



BIBLE ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUESTIONS

AND INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT THE HOLY WORD OF GOD

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ISSUE 1

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"If Only..."

Now that we are into the second month of 2015, there are many New Year's resolutions that have fallen by the wayside. Resolutions that were made with zeal in anticipation that the coming year would be different than the last one. People often make New Year's resolutions with the idea that, "if only I can change this area of my life," or "if only I can overcome my habit of..." or "if only I can be more self-confident..." or "if only I (you fill in the blanks)," and so-on, then this coming year will be better than the last one. But, for the most part, these resolutions that were made with enthusiasm and a desire to better our lives in the future are all but forgotten. Usually our failure to keep our resolutions is simply that we don't actually have the resolve to keep them. In reality, most New Year's resolutions are wishes that things would somehow change for the better. Of course, some of the resolutions that we make are more meaningful than others. For instance, failing to keep a resolution to get up thirty minutes earlier every morning in order to enjoy a relaxing cup of coffee with a co-worker before work time probably won't have as much effect on your future as not giving up something that is detrimental to your health. Regardless, rather than admitting that we are unwilling to exercise the self-discipline necessary to keep our resolutions, we blame it on the lack of something we call "will-power." We tell ourselves (and others) "if only I had enough

will-power than I could...(fill in the blanks), but I don't," and life goes on as usual.

There are others though that let their failures, and even the failures of others, have a seriously negative effect on their lives. They blame others for their failures. When Adam was confronted with his sin in the garden, he said to the Lord God, "the woman whom Thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat" (see Gen. 3:9-13). In other words he was saying, "if only you hadn't given me that woman who caused me to sin, I wouldn't have eaten the forbidden fruit. Lord, it's really your fault that I disobeyed you ." And the members of Adam's fallen race have been using this technique of "blame-shifting" as a way of denying personal faults and responsibility for their actions ever since. They say, "if only my parents had understood me..." "if only I had been given an opportunity..." "if only my wife (husband) would/wouldn't..." "if only my boss wasn't so critical..." "if only people weren't so biased..." "if only the police weren't always hassling me..." And it goes on and on, permeating every level of society. In the post-modern culture of our day, it is used to excuse or justify the actions of individuals all the way from minor infractions of common courtesy to violent crime. The thinking seems to be that collectively we are all guilty of everything, but individually nobody is actually responsible for anything. It is "situation ethics" in action. However, that is not how God sees things.

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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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There is coming a time when the all-powerful and Sovereign God who created the universe and all that is in it will require every individual of the human race to give an account of themselves. This will be their last opportunity to say "if only" and make their excuses, but they won't utter a word. When they appear before the Lord Jesus Christ as He sits on His "Great White Throne" (Rev. 20:11) to judge them, every mouth will be stopped as every individual will be proven to be a guilty sinner (see Rom. 3:19-20). All will be "judged...according to their works" (Rev. 20:12-13), and the guilty will then be "cast into the Lake of Fire" (Rev. 10:13-14). Only those whose names are found "written in the Book of Life" will escape the horrible destiny of everlasting torment (Rev. 20:15). If your name is not yet in "the Book of Life," you can have it permanently inscribed there at no cost to you. Instead of making your excuses, saying "if only," simply acknowledge to God what you know in your heart to be true, that you are a willful sinner, worthy only of everlasting condemnation. Put your trust in Jesus Christ alone for the forgiveness of your sins and He will forgive you and give you "the gift of eternal life" (Rom. 6:23). Simply believe that "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose again according to the Scriptures" (I Cor. 15:3-4). "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:31).

Because Christ Lives!

W. Edward Bedore

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

(All questions answered by the Editor unless otherwise noted)

QUESTION: Have you ever noticed that God did not expel Eve from the Garden, just Adam. It seems pretty clear that she went too, but the Bible never says she was asked to leave. Curious.

ANSWER: In regards to the expulsion of Eve from the Garden, it says, "So He drove out the man..." (Gen 3:24). The word translated as "man" in this verse is the same word that is transliterated as "Adam" in other places. Concerning the man and the woman, Genesis 5:2 reads, "...and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day they were created." Some translations render Adam as "man" or "mankind" in this verse. In other words, when it says, "He drove out the man," we can understand it to mean that He drove the man and the woman, or "all of mankind," out of the Garden.

QUESTION: In Genesis 3 God curses the serpent (14-15), curses the woman (16), and curses Adam (17-19). In verse 21 He clothes them with animal skins and then proceeds to kick them out of the garden. However, in verse 20, between the curses and the clothing/ejection, Adam names his wife "Eve" because she is the mother of all living. The timing of this event (naming her) seems very odd. Any ideas on why he would name his wife right at this moment?

ANSWER: The naming of his wife "Eve," which means "life," right after the Lord pronounced a death sentence on him, I believe, was Adam's expression of faith. He believed that, even though he would eventually die physically, the human race would be preserved through "the Seed of the Woman" who would eventually crush the Serpent's head (v. 15). In other words, Adam believed that Eve would produce children,

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as the Lord said she would, (v. 16) Who would not only continue the human race, but would also somehow vanquish death and defeat the Serpent. That is to say, Adam believed God. We don't know how much Adam knew about the spiritual and redemptive aspects of what the Lord God revealed to him at the time, but the fact that right after Adam named his wife Eve, the typology of God providing them with "*coats of skins and clothed them*" (v. 21) strongly implies that the Lord God counted their faith as righteousness, just as He would later do with Abraham (Gen. 15:4-6).

QUESTION: What was God's purpose in giving the Law to Israel, and what is its purpose today?

ANSWER: One purpose in giving the Law to Israel through Moses was to set them apart from the other nations as God's chosen people. Second, the Law was to reveal sin and convict sinners of their need of a Savior. Israel, over and over again, was proved guilty of disobedience and rebellion and worthy only of judgment, just like all the other nations were. The Law was not given to redeem or transform sinful man, but to condemn him (see Rom. 3:19-20; Gal. 3:19-25). Paul explains that the Law "*was added because of transgressions till the seed should come to whom the promise was made*" (Gal. 3:19). The Law was temporarily added to the Covenant of Promise God made with Abraham (see Gen. 12:1-7; 13:14-18; 15:7-20; etc.; cf. Rom. 4:13). God sent His Son through Israel, the nation that He called to be a channel of blessing to the nations. In perfectly keeping the Law, Jesus Christ demonstrated His right to redeem Israel and the world (see Isa. 49:5-6). When Jesus Christ returns to earth to permanently replant Israel in their Promised Land and to sit on the Throne of His Glory, He will put into force a New Covenant with Israel

and write the Law in their hearts so that they will be enabled to keep it (see Jer. 31:31-34; Ezek. 36:25-27). But, for now, with Israel temporarily set aside and the fulfillment of prophecy suspended for a time, the keeping of the Law is not mandated for Jew or Gentile. God is offering salvation to all that put their trust in His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

However, the principles of the Law are still as valid today as they ever were. Idolatry, murder, stealing, adultery, lying, and such are still grievous sins. The difference is that in the present Dispensation of Grace, instead of focusing on the do's and don'ts of the Law, believers are to love others as Christ loved us (Rom. 13:8-14; Eph. 5:1-2). Trying to live by the letter of the Law will only produce the frustration of failure that Paul experienced (Rom. 7:7-24). Only Jesus Christ can deliver the believer from this vicious cycle of self-condemnation that the Law produces (Rom. 7:25-8:4). We experience this deliverance when, by faith, we walk in the Spirit and not in the flesh (Gal. 5:16-26). The Law produces the works of the flesh; walking in the Spirit produces the fruits of love.

The proper use of the Law today is to use it to show lost people that they are condemned sinners in need of a Savior (I Tim. 1:8-11). But, we must never put anyone under the Law by telling them that they must live by it to find acceptance with God. Only by faith in Jesus Christ, believing that He died for our sins, was buried, and rose again as the Bible says He did, can anyone be delivered from the bondage of sin and death that the Law puts us under. "*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved*" (Acts 16:31). **In Him** "*we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace*" (Eph. 1:7).



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QUESTION FOR THE READER: WHO AM I?

I was a prophethess. My baby brother was adopted by a foreign lady but we met again later in life. I didn't approve of his Ethiopian wife. God gave me leprosy for seven days because I spoke against my brother. Who am I?

Answer to the December "Who Am I" Question for the Reader:

Samson (I was a Nazarite from the womb. I set fire to a grain harvest using foxes with torches tied to their tails. I carried the city gates of Gaza up to the top of a hill. My girlfriend betrayed me. Who am I?) A judge of Israel blessed by God with great strength (Judges 15).

COMMON SAYINGS FROM THE BIBLE

"Spittin' Image"

While the saying "he's the spittin' image of his father" is not found in the Bible, but it may have its roots there. The general idea, as it is used today, is that of a son who looks and acts like his father so much that he is like a duplicate of him or "made in the same mold." Some think that it is was originally "spirit and image," which conveys the idea of a child being identical to his parent in both spirit (character) and image (physique), but that it was corrupted into spittin' image over time. This reminds us of God's purpose for believers, which is to conform them to the very image of His Son (Rom. 8:29), both spiritually (Gal. 4:19) and physically (Phil. 3:20-21). The desire of every believer should be to demonstrate Christ's likeness in their manner of life (Eph. 5:1-2) as they look for His glorious appearing to take us to Himself (Titus 2:13; I Thess. 4:16-18). Maranatha!

INTERESTING BIBLE FACTS

"John Wycliffe's Bible"

Around 1380 John Wycliffe produced the first translation of the Bible in English. It predated the printing press so each copy had to be hand copied. This slow and tedious process limited the number of copies that could be made available, making them rare and expensive. Nevertheless manuscripts of Wycliffe's version of the Bible were in circulation for 150 years or more. The high cost prohibited people from owning one, so they would pay a fee to be allowed to read and study it themselves for a short period of time. Those who couldn't read would sometimes gather around to hear someone who could read the Bible to them in their own language. The "official church" banned the reading of the English Bible as a criminal activity, but people read it anyway. Wycliffe escaped punishment during his lifetime for translating the Bible into English and for his teachings of Bible truth in opposition to church dogma and practices. But, forty years after his death he was tried and found guilty of being a heretic by the Roman Catholic Church. His body was exhumed, burned, and the ashes dumped into a river.

IMPORTANT DATE!

BBI's Annual Grace Mission Conference!

Theme: A Living Sacrifice

March 27,28, 2015

at Berean Bible Institute

Slinger, Wisconsin

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