

# BIBLE ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUESTIONS

*And Interesting Facts About the Holy Word of God*

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*"Biblical Wisdom"*

Wisdom is the capability to properly discern and make Godly decisions resulting in taking the best course of action based on knowledge and understanding. According to Scripture, the message of the cross is *"unto the Greeks foolishness"* and *"unto the Jews a stumbling block"* (I Cor. 1:23). In this case, the Jews represent a religious worldview and the Greeks intellectualism. Except for those who believe the message of the cross and find in it the power of salvation according to the wisdom of the all-wise and almighty God (see I Cor. 1:18-25), all of mankind falls into one of these two categories.<sup>1</sup>

The Apostle Paul, under inspiration of the Holy Spirit, carefully contrasted *"the wisdom of this world"* with *"the wisdom of God"* in his first letter to the saints in Corinth<sup>2</sup> (I Cor. 1:20-21; 2:6; 3:18-19). This worldly, or fleshly, wisdom is also referred to as *"man's wisdom"* (I Cor. 2:4), and *"the wisdom of men"* (I Cor. 2:5).

That which the Scriptures reveal to be true wisdom is altogether different than the world's idea of wisdom. The world by nature strives after knowledge that will make them wise through many seemingly different ways. These include philosophy, rational thought, artistic venues, hedonistic abandon, mystical, and religious practices and experiences. While these various *"paths to wisdom"* appear to be different on the surface, at their core they have a common denominator. All are thoroughly humanistic in principle and application. They are all man-centered and hold to the idea that the Gospel of Jesus Christ, *"the preaching of the cross"*, is utter foolishness, insisting that man in his own wisdom

can in some way save himself. *"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God"* (I Cor. 1:18).

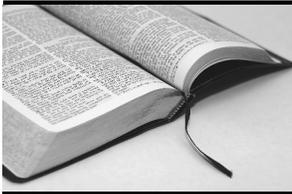
In its deepest sense of meaning, wisdom is an attribute of God and is associated with His all-encompassing knowledge. He knows all things, past, present, and future, and is all-wise and perfect in all that He does.

To grow in the wisdom of God, we are to turn from reliance on *"the wisdom of men"* and trust completely *"in the power of God"* (I Cor. 2:1-5). This truth is based on the fact that we are not to glory in our own fleshly wisdom and achievements (I Cor. 1:29), rather, we are to glory *"in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that according as it is written, he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord"* (I Cor. 1:30-31; cf. Eph. 1:6-8). Having been redeemed by His blood and identified with Christ, every believer is also permanently indwelt and sealed by the Holy Spirit (Eph. 1:13-14; 4:30).

In turn, as we grow in the *"knowledge of Christ"* through God's revealed Word, the Bible, we grow more spiritually mature, resulting in Godly wisdom (see Eph. 1:17-23). Through this process our minds are transformed (Rom. 12:1-2) and we learn to trust God more in our day-to-day lives. In Colossians we learn that *"all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge"* are hid in Christ (Col. 2:3; also see Col. 1:9, 28; 2:23<sup>3</sup>; 3:16; 4:5). Godly wisdom is gained through learning more about the Person of our Savior, who is Christ Jesus the Lord. The greater our understanding of who Christ is, the more we will realize and appreciate the vast riches of God's grace that have been abundantly

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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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lavished on us through His beloved Son. It is God's desire that every member of the Body of Christ "be filled with the knowledge of His will **in all wisdom and spiritual understanding**; that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God" (Col. 1:9-10). Do you desire to acquire true wisdom for living in the present and at the same time store up riches untold for the future? Then read your Bible!

Because Christ Lives!

*W. Edward Bedore*

Dr. W. Edward Bedore, Editor

*BBI Bulletin, BABQ*

*(All questions answered by the Editor unless otherwise noted)*

## **Endnotes**

1. While on the surface these two categories seem to be polar opposites, they are not. Because man is both a fleshly and spiritual being, anything that he involves himself with will have elements of both incorporated into it to some extent. And, because he is a sinner by nature and deed, it will also be corrupt. Whether by his own knowledge and wisdom or his religious practices, or a mixture somewhere in between, man strives to be his own "god" with no need of the Creator to guide his way.
2. In I Corinthians, Paul primarily deals with intellectualism (man's wisdom). In Galatians he specifically takes on the religious worldview as represented by the Judaizers, proclaiming that a curse is on those who pervert the Gospel of Grace (Gal. 1:6-9). An element of God's wisdom is found in recognizing the difference between prophecy and mystery as revealed to the Apostle Paul.
3. Colossians 2:23, *will-worship*, Greek=*ethelothreskeia*, implies "would-be" in the sense of "pretense." Speaks of a "self-devised, or self-imposed, worship" and/or religious system. The idea is the requirement of the strict observance of service, ritual, and duties that are not commanded or required by Scripture. It is worship according to man's will rather than God's will.

## **QUESTION: What is the Masoretic Text?**

**ANSWER:** The Masoretic Text is the Old Testament in Hebrew. It is the standard for the study of the Bible in Hebrew and translating it into other languages. It is the text that our English, and most other language translations of the Old Testament are made from. It gets its name from the group of Jewish scholars that worked diligently to preserve the original text. They were known as Masoretes from the Hebrew word *masora* which means "tradition". Using word and letter counts for each line of text, they developed a system to maintain an accurate transmission of the Hebrew Bible as it was copied over and over again through the centuries. They lived in communities with the most prominent one being in Tiberias, a city on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee. As well as meticulously copying the text and checking and double checking for accuracy, where the original Hebrew text contained only consonants, the Masoretes added vowel points to aid in preserving the pronunciation of the words as well. They continued and expanded the work of the scribes who went before them and were active from about A.D. 500 to A.D. 1,000. They also added textual notations to the margins making the Masoretic text a rudimentary study Bible.

## **QUESTION: At the Rapture what happens to the bodies of Believers?**

**ANSWER:** Scripture makes it clear that the Rapture of the Church is a resurrection. Just as Jesus Christ was raised from the dead in the same body He died in on the cross and that was placed in the tomb, so will the deceased members of the Body of Christ be raised in their original bodies. However, it will not simply be a resurrected body, but like the Lord Jesus, their resurrection body will constitute a new form of physical existence that is spiritual in nature.

The Lord's resurrected body has a physical aspect to it in that it is "*flesh and bone*" (see Lk. 24:38-40).

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At the same time we are told that His resurrected body is spiritual in nature (see I Cor. 15:42-49). I think the best way to understand this is that the life force that supports our natural bodies (the bodies we are stuck in right now) is found in the blood that flows through our veins (see Lev. 17:11,14; cf. Gen. 9:4; Deut. 12:23). This is the basis on which Jesus Christ shed His blood for our sins. But, our transformed bodies will not have blood as *"flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God"* and *"corruption"* cannot *"inherit incorruption"*. So for us to be *"joint heirs with Christ"* (Rom. 8:13), our corruptible blood-powered bodies must be changed to spiritual bodies (see I Cor. 15:44,50-56). We must take particular notice of the fact that Scripture says that *"we shall all be changed"*, not that our bodies will be completely replaced.

We also read in Philippians that when the Lord comes for us that He *"shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body...."* (see Phil. 3:20-21). In other words, He will transform these lowly bodies of corruption into a form like His glorified resurrection body. At that time we will no longer have a need for blood, as we will be fully infused and energized with life eternal by the Holy Spirit who indwells all who are *"in Christ"* (I Cor. 12:13; Gal. 2:20; 4:30; II Tim. 1:7, 13-14). Scripture says that the members of the Body of Christ are being joined together to grow into *"an holy temple in the Lord"* and *"an habitation of God through the Spirit"* (Eph. 2:21-22).

This logically brings us to another question: What about the saints who have gone before us whose dead bodies have somehow been completely destroyed. How can they be resurrected? The example of John Wycliffe comes to mind here. Forty years after his death, his decaying body was exhumed and he was posthumously put on trial and found guilty of being a heretic. Then his body was burned and the ashes scattered in a river to be carried out to sea. Will God be able to resurrect him at the time of the Rapture? Some claim that a physical resurrection of John Wycliffe's body, and of those whose bodies have similarly been

obliterated, is impossible because all of the scattered fragments of their bodies cannot be retrieved and reassembled into the original, so the resurrection will only be spiritual. There are two reasons why this is an invalid assumption on their part.

One is that it is not necessary that every physical particle of a body must be restored for it to be the same body. To substantiate this we only need to bring to mind the fact that our present pre-resurrected bodies regularly take in food products and give off waste. Our bodies also become heavier or lighter depending on the quality and quantity of food eaten and physical exercise. If a person loses or gains weight, even if the amount is substantial, we cannot say that they no longer have the same body. Today, with the discovery of DNA and the unique genetic code it holds for each individual, it is easier for us to understand how God will be able to resurrect the bodies of the deceased that have been, for all practical purposes, completely destroyed from a natural point of view. Each DNA molecule contains all the information needed to build, control, and maintain the physical properties of the person's body it came from.

Second, and most importantly, we must remember that it is not logic or scientific evidence we are to rely on to discern truth about the resurrection, or any other doctrine for that matter. Scripture stands alone as our authority for all matters of faith and practice (see II Tim. 3:16-17). Scripture says that we will be resurrected, and so we will be resurrected. Most certainly the all-knowing and all-powerful God who created all that exists will have no trouble bringing enough of the scattered particles from each individual's body to constitute a true resurrection when the time for their bodies to be raised from the dead comes. After all, He wrote the DNA code. Regardless, we do not need to understand it, we need only to believe that He will do it. *"And the very God of peace sanctify wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He that calleth you, who will also do it"* (I Thess. 5:23-24).



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## COMMON SAYINGS FROM THE BIBLE

*"Prepare to Meet Your Maker"*

Those who use this phrase are usually speaking of physical death with the "Maker" being God. Sometimes it is stated as a question; "Are you prepared to meet your Maker?" As a statement it means "get ready to die". As a question it means "Are you ready to die?" It is associated with two passages of Scripture. First is Amos 4:12 where, through the prophet Amos, the Lord warned the people of Israel to prepare to face their God in light of the destruction He was about to bring on the nation. The second passage is Hebrews 9:27, which reads, "And as it is appointed unto man once to die, but after this the judgment". A variation of this saying with the same meaning is "Have you made peace with God?" The principle expressed is important for each individual to seriously consider. Where would you end up if you were to die today? Only those who have trusted in Jesus Christ as their Savior "have peace with God" (Rom. 5:1) and will be allowed into Heaven to enter into the presence of God to enjoy the blessings of eternal life. All others will, in the end, appear before their Creator to be judged for their sins and will suffer everlasting punishment (see Rev. 20:11-15). Are you prepared to meet your Maker?

### QUESTION FOR THE READER: WHO AM I?

Who said this? "Pick me up and throw me into the sea and it will become calm."

*Answer to the August "Who Am I" Question for the Reader: Peter (Who said this? "Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water") [Peter said to Him, "Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water." And He said, "Come!" And Peter got out of the boat, and walked on the water and came toward Jesus. Matthew 14:28-29.]*

## INTERESTING BIBLE FACTS

*"The Enlightenment"*

For centuries Europe had been, at least in theory, considered to be Christian. But, an intellectual movement called the Enlightenment began, more or less parallel with the Reformation. It reached a high point in the 1700's, but its influence continues today. These "Enlightenment" thinkers believed social progress along with rational and scientific knowledge to be the keys to liberating the human mind so that man could live up to his potential. Enlightenment thinkers believed that rational thinking was the only way of finding truth and governing behavior. In other words, they put their faith in the power of human reasoning as their guide to life rather than the Bible. For the most part they were hostile to "religion", which they viewed as nothing but superstitious tradition that kept the human mind in bondage.

While some moved towards Agnosticism or Atheism, many Enlightenment leaders embraced Deism. Deism believes that there is a "god," or "supreme being," but that this "god" has left mankind to his own devices, and that man's only religious duty is to live virtuously. Sin, they said, is not man's problem, but rather ignorance is, and Jesus Christ was only a good moral teacher, not the Savior of the world. Men like Voltaire helped popularize Enlightenment ideas. Enlightenment thinking had a heavy influence on America's Founding Fathers, especially Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin, who, contrary to popular tradition, were not Bible believing Christians (see Col. 2:8-9).

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