



BIBLE ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUESTIONS

AND INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT THE HOLY WORD OF GOD

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BIBLE ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUESTIONS

The first question asked in the Bible is that of the serpent asking the woman, “*yea, hath God said, ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?*” (Gen. 3:1). This question was designed to cast doubt in the mind of the woman on God’s goodness and honesty. The question can be restated as “Did God really say that you are not allowed to eat from all of the trees in the Garden?” Implied in this question is that there is no reason the man and the woman should be denied fruit from any tree in the Garden.

In answering, the woman both misquotes and adds to God’s Word. She says “we may eat” instead of “*we may freely eat*”, and “lest ye die” rather than “*ye shall surely die*” as God originally said to Adam (compare Gen. 2:16-17 with 3:2-3). The addition she made was to say that “neither shall ye touch it”, a command not included in God’s instructions to Adam. We don’t know, but it is possible that Adam added this to the prohibition against eating the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil that the Lord God gave him. Adam received his instructions before the woman was created and we have no evidence that God ever directly restated them to her. If not she heard them from Adam only. Regardless, Satan was using the serpent to set her up as the original patsy for his con game.

Having set the stage for deception, the serpent offered the bait that would lure the woman into his trap. Contradicting God’s Word, He said, “*ye shall not surely die*” (Gen. 3:4). Then he presented his own perverted gospel, telling the woman that instead of dying, if she ate of the forbidden fruit she would actually reach her full potential through the knowledge

of good and evil gained by doing so. He also accused God of being selfish in denying her and the man the fruit because He didn’t want them to realize their godhood, their equality with God, through the knowledge of good and evil He was trying to withhold from them. He said to her, “*For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes will be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil*” (Gen. 3:5). This is Satan’s basic lie upon which all of his deceptions are built. He draws men and women away from giving the glory, honor, and worship due to the True God as the Creator and Sovereign Ruler over all things by offering them an attractive alternative; the glorification of self as equal with God, declaring themselves to be self-sufficient, self-directing, and self-fulfilling. It is mankind’s attempt to displace the One True Creator God and replace Him with self (see Rom. 1:18-25 ff.).

All false religions, or belief systems, are in some way connected to “the lie” that man is his own god and therefore has the knowledge and authority to establish his own standard of what is good and what is evil based on his own wisdom and experiences. This kind of thinking is most clearly seen in the Eastern and Mystical religions that openly admit that they believe in a god that is in all and all is god and the highest state of being for an individual is a “higher state of consciousness” that causes them to realize that they are god. Other expressions of religion are more subtle about it, but any religion that teaches that a person can earn their salvation or acceptance by God through their own efforts or inherent goodness is, in effect, saying that men and women are or can become equal with God.

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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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The only way anyone can meet God's standards of righteousness is to be as perfectly righteous as He is. To claim the ability to meet His standard of righteousness is to claim to be equal with God. But no one can legitimately claim that equality because *"all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God"* (Rom. 3:23).

In the Garden, the woman was deceived by the serpent's lie. Attempting to gain knowledge of her imagined godhood, she *"took of the fruit"* of the tree *"and did eat and gave also to her husband....and he did eat"* (Gen. 3:6). At this pivotal juncture in history, sin entered into the creation alienating mankind from his Creator as a condemned sinner. Sadly, since then mankind as a whole has persisted in its quest to displace God as Creator with self and digressed into worship of the creation in His place (Rom. 1:25; see vs. 1:18-32). Thankfully, One who is equal with God, His Own Son, took on human flesh and, as Man, not only demonstrated God's absolute righteous standard of holiness and goodness in His life, but also died in our place for our sins that we might be forgiven and given the gift of life through faith in Him (Rom. 3:21-26; II Cor. 5:21).

Have you given up your false notions of "self" being able to make you acceptable to God and acknowledged your unworthiness and helplessness before God as a lost sinner deserving only everlasting condemnation? Have you been redeemed by the soul-cleansing blood of Jesus Christ and your relationship with God restored through Him? Or are you in some way futilely trying to justify yourself through your own efforts and/or the quest for a higher consciousness of self? Have you been honest with yourself about your personal sinfulness and separation from God? Or are you in denial, trying to hide behind your own self-justifying ideas about what is good and evil? Are you depending on what you imagine to be true about what is acceptable to God? Or are you depending on "the Truth", which is found only in Jesus Christ? It is

only through faith in Him that anyone can have forgiveness of sins and receive the gift of eternal life (Rom. 6:23; John 14:6).

Because Christ is Alive!

W. Edward Bedore

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

QUESTION: I have heard that the chapters and verse divisions in the Bible are not part of inspired Scripture. If this is true, where did they come from?

ANSWER: None of the chapter and verse divisions found in Bibles today existed before the thirteenth century. The Latin Vulgate version of the Bible was first divided into chapters in A.D. 1228 by Stephen Langton who was the Archbishop of Canterbury. While this made the Bible more convenient to use, some of Langton's chapter divisions were not accurate. Nevertheless, they are essentially the same chapter divisions that are in use today.

The Old Testament was divided into verses by a Jewish Rabbi named Mordachi Nathan in 1448. Robert Estienne, also known as Robert Stephanus, divided his Greek New Testament of 1551 into verses as we know them today. The first whole Bible printed with both chapter and verse divisions was the Geneva Bible which was published in 1560.

QUESTION: I believe that the Bible must be rightly divided and understand that when the Rapture happens the Body of Christ will no longer be involved in earthly events and will not go through the Tribulation that will follow the Rapture. I have two questions about the Book of Revelation. First, will people become believers during the Tribulation? I have met some who do not think that people will become believers during the Tribulation, but

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from my study of the book, it appears that evangelism is one of the major reasons for the Tribulation. Secondly, even though Paul is the Apostle to the Gentiles, considering the time frame that Revelation was written, it seems that the information and teaching in it would apply to us today. If you have another view, I would appreciate hearing it.

ANSWER: You are correct in your conclusion that one of the main reasons for the Tribulation is to turn people to God. During this terrible time of Judgment, people will either harden their hearts against God or turn to Him in repentance. Jesus Christ's remarks about being "*the Light of the World*" (Mk. 5:14-16) were directed to national Israel. It had to do with Israel's prophetic role as God's people. Their Messiah, God's Servant, would come not only to redeem Israel, but also the Gentiles **through Israel** (see Isa. 42:4-6; 49:1-7). During the darkness of the Tribulation, the light of Christ will be seen on believing Israel. This light will draw God-fearing Gentiles to the living Creator God of Israel (Isa. 60:1-3). This was the light that the Lord Jesus had in mind in Matthew chapter five. Jesus Christ Himself is the True Light and His followers reveal the light of life that they have through Him (John 8:12).

For a brief period of time after the Rapture there will be no saved people on Earth, but many will turn to the Lord very quickly. These will be Kingdom believers who will suffer persecution during the Tribulation (Rev. 6:9-11; 7:9-15). Believers who survive the Tribulation will enter into the Millennial Kingdom, both Jews and Gentiles, in their natural bodies and will repopulate the earth. This will be necessary because most of the population will have died during the Tribulation (Isa. 24:6; Matt. 24:22; Rev. 8:11; 9:18; 11:5; etc.). The Kingdom saints returning from Heaven with the Lord will have their resurrection bodies and so will not be able to reproduce (Matt. 22:30).

Concerning the time frame in which the Revelation was written, I personally believe that it was actually written much earlier than the late date traditionally assigned to it (c. A.D. 95). Outside of Paul's letters, which can be correlated with the Book of Acts, there is no hard evidence supporting the traditional dates given the Gospels and the General (Kingdom) Epistles. At least there is none that I've been able to uncover. They seem to be based on subjection and church tradition alone (except for II Peter, which we know was written after Paul began his ministry (II Peter 3:25). The Revelation is a prophetic book written to a prophetic people, Israel. I base my belief on the understanding that Paul, not John, completed the canon of Scripture. That is, Paul "filled up," or finished, God's written Word making him the last Bible writer (Col. 1:25). This would mean that the rest of the New Testament was written before about A.D. 50. Regardless, there is no reason that the Revelation could not have been written at a very early date. If this is correct, then there is nothing in the Revelation that is directly applicable to the Dispensation of Grace we are now living in. Regardless, the first three chapters of the book teach a faith plus works* salvation that is consistent with the Kingdom message but is not compatible with Paul's faith plus nothing Grace Message.

*In saying that a faith plus works salvation is consistent with the Kingdom message of prophecy, (or Kingdom Gospel), we do not mean that Kingdom believers, or anyone from any dispensation past, present, or future, has been or ever will be saved by works of any kind. The salvation of lost sinners is by faith. However, faith has not always stood alone as it does in the present Dispensation of Grace. As an illustration, let's consider Israel under the Mosaic Law.

An elaborate system of sacrifices was central to the keeping of the Law. When someone transgressed the Law, they were required to bring the prescribed sacrifice to atone for their

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sin. They could not simply say "Thank you Lord for graciously forgiving me," and refuse to offer the appropriate blood sacrifice. Of course, the blood of the sacrificed animals could never cleanse them of their sin (Heb. 10:4). Nevertheless, the shedding of their blood was required to demonstrate the offerers' faith in God to do what He promised to do for him.

Could a devout Israelite appeal to grace apart from works and be assured of salvation? When Israel found a man gathering wood for a fire on the Sabbath, the Lord gave Moses specific instructions to have him brought outside of the camp and stoned to death (Num. 15:32-36). The works of the Law were required, even if that meant not doing any work on the Sabbath. That he was taken outside the camp shows that he was "cut off from his people" (Ex. 31:14; Lev. 7:20; etc.). This was serious because it meant that he was cut off from access to the sacrificial system of the Law by which he could receive atonement. Those who were cut off from Israel were like the Gentiles who were left "without God and without hope" because they were not part of "the commonwealth of Israel" and their "covenants of promise" (see Eph. 2:11-12). Salvation is an act of God on man's behalf that he receives through faith. Individuals demonstrate their faith by doing what God has asked them to do. Under the Law, the keeping of the ordinances and ritual sacrifices were required. Today, in the Dispensation of Grace, it is required to trust in Jesus Christ and His death, burial, and resurrection apart from the Law.

INTERESTING BIBLE FACTS

"An Odd Verse"

I Chronicles 26:18 may be the strangest verse in the Bible. It reads: "At Parbar westward, four at the causeway, and two at Parbar."

Scholars are divided over what a parbar is. The word is only found in this verse. Where it is used in reference to the porters (gatekeepers) of the Temple. Whatever it was, it was part of, or at least connected to the Temple complex.

COMMON SAYINGS FROM THE BIBLE

"Seek and Ye Shall Find"

This saying comes from the mouth of the Lord Jesus in what has been called the Sermon on the Mount (see Matthew chapters 5 through 7). He said; "Ask and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you" (Matt. 7:7). The Lord was teaching on entering into the Millennial Kingdom in this long discourse. In this particular verse, he is stressing the importance of prayer and trust in God for the saints to survive in the Tribulation that will precede His Second Coming. Those who find themselves in the Tribulation will not be able to buy or sell unless they take the Mark of the Beast (Rev. 13:16-17). The believers who refuse the Mark will have only God to depend on for their sustenance.

The phrase is used in everyday language in a very general way in regards to solving a problem of some kind by asking for help to find a solution.

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