



BIBLE ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUESTIONS

AND INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT THE HOLY WORD OF GOD

BEREAN BIBLE INSTITUTE, INC.

MAY 2015

PO BOX 587, SLINGER, WI 53086

VOLUME 6

(Published eight times yearly: Feb., Mar., May, June, Aug., Sep., Nov., Dec.)

ISSUE 3

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"Be Ye Reconciled to God"

Adam's sin brought enmity between him and God, an enmity that has been passed down to all his descendants from generation to generation until this very day. Man's hostility towards God is revealed in his prideful insistence that he can somehow earn his own salvation through his own good works. In arrogance, he rejects the idea that he must trust in Jesus Christ alone, depending completely on Him and in His death, burial, and resurrection as having accomplished all that is needed to provide for his salvation. In doing so the barrier of sin remains between him and a Holy God.

Because God is perfectly righteous by nature, He cannot simply ignore sin but must demand that the penalty incurred by sin be paid before the relationship between Him and man can be restored. The penalty owed because of sin is "death" (Rom. 5:12; 6:23a). Knowing that if man was left to pay the penalty of sin on his own, he would die in his sins and would be forever separated from God in the everlasting torments of the "Lake of Fire" (Rev. 20:11-15). However, God, the Creator of all things, is not one dimensional in His being. While He is absolutely holy, righteous, and just, He is also a God of love, mercy, and grace. And, because of His great love for ungrateful, wicked, and hostile sinners, He sent His Son to die for our sins (see Rom. 5:6-11) and mercifully offered salvation to man as a gift of grace (Eph. 2:4-5, 8-9; Titus 3:3-5). Through His death on the Cross, Jesus Christ

has made it possible for that which alienates man from God, man's sin, to be removed. With his sin debt paid in full by the blood of Jesus Christ, man can be reconciled to God. However, while God has reconciled the world to Himself in the sense that in His Son He has provided for the remission of sins of the entire fallen human family, each individual man and woman must by faith accept God's terms of reconciliation in order to be personally reconciled to God. When a sinner recognizes his or her lost and hopeless condition and believes the message of the Cross, that Jesus Christ died for their sins, was buried, and rose again as the Scriptures say, their sins are forgiven and they are redeemed (Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:13-14), and thus reconciled to God (Col. 1:21). Those who shun God's offer of reconciliation and remain in their sins, will one day be judged for their works of unrighteousness. *"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God....For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe"* (I Cor. 15:18, 21).

Because Christ Lives!

W. Edward Bedore

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

(All questions answered by the Editor unless otherwise noted)

"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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QUESTION: What is your view of the meaning of Isaiah 45:7 where the Lord says; “I create evil.” I do not think that it can mean that God created evil in the sense that He caused sin. From the context the verse is in, I believe He is saying that He is in control. However, I have been told that it does mean that God created evil and evil is sin. I understand that God can and does use evil to bring about His purpose when He chooses as stated in Genesis 50:20 and II Thessalonians 2:10-12, but I do not believe that He created something that He despises and punished Israel for so many times. If He did create evil/sin, why did He do it?

ANSWER: As to the meaning of Isaiah 45:7 where the Lord says that He “creates evil,” I believe that you are on the right track. The Lord God was letting Israel know that it was He who is ultimately in control of all things as He causes the great “calamity” of evil times to fall on wicked nations, including Israel and Judah. This prophetic portion of Holy Scripture naming the Persian king Cyrus as the one that He would use to one day judge the powerful Babylonians was written 150 years before Cyrus’ birth (see Isa. 45:1-4), which demonstrates God’s sovereignty.

God certainly did not create evil in the sense that He created sin. If He did, then He would be the originator of sin and the channel by which sin came into the world. It would be a miscarriage of justice for Him to punish man for sinning if He created sin. Scripture tells us that “out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies” (Matt. 15:19). In other words, man is responsible for his own evil doings. The Bible, God’s Word, clearly says that the curse of sin and the resulting curse of death came into the world through Adam (Rom. 5:12). God did not create sin, but He did give man a choice to either obey or disobey Him. The first lie recorded in Scripture is the Devil’s lie to Eve, telling her that she wouldn’t die, but would become a god if she disobeyed the Lord and ate of that which He

had forbidden to be used as food, the fruit of the tree of “the knowledge of good and evil” (see Gen. 2:9,16-17; 3:1-5). Eve was deceived by “the father of lies” (John 8:44), but Adam willfully sinned of his own accord, bringing the curse of sin, which is “death,” upon all of mankind (Gen. 3:6-19; Rom. 6:23; I Tim. 2:13-14).

Besides that, God could not be the originator of sin because He cannot sin as He is absolutely perfect in His righteousness and holiness. For Him to create sin would make Him personally responsible for all sin and therefore a sinner, and if He was a sinner, He would be unrighteous. This cannot be true of a perfectly Holy God of whom it is said; “There is no unrighteousness in Him” (Deut. 32:4; Ps. 92:15; Rom. 9:14). But, as you pointed out in your question, by His providence, He can and does providentially use the purposefully wicked acts of sinful men to accomplish His own holy purposes (Gen. 50:20; Rom. 8:28).

The Hebrew word for “evil” (*rah*) can be used of that which is morally evil (sin) or of physical disaster. As God is Sovereign over all things, when He chooses He is quite able to override man’s sinful intentions and the forces of nature to carry out His own purposes, and the testimony of Scripture is that He does. When Israel was blessed with an abundant harvest when they obeyed the Law, it was God’s doing. And when Israel was cursed with famine because of disobedience, it was God’s doing. This is true of all the blessings and curses that Israel experienced, just as God’s prophets warned them would happen over and over again.

QUESTION: Did we humans (mortals) live in Heaven prior to coming to earth (premortal life)? If so, after entering mortal life as humans, is a veil put over us preventing us from remembering our premortal life? Also, as immortals were we given the choice to come to earth to live a mortal life? I have not found any

(continued on page 3)



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(Bible Answers to Bible Questions continued from page 2)

Scripture that indicates that we ever lived as immortals in Heaven prior to this life. What are your thoughts?

ANSWER: The reason that you have not found any Scripture reference that indicates that humans lived in Heaven before coming to earth to live as mortal beings is because there are none. We did not exist previous to being conceived by our parents. When God created Adam, He created the entire human race. Each and every human has come into being as one of Adam's descendants. Even Eve was taken out of Adam. *"And the rib, which the Lord had taken from man, made He a woman, and brought her unto the man"* (Gen. 2:22).

"And the Lord God formed man of the dust of ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (Gen. 2:7). From Adam is passed down from generation to generation the spirit or breath of life, the personality of the soul, and the physical characteristics of the human body that God created him with. This is why the Bible tells us that we are all "in Adam" and are partakers of his nature. The old man, the natural man, and the flesh are all references to the Adamic nature that all human beings have. Adam was created without sin, but when he disobeyed his Creator and fell into sin, the entire human race fell with him. He became sinful by nature and passed his sin nature down to all of us.

The idea of the preexistence of the soul before coming to earth as a human is mythological, occultic, and New Age in nature and is usually connected to the idea of reincarnation and the demigods of paganism. The cult of Mormonism also teaches a form of this idea. These concepts are demonic deceptions that the enemy uses to turn men and women from Scriptural truth and the Savior to darkness and spiritual ruin. They deny the original sin of

Adam as having a permanent effect on all of the human race and the personal sin nature, and the consequent sinfulness of every individual human being. It should also be noted that while the human body is subject to mortality, the soul and spirit of every man and woman is immortal and will exist in a conscious state of being somewhere forever. At the end of time, every individual human being will be resurrected in an immortal body. The redeemed *"to everlasting life"* and the lost *"to shame and everlasting contempt"* (Dan. 12:12; also see John 5:28-29; Rev. 20:11-15). When the Scriptures speak about the lost being *"dead in trespasses and sins,"* it is not saying that their soul and spirit ceased to exist, but that they are separated from the life of God. When the unbeliever trusts in Jesus Christ for salvation, they are made spiritually alive in Christ. *"And you hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins"* (Eph. 2:1).

The one exception, of course, was God the Son, the Creator Himself who is the Lord Jesus Christ. He who had eternally existed with the Father *"in the form of God"* left heaven to take on the form of sinful flesh, and yet remained without personal sin. He died for our sins that through His blood all who believe on Him might be forgiven, redeemed and given the gift of eternal life (see John 1:1-5; Rom. 5:8; 6:23; I Cor. 15:3-4; II Cor. 5:21; Eph. 1:7, 13-14; Phil. 2:5-11; Col. 1:19-22; etc.). The Lord Jesus did not have the sin nature that all other human beings have inherited from Adam. The sin nature is passed down through the father, but Jesus Christ had no human father as He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin (Matt. 1:18,25; Lk. 1:26-36). Still, He was a descendant of Adam in His humanity through His mother, Mary (Lk. 3:38).

For a more detailed answer to the question "Is the Soul of Man Immortal?" see the December 2013 edition of the BABQ.



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QUESTION FOR THE READER: WHO AM I?

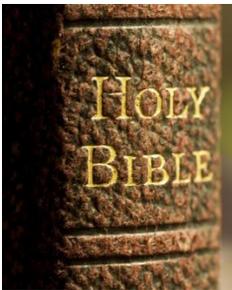
My marriage was declared as unlawful by a man of God and he was thrown into prison and beheaded because of what he said. Who am I?

Answer to the March "Who Am I" Question for the Reader: **Josiah** (I became king at the age of eight. I devoted myself to getting rid of idols when I was sixteen. While restoring the temple, my people found the Pentateuch written by Moses. Who am I?) Josiah became king after his father, Amon, died. After reading the Pentateuch, Josiah had his people celebrate Passover. Josiah died after going into battle disguised. Jeremiah read Josiah's funeral eulogy and listed him as one of the best kings of Israel. The story of Josiah can be found in 2 Kings 22-23 and 2 Chronicles 34-35.

INTERESTING BIBLE FACTS

"First English Bible"

Robert Aiken printed the first Bible in English that was produced in the newly formed United States of America. In 1781, he petitioned the Continental Congress for, and received, authorization to print the entire Bible in English. Formally, under British rule, English Bibles were not allowed to be printed in the colonies but had to be imported from England. This first English edition was the King James Version.



*This Book will
keep you from
sin, or sin will
keep you from
this Book!*

COMMON SAYINGS FROM THE BIBLE

"Signs of the Times"

This phrase is derived from Matthew 16:3. The Pharisees and Sadducees had come to the Lord Jesus asking that He "*shew them a sign from heaven.*" Their purpose in "*tempting*" Him by this request was not in hopes that He would convince them He was really the Messiah but was another effort to somehow discredit Him. Considering that He had already performed enough miracles or "*signs*" (over a dozen publicly) to validate His identity, the Lord did not perform another for these men. Instead, He pointed out that while they could predict the weather by signs in the evening and morning skies, they were ignoring the signs of the prophetic times that were just as evident, saying to them; "*O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times?*" (see Matt. 16:1-4). This saying is used today of something, or things, that characterize a particular period of time, most often in reference to events of the present.

Much is made of current events as signs that end times Bible prophecy is being fulfilled today. It is not, but signs that Paul's prophecy of the apostasy that will overwhelm the church in the last days of Grace are all around us today (see I Tim. 4:1-3; II Tim. 3:1-9). Sadly, most professing Christians are ignoring these signs, seemingly thinking that "*comfortable*" American Christianity will continue as it has for the last two and a half centuries, but it won't.

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