Moses or Elijah – they were only men; He is God.
 2. According to Matthew's account, God said, “In whom I am well pleased.”
 - a. The tense of the verb in the Greek is aorist, meaning that God was pleased then and would continue to be pleased in Jesus.
 - b. Jesus' life and teaching was pleasing to God.
 - c. His sacrifice pleased God (Isaiah 53:10-11; Hebrews 7:25-27).
 3. Finally, God said, “Hear him.”
 - a. Moses was the one through whom God gave His law to the children of Israel.
 - b. Thus, he came to symbolize the Law of God.
 - c. Elijah was one of the greatest of all the prophets in the Old Testament.
 - d. Thus, he came to symbolize the prophets of God.

- e. Yet, as great as Moses and Elijah were, they could not compare to Jesus.
 - f. Thus, God declared that the time of listening to Moses and Elijah (the Law and the prophets) was done.
 - g. Now, men are commanded to hear Jesus (Hebrews 1:1-2; Colossians 2:14-16).
 - h. In other words, we are no longer under the Old Testament, but now are accountable to the New Testament, the Gospel of Christ.
- G. After hearing the voice of God, Peter, James and John were afraid and fell on their faces.
- H. When they looked around, Jesus was standing before them, alone.
- I. As they came down from the mountain, Jesus commanded them not to tell anyone what had happened until He was risen from the dead.
- 1. Thus, the transfiguration also confirmed the resurrection of the dead.
 - 2. While Moses and Elijah talked with Jesus about His death, Jesus spoke of His resurrection.
 - 3. There is life beyond the grave!

III. The Teaching

- A. The change that takes place in this passage teaches some very important lessons.
- B. Jesus changed from a human state to a glorified one, and back.
 - 1. This proved His deity.
 - 2. This proved His power.
 - 3. This proved His superiority.
 - 4. This proved His authority.
- C. God's Law for man was seen to be changed from the Old Testament to the New Testament.
 - 1. No longer is man to look to Moses or Elijah for instruction.
 - 2. No longer can we justify our beliefs and practices based on the Old Law.
 - 3. Instead, we must look to the Word of the Son of God – the Gospel.
- D. This idea of change illustrates the principle of repentance.
 - 1. Repentance is a change.
 - a. Repentance is produced by godly sorrow – sorrow that our sins have hurt God (2 Corinthians 7:9-11).
 - b. Repentance is a change of mind, heart and attitude toward sin – one decides to turn away from sin and toward God (Matthew 21:29)
 - c. Repentance is acknowledged by a change in action – the way that one lives (Luke 17:1-4; Matthew 3:8; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 26:20).
 - 2. Repentance is essential to salvation (Luke 13:3, 5; Acts 17:30-31).
 - 3. Just like they (and we) had to turn away from the Old Law and turn to the New, when we repent we must turn away from sin and turn to God.

Conclusion:

- 1. The story of the transfiguration shows our need to hear, believe and obey Jesus.
- 2. He is the Son of God, and His Gospel is our only hope of salvation (Romans 1:16).
- 3. Yet, to obey Him truly, we must be willing to repent.

CLIMBING BIBLE MOUNTAINS

Lesson Four Jesus on Mount Calvary

Text: Luke 23:33-47

Plan of Salvation: *Confession*

Introduction:

1. In our last lesson, we were able to read of the true nature of Jesus – He is the Son of God.
2. We were able to see His glory as He was transfigured before Peter, James and John.
3. This same Jesus, the glorified Son of God, went to Mount Calvary to endure the suffering of the cross.
4. In this lesson, we will study Jesus' death and what it means to all men.
5. We will also emphasize the importance of confessing our belief in Jesus as our Savior.

I. The Purpose of the Cross on Calvary

- A. Luke states quite simply that when they came to Calvary, "they crucified him."
- B. But, why was Jesus crucified? Consider first from a human perspective.
 1. Jesus was crucified because of greed (Matthew 26:14-16).
 2. Jesus was crucified because of envy (Matthew 27:17-18).
 3. Jesus was crucified because of hate (Matthew 27:20).
 4. Jesus was crucified because of unbelief (John 1:11).
 5. Jesus was crucified because of neglect (John 5:39).
 6. Jesus was crucified because of rejection (John 5:40).
 7. Jesus was crucified because of hypocrisy (Acts 1:15-20).
 8. Jesus was crucified because of wickedness (Acts 2:22-23).
 9. Jesus was crucified because of denial (Acts 3:14).
 10. Jesus was crucified because of ignorance (Acts 3:17).
- C. Now, consider the reason for Jesus' crucifixion from God's perspective.
 1. Jesus was crucified because of man's guilt.
 - a. All have sinned (Romans 3:9-10, 23).
 - b. The punishment for sin is death (Romans 6:23).
 - c. Thus, someone had to pay the price of death for our sins.
 2. Jesus was crucified because of God's love.
 - a. God loves the whole world (John 3:16).
 - b. He loves us so much that He would sacrifice His Son (Rom. 5:8).
 3. Jesus was crucified because of God's grace.
 - a. Even though He loves us, God does not owe us anything.
 - b. Yet, He gave His Son as a gift for our salvation (Eph. 2:8-9).
 4. Jesus was crucified because of God's righteousness (Romans 3:24-26).
 - a. Though it hurt God to allow His Son's death, it was necessary.
 - b. There is no forgiveness without bloodshed (Hebrews 9:22).

5. Jesus was crucified because of God's power.
 - a. The Gospel is God's power to save (Romans 1:16).
 - b. Yet, without the blood of Christ it would be powerless.
 6. Jesus was crucified because of man's hope (1 John 2:1-2, 25).
 7. Jesus was crucified because of man's obedience.
 - a. Only those who obey will be washed by His blood (Hebrews 5:9).
 - b. Those who do not obey will be punished (2 Thessalonians 1:6-9).
- D. So, Jesus was crucified to take away our sins.

II. The Pain of the Cross on Calvary

- A. As we think of the crucifixion, let us remember who Jesus is.
1. He is the only-begotten Son of God (Luke 23:34).
 2. He is the Messiah, the Christ, God's anointed (Luke 23:35).
 3. He is the King of the Jews (Luke 23:37-38).
 - a. Notice that this sign was written in three languages.
 - b. In Hebrew so every Jew could read it
 - c. In Greek so every common man could read it
 - d. In Latin so every Roman could read it
 4. He is innocent, pure from any sin (Luke 23:41).
 5. He is Lord, worthy of man's obedience (Luke 23:42).
 6. He is God, for He is able to forgive sins (Luke 23:43).
- B. In spite of all of these facts and all of His power, Jesus still gave Himself for the sins of the world.
- C. He could have avoided the agony of His death, yet He willingly died for you and me (Matthew 26:53).
- D. Let us consider the pain of the crucifixion.
1. Luke 22:44 – Agony in the Garden
 2. Luke 22:61 – The heartbreak of Peter's denial
 3. Luke 22:63-64 – Beaten by the Jews
 4. Luke 23:16, 22 – The torture of scourging (Matt. 27:26; Mk. 15:15)
 5. John 19:1-3 – The crown of thorns
 6. Matthew 27:28-31 – Beaten by the Roman soldiers (Mark 15:19)
 7. Psalm 22:14 – Bones out of joint
 8. Psalm 22:15 – Thirst
 9. Psalm 22:16 – Hands and feet pierced (Zech. 12:10; Jn. 20:25, 27)
 10. John 19:34 – Side pierced
- E. How thankful are we that Jesus endured the cross for our salvation!
- F. If we are truly thankful, we must be willing to confess our faith in Jesus.
1. If He could endure the cross for us, we should be happy to confess His name.
 2. Confession of faith is essential to salvation (Romans 10:9-10; Acts 8:37; 1 Timothy 6:12-14; Luke 12:8-9).
 3. Yet, we must continue to confess Christ in our daily lives, by the way we live.
 - a. Even if it is unpopular
 - b. Even if it brings persecution

III. The Product of the Cross on Calvary

- A. As He suffered upon the cross, Jesus knew that “all things were now accomplished” (John 19:28).
- B. Thus, He declared, “It is finished [accomplished]” (John 19:30).
- C. But, what did Jesus’ death accomplish?
 - 1. Romans 5:20 – It reconciled man to God.
 - 2. Colossians 1:20 – It made peace.
 - 3. Ephesians 1:6-7 – It procured forgiveness.
 - 4. Ephesians 2:13 – It restored fellowship.
 - 5. Hebrews 9:12 – It obtained eternal redemption.
 - 6. Hebrews 9:26 – It put away [abolished] sin.
 - 7. Hebrews 13:12 – It provided sanctification.
 - 8. 1 Peter 1:18-19 – It redeemed the lost.
 - 9. 1 John 1:7 – It enabled cleansing.
 - 10. Revelation 12:11 – It assured man of victory.
- D. We would be lost without the cross.

Conclusion:

- 1. It is sad to think about the contrast between Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration and Jesus on Mount Calvary.
- 2. Yet, it is only because of His willingness to suffer on the cross that we have the hope of Heaven.
- 3. Do you appreciate His sacrifice? Will you confess Him before men?
- 4. May we ever serve Jesus because of His service for us.
- 5. May we ever love Him, because He first loved us.

CLIMBING BIBLE MOUNTAINS

Lesson Five Jesus on the Mount of Olives

Text: Acts 1:9-12

Plan of Salvation: *Baptism*

Introduction:

1. In our last lesson, we studied about Jesus' death upon the cross of Calvary.
2. While we are saddened to think of how terribly He suffered, we are also joyful and thankful for the gift of salvation purchased by His blood.
3. Had Jesus simply died on the cross, it would have been a sad story indeed.
4. But, the cross was not the end; instead, it was only the beginning!
5. For, after He suffered on Mount Calvary, Jesus rose from the dead and ascended back to the Father in Heaven from the Mount of Olives.

I. The Resurrection of Jesus

- A. Following His death, Jesus' body was taken by Joseph of Arimathaea and laid in a tomb (Luke 23:50-53).
 1. It was a nearby tomb (John 19:41-42).
 2. It was a new tomb (John 19:41).
 3. It was a borrowed tomb (Matthew 27:59-60).
 4. It became an empty tomb (Mark 16:1-4).
- B. The tomb was sealed, with a stone rolled in front of the entrance, and guarded by Roman soldiers (Matthew 27:62-66).
- C. However, on the first day of the week, an angel descended from Heaven and rolled back the stone from the tomb (Matthew 28:1-3).
 1. As this happened, there was an earthquake.
 2. The Roman soldiers trembled with fear and fainted (Matthew 28:4).
- D. As Jesus' disciples looked into the tomb, they found it to be empty (Matthew 28:5-6; Mark 16:5-8; Luke 24:1-12; John 20:1-13).
 1. The empty tomb proved the resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:20-23).
 2. The empty tomb fulfilled Jesus' promises (Matthew 12:40; 16:21; 17:22-23; 20:17-19).
 3. The empty tomb fulfilled Old Testament prophecy (Psalm 16:8-10; Acts 2:25-31; 13:35-38; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4).
 4. The empty tomb proved Jesus' deity (Acts 2:22-24; Romans 1:3-4).
 5. The empty tomb provides hope for man (1 Corinthians 15).
- E. Jesus had been raised from the dead!
- F. Following His resurrection, Jesus appeared several times to His disciples.
 1. John 20:11-12 – First, to Mary Magdalene
 2. Matthew 28:1-10 – To women at the tomb
 3. Luke 24:13ff – To two disciples on the road to Emmaus

4. Luke 24:34 – To Peter (1 Corinthians 15:5)
 5. John 20:19-23 – To 10 apostles (minus Thomas)
 6. John 20:26-28 – To all 11 apostles (1 Corinthians 15:5)
 7. John 21:1-23 – To disciples on the Sea of Galilee
 8. 1 Corinthians 15:6 – To over 500 disciples
 9. 1 Corinthians 15:7 – To James
 10. 1 Corinthians 15:7 – To all the apostles
 11. Matthew 28:16-20 – To the apostles on a mountain in Galilee
 12. Acts 1:3-9 – To the apostles just before His ascension
 13. Acts 9:1ff; 22:3ff – To Saul of Tarsus (1 Corinthians 15:8)
- G. Finally, it was time for Him to return to His Father in Heaven.
- H. The resurrection of Jesus teaches us an important lesson about baptism.
1. Baptism includes a death to sin, a burial in water, and a resurrection from the water (Romans 6:3-6).
 2. In baptism, we reenact the death burial and resurrection of Jesus.
 3. It is only in being resurrected that we have new life in Jesus (6:4).
 4. It does not make sense for one to be saved and have new life and then to be buried in baptism! *-You do not bury living people!-*
 5. The Bible teaches that baptism is essential to salvation – for the remission (forgiveness) of sins (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16; Galatians 3:26-27; 1 Peter 3:20-21).
 6. If we want to obey the Lord and have our sins forgiven, we must be baptized!
- II. The Rising of Jesus
- A. The ascension of Jesus is an important part of the Gospel.
 - B. Jesus ascended back to Heaven from the Mount of Olives (Acts 1:12).
 1. This mountain was located to the east of Jerusalem.
 2. It was about a mile from the city.
 3. Bethany was located on the other side of the Mount (Luke 24:50-51).
 - C. The Bible gives certain details about Jesus' ascension.
 1. It occurred 40 days after His resurrection (Acts 1:3).
 2. He was taken up or, literally, raised up into the sky (Acts 1:9).
 3. The 11 apostles witnessed this event and watched Him leave (Acts 1:9-10).
 4. As He ascended, a cloud took Him in and hid Him from the view of the apostles (Acts 1:9).
 5. Though He left earth, He was received into Heaven (Mark 16:19; Psalm 24:7-10; Daniel 7:13-14).
 6. He was seated at the right hand of God (Mark 16:19).
 - D. Jesus ascended to declare His deity (John 6:56-62; 20:17).
 - E. Jesus ascended to send the Spirit (John 16:7, 13).
 - F. Jesus ascended to mediate for man (Hebrews 9:6-15, 24; 7:23-25).
 - G. Jesus ascended to chart a course (1 Corinthians 15:20-26; Hebrews 2:10; 6:17-20).
 - H. Jesus ascended to prepare a place (John 14:1-6).
 - I. Jesus ascended to receive His reign.

III. The Reign of Jesus

- A. In a vision, Daniel saw that Jesus received His kingdom when He ascended back to Heaven (Daniel 7:13-14).
- B. Jesus Himself taught that this was true (Luke 19:12-15).
- C. Thus, Jesus returned to Heaven as a conquering hero, ready to receive the rewards of His great victory – His kingdom, the church (Psalm 24:7-10).
 - 1. He had fought and won against temptation (Hebrews 4:15).
 - 2. He had fought and won against sin (1 Peter 2:21-23).
 - 3. He had fought and won against death (1 Corinthians 15:55-57).
 - 4. He had fought and won against Satan (Hebrews 2:14-15).
- D. His kingdom came into existence on the Day of Pentecost following His ascension (Acts 2).
- E. He now reigns over His kingdom – the church (Matthew 16:18-19) – as King of kings and Lord of lords (Ephesians 1:20-23; Revelation 1:9; Hebrews 12:28).
- F. He will continue to reign until the end of time when He returns to raise His followers from the dead and carry them home to Heaven (1 Corinthians 15:24-26).

IV. The Return of Jesus

- A. As Jesus ascended into Heaven, two angels appeared and spoke to His apostles (Acts 1:10).
- B. They reminded them that the same Jesus who had ascended would return one day (Acts 1:11).
- C. It is absolutely certain that Jesus will return (John 14:1-6; 2 Peter 3:1-15).
- D. When He does, the world will be destroyed (2 Peter 3).
- E. The wicked will be raised and punished (John 5:28-29).
- F. But, the righteous will be resurrected – just as Jesus was – and they will ascend to meet the Lord in Heaven – just as Jesus did (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).
- G. Are you ready to meet the Lord when He returns? Are you prepared to follow Jesus into Heaven? (Revelation 22:14, 17)

Conclusion:

- 1. God has given us a plan of salvation.
 - a. Hear the Gospel
 - b. Believe in Jesus
 - c. Repent of sins
 - d. Confess faith in Christ
 - e. Be baptized for forgiveness
- 2. The stories we have studied this week have helped to emphasize this plan.
- 3. As VBS comes to an end, let us remember the views that we have had from these Bible mountains of Moses, Elijah and Jesus.