

BIBLE ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUESTIONS

And Interesting Facts About the Holy Word of God

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ISSUE 4

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"What Does the Future Hold for Israel?"

Jerusalem, the Capital of the World: The city of Jerusalem has been chosen by the LORD as His visible dwelling place on earth. Even before Israel entered the Promised Land, the LORD God informed them that He would choose a place as His own, saying to them: *"But unto the place which the LORD your God shall choose out of all your tribes to put His name there, even unto His habitation shall ye seek, thither thou shall come"* (Deut. 12:5; 31:11). Later the LORD would choose Jerusalem as the permanent place of His presence in the midst of the Twelve Tribes of Israel (also see I Kin. 8:44; 11:32,36; 14:21; II Chr. 12:13; Neh. 1:8-9). Prophetically God has said that He will make Jerusalem *"a burdensome stone"* and *"a cup of trembling"* among the peoples and nations of the world in the Last Days (Zech. 12: 2-3). In a sense, this has been the case ever since Abraham demonstrated his faith in God by his willingness to sacrifice Isaac on Mount Moriah, which would later become the place where the Temple would be built as God's chosen site of visible residence on earth (Gen. 22:1-3, 9-13; I Chr. 21:18; II Chr. 3:1). The people of Israel and their capital of Jerusalem have been at the forefront of international turmoil and unrest ever since Joshua led Israel into the Promised Land. Throughout its history, the land of Israel has only experienced intermittently short periods of peace. Today, Israel is troubled on every side as she has been set aside in unbelief for almost two thousand years because she rejected the promised Messiah,

Jesus Christ, when He came to earth the first time. Israel's troubles will only cease when Christ returns at His Second Coming.

Jerusalem has a special place in God's plan for the ages. He has set Jerusalem *"in the midst of the nations and countries that are round about her"* (Ezek. 5:5). Jerusalem is the geo-political center of the world. There is coming a day when Jesus Christ will return to this corrupt and rebellious world to vanquish His enemies, to redeem Israel, build the greatest temple that has ever existed on this planet and establish "God's Kingdom of Righteousness on Earth" that He will rule over from the Throne of His Glory in Jerusalem (Matt. 25:31).

The "Ark of the Covenant," which represented the throne of God's presence, was the most important object in the Tabernacle and later the Temple. However, it will not be found in the Millennial Temple that Jesus Christ will build after His Second Coming. In the words of the Prophet Jeremiah concerning Christ's return to Zion (another name for Jerusalem), we read: *"And it shall come to pass, when ye (Israel) be multiplied and increased in the land, in those days, saith the LORD, they shall say no more the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD: neither shall it come to mind: neither shall they remember it; neither shall they visit it; neither shall that be done any more. At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the LORD; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the LORD, to Jerusalem: neither shall they walk anymore after the imagination of their evil heart"* (Jer. 3:16-17). No longer will the Ark of the Covenant that was first placed in the Tabernacle

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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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and later in the Temple serve as a symbol of God's presence there, but the Son of God Himself, God in human flesh, the Lord Jesus Christ, will dwell among His chosen people there and manifest the glory of God in the exaltation of His Person, "for in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. 2:9).

When Jesus Christ brings the Kingdom of God to Earth in the Millennial Kingdom, the Gentiles will go to Jerusalem seeking Him. They will grab the sleeve of a Jew, saying; "We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you" (see Zech. 8:20-23; also see Zech 2:10-13; 14:16).

Because Christ Lives!

W. Edward Bedore

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

(All questions answered by the Editor unless otherwise noted)

QUESTION: Methuselah died the year of the flood. Do you think he died in the Flood or from natural causes? We usually tend to associate him with righteousness (perhaps because of his old age), but the Bible never says that he was righteous.

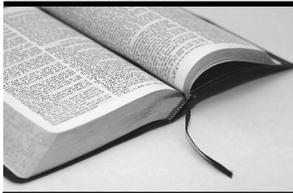
ANSWER: I believe that Methuselah simply died of natural causes shortly before the flood. However, as you suggest, he may have died in the flood with everyone else. Scripture simply says "and he died" (Gen. 5:27), just as it does of all from Adam to Methuselah (Gen. 5:5,8,11,14,17, 20, 27, 31) with the exception of Enoch who was translated (Gen. 5:21-24; Heb. 11:5). Without further information from Scripture, I think that this is where we have to leave it.

QUESTION: Are the lost bound in Hell and tormented by Satan?

ANSWER: No, the unsaved dead are not held captive in Hell by Satan. The idea that there is some "demonic lord of the underworld" that enslaves and tortures the souls of the dead is an occultic pagan concept that has been adopted and popularized by myth and unbiblical religious leaders. The idea that Satan is in charge of Hell has been reinforced by the often seen depiction of him as a red cartoonish demonic looking creature with a tail, horns, and carrying a pitchfork. We do not know what he actually looks like, but Scripture does refer to him as "the great dragon" and "that old serpent" (Rev. 12:9). He is also said to be able to masquerade as "an angel of light" (II Cor. 11:14) and is described as "the prince and the power of the air" (Eph. 2:2).

It is God who consigns the souls of those who depart this life to their place of residence and administers either punishment upon the lost or blessings upon the redeemed. He is the only One who has the power and authority to do so as He is the Creator, and it is His Law that is transgressed and His Holiness that is offended by sin. It would be unjust for God to turn the punishment of the unrighteous over to Satan, who is unrighteous himself. Along with the titles mentioned above, this powerful and evil foe of all that is good and holy is said to be "the deceiver of the whole world" (Rev. 12:9); "the evil one" (Matt. 13:19, 38; I John 2:13; 5:19); "the father of lies" (John 8:44); "the god of this world" (II Cor. 4:4); "the prince of this world" (John 12:31; 14:30); "a murderer" (John 8:44); and several other titles and names that reveal his wicked and malicious character. This leader of the demonic host of fallen angels fosters the idea that he is in charge of torturing the condemned souls of the lost as

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another ploy to make people think that he is more powerful than he is. His ultimate goal is to dethrone God and sit in His place. Of course, he will never accomplish this as his final and complete defeat has been assured by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. In fact, he will one day be bound in the "temporary Hell" of Sheol/Hades, also known as "the bottomless Pit," for 1,000 years (Rev. 20:1-3). At the end of this time, he will be released for a short while during which he will lead the nations in one final revolt against God and His people. This revolt, of course, will fail and he will be cast into the "final Hell" which is "the Lake of Fire" where he will suffer everlasting torment along with all the other fallen angels and the unsaved dead of all of history, (Rev. 20:7-15; 14:10-11; Matt. 25:41; etc.).

QUESTION: As the Bible says that "whosoever's name is not found in the book of life will be cast into eternal fire," is there no possibility that some souls in Hades can still make it to Paradise if para venture their names appear in the Book of Life?

ANSWER: As only the lost go there, there is no possibility that anyone in Hades will be found to have their name written in the Book of Life when it is opened at the Great White Throne Judgment. Some believe that everybody has their name inscribed in the Book of Life when they are conceived in their mother's womb and then it is blotted out when they die in unbelief. Others think that the names of each individual is written in the Book of Life when they become believers, (I prefer the first scenario). But, regardless of which it is, those who have died in their sins will not find their name written in the Book of Life when it is opened. It will not be opened to see if any of those in Hades have their name written in it, but to show that it is not there.

QUESTION: Where did Jesus go between His death and resurrection?

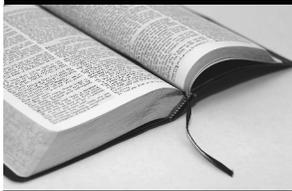
ANSWER: Before His resurrection, all who died went to Hades, which was at that time divided into two compartments. One was a place of blessing and the other a place of torment, as we learn from the account of the Rich Man and Lazarus (Lk. 16:19-25ff). Jesus Christ descended into Hades on the side of blessing where all those who had died in faith were. This place is known as "Abraham's Bosom" (Lk. 16:22) and "Paradise" (Lk. 23:43). After He was raised from the dead, He ascended into Heaven, taking Paradise and all the righteous dead with Him. All who have died in faith from then on have gone to Heaven to await their resurrection day. All who have died in unbelief are in the torment side of Hades awaiting the Great White Throne Judgment (Rev. 20:11-15).

QUESTION: If Hades is already a place of torment, why must souls be sent to Hell again at the Great White Throne?

ANSWER: Hades, which we might call a temporary Hell, is where those who die in their sins go to await their final judgment. The torment they suffer there is for the sin of unbelief. They have rejected whatever light they have been given as to who God is and their responsibility to trust and worship Him. The evidence provided by the existence of the creation alone leaves all of the human race without excuse for their unbelief (see Rom. 1:18-20).

At the end of time, the unsaved will be resurrected to face judgment for their sins, their actions, the evil things they did in their unbelief, their works of unrighteousness. In Hades the level of torment seems to be the same for everybody, but in the Lake of Fire, the final

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destiny of all the unsaved, there will be degrees of punishment based on each individual's level of sin and their influence on others during their life. "...and they were judged every man according to their works" (Rev. 20:13). The Great White Throne Judgment comes at the end of time so that all of the fruits of their evil works will be included. For instance, those whose false teachings have been handed down from generation to generation continue to have a negative influence on others long after they have died.

QUESTION FOR THE READER: WHO AM I?

I was just a simple Jewish girl when I was chosen to be the new queen of Persia. My cousin made me promise to hide my faith from my new husband. Who am I?

Answer to the May "Who Am I" Question for the Reader: **Herodias** (My marriage was declared as unlawful by a man of God and he was thrown into prison and beheaded because of what he said. Who am I?) Herodias was the granddaughter of Herod the Great who married her uncle Herod Philip. But, when her brother-in-law Herod Antipas saw her, he desired her and took her for his own wife. When John the Baptist reproved Antipas for this he had the prophet arrested and later beheaded at Herodias' urging. Herodias' story can be found in Matthew 14:3-11, Mark 6:17&28, and Luke 3:19-20.

COMMON SAYINGS FROM THE BIBLE

"A House Divided Against Itself Cannot Stand"

Speaking on the state's rights and slavery issue that was troubling America in the 1860's, President Abraham Lincoln said; "A house divided against itself cannot stand." This was a

paraphrase of the Lord Jesus' words to His enemies who were accusing Him of being able to cast out demons because He Himself was empowered by Satan, "the chief of the demons" (Lk. 11:15). The Lord's answer was "...every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and a house divided against a house falleth" (Lk. 11:17). He also told them that "He that is not with Me is against Me: and he that gathereth not with Me scattereth" (Lk. 11:23).

Lincoln used the principle expressed here to warn the people of America that the Union could not survive as a nation if it was not united in its core values. This has become a popular saying that people today use in regards to any issue that causes strife and turmoil within nations, organizations, businesses, their home, etc. Of course, the Lord Jesus was talking of the religious leaders of Israel refusal to believe that He was the Messiah and their effort to either discredit, silence, or kill Him. As important as it is that our country be united in its core values today in order to continue as a prosperous and strong nation, it is much more important that Bible believing Christians be separate from the world and united in the truth of the Gospel of the Grace of God.

Something to Think About!

A believer's life will not be judged by length of years, accumulation of wealth, or the praise of men. However, the use of one's time for the Lord's work, the willingness to surrender one's resources to the Lord, and the extent that one does all that they do to the glory of God, will be taken into account.

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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.
Layout: Jessica Sadler