



BIBLE ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUESTIONS

AND INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT THE HOLY WORD OF GOD

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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

"And Pharaoh called Abram and said, 'What is this you have done to me? Why did you not tell me that she was your wife?'" (Gen. 12:18).

Not long after Abram, (who the Lord later renamed Abraham, Gen. 17:3-5), had gone into Canaan, he went down into Egypt because of a famine there (Gen. 12:10). Because his wife Sarai, (who the Lord later renamed Sarah, Gen. 17:15), was beautiful woman, Abram feared that the Egyptians would kill him so that she could be taken as a wife by another. So, he instructed Sarai to say she was his sister (she was his half-sister) and not let the Egyptians know that she was his wife (Gen. 12:11-13). As it turned out, Sarai's beauty did result in her being commended to Pharaoh and she was taken to the palace to prepare her for becoming Pharaoh's wife (Gen. 12:14-16). Because the Lord had called Abram to go to Canaan for a special purpose (Gen. 12:1-9) He intervened, plaguing Pharaoh's house to keep him from marrying Sarai (Gen. 12:17). Realizing what had happened, Pharaoh called Abram and confronted him with his lie of deception and sent him away from Egypt (Gen. 12:18-20).

Abram went out by faith when he left his home in Ur of the Chaldeans to go to Canaan. He didn't even know where he was going when he set out (Heb. 11:8). He was simply trusting God to do for him what He had promised. But, when there was a famine in the land that the Lord had called him to, Abram went to Egypt in unbelief. He just didn't believe that the Lord

could provide for him in Canaan and so he went to Egypt where he hoped to have his needs met. But, finding no peace in Egypt, Abram was forced to go back to Canaan where the Lord reaffirmed His promise to give him the land He had called Abram to (Gen. 13:14-18).

Most believers today, if not all of us, can relate to Abram's failure of faith. We desire to trust the Lord with our lives but, so often, we let circumstances overwhelm us and we allow human reasoning to cloud our spiritual understanding. We simply go along with the ways of the world (which Egypt typifies) rather than letting truth from God's Word direct our way of thinking and doing. And we do this knowing that the Scriptures say to *"trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths"* (Prov. 3:5-6) and that the *"thoughts"* and *"ways"* of the Lord are higher than the heavens are above the earth over the thoughts and ways of human wisdom (see Isa. 55:8-9). To guard against this the Apostle Paul tells us that believers are to focus on *"Jesus Christ and Him crucified"* in order that our faith will *"not be in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God"* (see I Cor. 1:18; 2:1-5). Having trusted Christ as Savior, every believer has been positionally raised with Christ and seated with Him in heaven (Eph. 2:6). This being so, we are to set our minds *"on things above, not on things on the earth"* because as believers our *"life is hidden with Christ in God"* (see Col. 3:1-4). Regardless of our situation or circumstances, we are not to look

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"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 Timothy 3:16



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to the world for hope and security. We are to think on Christ, to think like Christ, and by the grace of God, we are to do as Christ would have us do.

Because Christ is Alive!

W. Edward Bedore

Dr. W. Edward Bedore, Editor
BBI Bulletin, BABQ

QUESTION: I just read your very informative article "Hell, Sheol, Hades, Paradise, and the Grave" on your website. I have a question if you don't mind answering. You said, "The term 'Hell' is commonly understood to mean a place of torment where the souls of the wicked go after physical death. This is true." Is it true? Did the souls of wicked people go to a place of torment ever since the expulsion from the Garden? If so, it wasn't mentioned in Genesis, and that's an extremely serious omission. Here's why I'm skeptical: The Old Testament is very clear that God's fiery judgment falls on the wicked in THIS life. I cannot find one verse from the Old Testament that definitively upholds your claim. Are there verses that we could interpret to imply it? Sure. But only when we back read the story of the rich man and Lazarus INTO the Old Testament. I don't think it's consistent with God's character to eternally torture people's souls without first warning them. The Old Testament has no such warning. Your thoughts? Thanks ahead for your response.

ANSWER: First of all it should be pointed out that we do not have all of the details of what God revealed to mankind before the flood. However, we do know that Enoch preached a message about the coming judgment at the Second

Coming of Christ (Jude 14-15). We also know that after Enoch, Noah was "a preacher of righteousness" in the world of old that perished (II Pet. 2:5). Concerning his ministry, we must keep in mind that Noah lived on both sides of the flood. The only definitive information we have about what exactly Enoch and Noah preached is that Enoch foretold the coming of the Lord in the last days "to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him" (see Jude 14-16). Scripture is clear; God did send a prophet to warn the pre-flood world of a coming judgment. The judgment of nations at Christ's coming in "the last days" will result in unbelievers being cast into the place of "everlasting fire" (Matt. 25:41-46). This is the coming of the Lord that Enoch spoke of.

It is important to note that Jude referred to Enoch's prophecy in reference to his own prophecy of warning against heretical and immoral false teachers and the doom "reserved" for them, which is: "the blackness of darkness forever" (Jude 13). And what can the place of everlasting "blackness of darkness" be then the "outer darkness" where there will be "weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. 8:12). This is nothing less than a reference to the Lake of Fire.

The testimony of these two prophets of God reveals that the Lord was doing more in those early days of human history than is recorded for us in Genesis. And the fact that Job, who lived in Abraham's day, knew about a future resurrection of redemption (Job 19:25-27) implies that he knew about a coming judgment as well. Regardless, Jude also tells us that the wicked who perished in Sodom and Gomorrah are doomed to suffer "the vengeance of eternal fire" (Jude 7).

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Another thing that needs to be addressed is the idea that the account of the Rich Man and Lazarus can only be interpreted to imply that the souls of the wicked dead from the Old Testament went to a place of torment at physical death "if we back read" the story into the Old Testament. This simply is not true. The Lord Jesus Himself placed this true account of the fate of these two men on Old Testament ground when He revealed Abraham's presence in Sheol/Hades where Lazarus was in a state of blessedness and the rich man was suffering in torment (see Lk. 16:19-31). We also have to remember that the Lord Jesus' earthly life and ministry was played out on Old Testament (covenant) ground as the New Testament (covenant) was not ratified until after the Cross.

Of course, while these things provide strong evidence that those of the Old Testament were warned about the everlasting judgment they would face if they rebelled against God, they could possibly be questioned by some. But the Lord didn't leave it to us to decide what He did or didn't do in regards to warning all of mankind about His righteous indignation against sin. From Paul's letter to Rome, we learn that *"the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shown it to them. For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: because that, when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise they became fools,"* (see Rom. 1:18-22ff). In Romans 1:18-32 we find a general indictment of all of mankind as sinners worthy only of condemnation. We are also told that they know

that they are "deserving of death" (v.32). And, lest anyone argue that somehow they are not included in this, the Apostle Paul shows that the self-righteous (Rom. 2:1-16) and those of the favored nation of Israel, with all of their advantages, are just as guilty (Rom. 2:17-3:20).

To make sure that nobody misunderstands that the charge of being a sinner includes all of the human race when Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, explains the entrance of sin and death into the world, he goes back to Adam to show that condemnation came upon all through the first man (see Rom. 5:12-14ff). All are equally guilty and equally deserving of the divine judgment of the "second death" which is to be "cast into the Lake of Fire." (see Rev. 20:11-15). And opposed to the idea that whatever judgment might befall the wicked in this life is all there is, the Word of God tells us that *"it is appointed for men to die once, but after this comes the judgment"* (Heb. 9:27). So following physical death is a final judgment. It is referred to as "the Second Death" when the unsaved of all history will be cast into "the Lake of Fire" (Rev. 20:14-15).

God, who is "no respecter of persons" (Acts 10:34) judges in righteousness. All who die in their sins will end up in the same location which is both a place of "outer darkness" and "the Lake of Fire" where there will be "weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. 8:12; 22:13; 25:30; Rev. 14:11; 20:10-15). Regardless of how we think God should carry out His judgments, no amount of reasoning and searching for loopholes will change the reality of the fate of the lost regardless of what era of history they lived in. Like it or not, the other side of the coin of everlasting life that is given through faith is everlasting condemnation that is the result of unbelief. **For an indepth study on this and other related issues see "The State and Place of the Dead: What Happens After We Die" by Dr. W. Edward Bedore. Available from BBI for \$10.00 plus S&H.**



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INTERESTING BIBLE FACTS

"Bible Translations"

The Bible has been translated into more different languages than any other literary work in history. Today, with a population of about 7 billion, there are more than 6,800 languages spoken around the world. Of those, there are over 2,000 that do not have any portion of the Bible in their language. Around the globe, there are 1,223 language groups that have access to the entire New Testament and 471 that have the entire Bible available to them. There are about 250 million people who speak the 2,000+ languages where translation work has yet to begin. (Source, Wycliffe Bible Translators).

COMMON SAYINGS FROM THE BIBLE

"I Wash My Hands of This Matter"

Pontius Pilate wanted to set the Lord Jesus free because he could find no fault in Him and he knew that the religious leaders wanted Him dead because of envy. But, when he realized that they would not consent to let Him live; *"...he took water and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, 'I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it'"* (Matt. 27:24). He then delivered Jesus to be crucified. His attempt to deny his responsibility in putting Him to death did not release him from his guilt though, because, by his own admission he ordered an innocent man to be crucified (see Matt. 27:15-26; Lk. 23:13-25). As an agent of Rome, he represented the nations of the world and the

religious leaders represented Israel, God's chosen nation. While the crucifixion of Jesus Christ was a travesty of justice, it was God's love for all of mankind that allowed it to happen so that His Son could die for the sins of the whole world.

The phrase, "I wash my hands of this matter," or something similar, is often used by people today in reference to no longer wanting to be involved in some situation or to deal with some issue. Depending on their individual circumstances, they might be released of responsibility of whatever the matter is about or, like Pilate, they might still be accountable, whether they accept it or not.

"The Kiss of Death"

The origin of this saying is the kiss that Judas gave Jesus Christ the night He was arrested (Matt. 26:48-49). Judas, having agreed to betray the Lord Jesus for thirty pieces of silver, led an armed band to apprehend Him in the Garden of Gethsemane late at night. As a prearranged sign, he told them: *"Whomever I kiss, He is the One; seize Him."* His kiss led to the Lord being unlawfully arrested and tried and finally put to death the next day. In modern usage, it is generally used in respect to something that leaves a stigma by association that results in a negative consequence. Such as, the candidate's support for an unpopular bill was the kiss of death for his campaign. The custom of the Mafia to kiss someone as a sign they had been marked for death is also thought to have had its origin in Judas' kiss of betrayal.

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

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

President & Executive Editor: Robert E. Nix, Ph.D.
Managing Editor: W. Edward Bedore, Th.D.
Composition & Layout: Jessica Sadler