



BIBLE ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUESTIONS

AND INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT THE HOLY WORD OF GOD

VOLUME 2

JUNE 2011

ISSUE 4

BEREAN BIBLE INSTITUTE, INC.

PO BOX 587, SLINGER, WI 53086

Answers by the faculty of Berean Bible Institute or compiled from the works of mid-Acts Grace authors.

BIBLE ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUESTIONS

Quite a bit of interest was generated this year about the time of the Lord's coming for His Church, an event referred to as the "Rapture." This interest was generated by a radio minister who predicted May 21st as the date when the true believers would be raptured. The ministry he heads up even advertised this message on highway billboards across the country. Explaining why the Rapture didn't happen as scheduled, he said it did take place on the day he said it would, but it was a spiritual event rather than a physical one. (There have been a number of other end-time date setting proclamations made over the years and, obviously, none have been correct.)

Undaunted by the failure of his prediction of the Rapture, this man still claims that the second-part of his warning will take place just as he has said it would this coming fall. He says that "we must realize that October 21, 2011 will be the final day of earth existence." In making his predictions, this man was, and is, very dogmatic about their accuracy, claiming Biblical authority to make them. It seems that he believes that God has given him alone the needed understanding of Scripture to figure out these dates. And, by the way, he previously predicted Christ's return to Rapture the Church to take place in 1994. Obviously it didn't happen then either.

When the Rapture of the Church does take place, it will be a literal physical "catching away" of God's people from this world (I Thes. 4:13-18;

cf. I Cor. 15:51-53; Phil. 3:20-21). It is something that believers are to look forward to with joyful anticipation (Titus 2:11-13). We hope it will be sooner rather than later, but we are not to set dates. (The Greek word "Maranatha" found in I Corinthians 16:22 means "O Lord, come!")

Should anybody be concerned that the world will be destroyed in October? No, the earth will be around for at least another one thousand and seven years before it is renovated by fire. After the Rapture of the Church, the seven years of the Tribulation will take place to complete the seventy weeks of years as prophesied by Daniel (Dan. 9:24-27; Rev. 11:3; 13:5). Following the seven year Tribulation, Jesus Christ will reestablish David's kingdom as His own and expand its rule over the whole world. He will reign over this kingdom for one thousand years before the final judgment of the unsaved takes place (Rev. 20:4-6, 11-15). Then there will be a New Heaven and a New Earth in which the righteous will dwell in His presence forever (Rev. 21:1-8ff.). This means that we don't have to worry about any predictions about the end of the world. Nor should the speculations about the expiration of the Mayan calendar in 2012 being a sign that the end is near trouble us.

While we can know a lot about the future from prophecies found in the Bible, the Scriptures give us no specific dates as to when the Rapture, the Second Coming, or the Final Judgment will take place. Just the opposite is true, when the apostles asked the Lord Jesus if He was going

(continued on page 2)

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." II Tim. 3:16



BIBLE ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUESTIONS

AND INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT THE HOLY WORD OF GOD

(BIBLE ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUESTIONS cont. from page 1)

to restore the Kingdom to Israel right away, He answered; *"it is not for you to know the times and seasons, which the Father has put in His own power"* (Acts 1:7; cf. Mk. 13:31-32). It is right to be looking for the Savior because His appearing for His Church is the believer's Blessed Hope. It is wrong to set dates because He has not given specific times. Bible teachers who set dates betray those who are taken in by them because they produce a false expectation that destroys the faith of many when their predictions fail. It also gives cause for unbelievers to scoff at Christianity in general, to call into question the reliability of God's Word, and to become suspicious of all those who minister the Word. Instead of being concerned about when He will come, let us be busy serving Him "until He comes" by making the glorious Gospel of God's Grace known to a world of lost sinners in desperate need of the Savior as we abide in Him. Maranatha!

Because Christ Lives,

W. Edward Bedore

Dr. W. Edward Bedore, Editor

QUESTION: The subject of the "Rapture" is controversial to some. I do not see it happening quite like the dreams of Margaret MacDonald that John Nelson Darby interpreted and later told to C.I. Scofield who included it in the second edition of his study Bible in America. I see a more climatic event after the Tribulation, a "post-tribulation Rapture." What is your view on this?

ANSWER: In recent years many have challenged the doctrine of a pre-tribulation Rapture saying there is no historical evidence for it. The most common is that the pre-tribulation Rapture was

a new idea that originated with a fifteen year old Irish girl named Margaret MacDonald around 1830 who had a prophetic revelation that the true Church would be raptured before the anti-Christ would be revealed. It is said that J.N. Darby learned about the pre-tribulation Rapture from Miss MacDonald and C.I. Scofield in turn learned it from Darby and popularized it by putting it in the notes of his widely distributed study Bible. However, there are some historical facts that are problematic to this theory. One is that Darby had already developed his pre-tribulation views by 1827. Another is that there is no hard evidence that proves this theory, in spite of what has been said about it. Also, Morgan Edwards, who was a prominent Baptist of the 1700's, wrote a pre-tribulational paper almost 90 years before Miss MacDonald's supposed pre-tribulational revelation.

These kinds of arguments against the Rapture do not provide a basis for confirming or refuting this or any other doctrine. Our court of appeal, both first and last, must be the Scriptures alone. Taken at face value, the Word of God will be seen to be Dispensational in nature and pre-tribulational in particular. (A more in depth article on the Rapture that includes a comparison chart between the Rapture and the Second Coming is available from BBI for \$5.00 postage paid.)

QUESTION: I believe that II Corinthians 5:19 means that through the Cross Jesus Christ reconciled the whole world, taking sin completely off the bar of God's judgment. I know that you take a different position on this, but didn't Pastor C.R. Stam agree with my understanding? Please consider his remarks in his commentary on "Galatians" (pgs. 37-38) and "Things That Differ" (pgs. 210-211).

(continued on page 3)



BIBLE ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUESTIONS

AND INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT THE HOLY WORD OF GOD

(BIBLE ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUESTIONS cont. from page 2)

ANSWER: As suggested, I read Pastor Stam's comments in "Things That Differ" and "Galatians" in regards to II Corinthians 5:19. All I can say is that Pastor Stam believed and taught from the same position that I do, that apart from faith in Christ no one is reconciled to God nor are their sins forgiven.

It is clear in "Things That Differ" that he believed that individuals must receive Jesus Christ as Savior in order to be reconciled to God. Please read from the bottom of page 210 through the top of page 212 again. The Good News is not that everyone "has been reconciled" through the blood of Jesus Christ, as you believe. Instead, it is that "reconciliation is offered to all who are willing to receive it through faith in Christ as Savior." Pastor Stam made this clear in the multitude of books, booklets, articles and tracts that he wrote.

Pastor Stam's remarks on the bottom of page 37 and the top of page 38 of his commentary on Galatians do not give support to your position either. His statement that "it has well been said, it is no longer the sin question, but the Son question" does not prove in any way that he believed that everyone's sins are already forgiven. Notice that he follows this up by saying; "If men remain unreconciled to God, it will be because of their rejection of Christ and His redemptive work." What he means is that it is not a question of whether a person is a sinner or not, because all are, but it is a Son question because each sinner must choose to trust in Jesus Christ alone for the forgiveness of sins or they will die in them.

In his book, "Man, His Nature and Destiny," in regards to the Great White Throne Judgment, Pastor Stam says, "It is the judgment at which all the remaining dead—all the *unsaved* dead—will stand before God the Son to answer for their sins" (pg. 120, italics in original). Obviously he

did not believe that everybody's sins were automatically taken away or forgiven because of the Cross. Of course, Pastor Stam is not the final authority but God's Word is. I do believe that he has accurately represented what the Scriptures actually teach on this important topic.

QUESTION: I read in a Christian magazine that when Samuel appeared to Saul in I Samuel 28:6-20 that it wasn't actually Samuel, but an apparition that looked like Samuel appeared. Is this the right understanding?

ANSWER: No, it is not a proper interpretation of this passage. An apparition is an unexpected phenomenon in which a ghostly figure, or phantom appears. The actual appearance of Samuel was a surprise to the woman who was a medium or spiritist. She undoubtedly expected an apparition consisting of a demon masquerading as Samuel. Saul on the other hand had come to the woman in an effort to make contact with Samuel. The woman was not able to call Samuel up from Sheol/Hades but God sent him to deliver a message of doom to His disobedient servant, Saul. It is stated clearly in this passage "that the woman saw Samuel" (v.12), that "Samuel said to Saul" (v. 15), that "then said Samuel" (v. 16), and that Saul was frightened "because of the words of Samuel" (v.20). It is very clear that it was Samuel that "came up" (v. 11, 14-15). Without direct Scriptural evidence to the contrary we must simply take the words of the Bible at face value. Does it make a difference what we believe about this? I think it does because the authority of Scripture is attacked when we try to make the Bible say something other than what it says by undermining people's faith in the reliability of God's Word.

QUESTION: My question regards Romans 7:12. Paul separates law and commandment in this verse, why does he differentiate between them?

(continued on page 4)



BIBLE ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUESTIONS

AND INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT THE HOLY WORD OF GOD

(BIBLE ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUESTIONS cont. from page 3)

How do you explain the commandment being “holy, just, and good,” but the law is only said to be “good”?

ANSWER: Romans 7:12 reads “wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good.” I believe Paul is using the terms law and commandment interchangeably in this passage (see Rom. 7:7-14). He is employing a literary device referred to as “parallelism” that is usually used for emphasis. It is common in Hebrew poetry. Paul has combined two forms in this passage. One is referred to as “comparison parallelism” in which the second line repeats the thoughts of the first using a synonym. The other is “stair-step parallelism.” This form repeats the second line, a part of the first line, and then adds something to complete or expand the thought being conveyed. It seems that the Apostle employed this form of speech here to drive home the point that the problem is not with the law, but with sinful man. He may have been alluding to Psalm 19:7-9 where the law is described as being “perfect, sure, right, pure, true, and righteous.”

INTERESTING BIBLE FACTS

Some Common Sayings Taken from the Bible

“A Lamb to the Slaughter”

Isaiah 53:7 speaks of God’s Elect Servant (Isa. 42:1; 52:13), saying, “He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is

dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.” This, of course, was a prophecy of Jesus Christ and His sacrificial death for the sins of the world. He is identified as “the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” (Joh. 1:29; cc. I Pet. 1:18-19), and He did not protest His being put to death even though He was innocent (see Matt. 26:62-63; 27:14; Lk. 23:9). The phrase “Lamb to the slaughter” in a general sense has come to mean any innocent victim. In a more particular way it is sometimes used to refer to someone who is blamed for someone else’s mistake or failure in the workplace. Used in this way, it is very similar to the term “scapegoat” (see the March 2010 edition of the BABQ).

“Lusting in One’s Heart”

While it was in use before, this saying gained notoriety when then presidential candidate Jimmy Carter admitted in an interview that while he had never committed the act of adultery, he had done so “in his heart.” This was in reference to the Lord’s teaching on adultery: “You have heard it said by them of old time, ‘Thou shalt not commit adultery’: But I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart” (Matt. 5:27-28). The Lord used this illustration to show that sin originates in the heart (see Matt. 15:18-19) and that sinful deeds carried out are symptoms of inherent sinfulness. It also teaches us that our thoughts are as important to God as our actions are. While it is sometimes used irreverently, this saying generally seems to be used in the way the Lord Jesus Christ meant it.

Bible Answers to Bible Questions is published by **Berean Bible Institute** of Slinger, Wisconsin.

All rights reserved. *Bible Answers to Bible Questions* is sent free of charge to all who request it.

Berean Bible Institute, Inc. admits students of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin.

BEREAN BIBLE INSTITUTE
116 Kettle Moraine Drive South
PO Box 587
Slinger, Wisconsin 53086

Phone: (262) 644-5504
Fax: (262) 644-5507
E-mail: <bbi@bereanbibleinstitute.org>
Web: <www.bereanbibleinstitute.org>