

BIBLE ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUESTIONS

And Interesting Facts About the Holy Word of God

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ISSUE 5

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How Are We To Walk?

Apostle Paul tells us, *"That ye should henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind"* (Eph. 4:17). The unbeliever is in spiritual darkness and does not understand the things of God. They can only *"walk according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now worketh in the children of disobedience"* (Eph. 2:2). The unbeliever is completely out of the will of God because of unbelief. The unbeliever cannot live a life pleasing to God.

On the other hand, the believer is to *"walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us and given Himself for us"* (Eph. 5:2). Those who trust Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins and eternal life are given a new nature and empowered by the indwelling Holy Spirit to walk in the newness of life. As believers, we are to put off the old man and his ways and put on the new. The unsaved man or woman cannot accomplish this. God looks at the heart, the inner person, not the outward show. Only those who are *"in Christ"* are in any way acceptable to God. Only the believer can walk in love. The unbeliever walks in spiritual disobedience, ignorance, and futility. Which path are you walking on?

Because Christ Lives!

W. Edward Bedore

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

(All questions answered by the Editor unless otherwise noted)

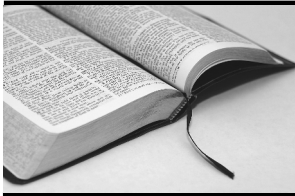
QUESTION: I have heard it said that "Nimrod was a hunter of men." How do we know that?

ANSWER: We are introduced to Nimrod in Genesis chapter 10. There he is listed as a grandson of Ham, where it is said that *"he began to be a mighty one on the earth"* (Gen. 10:6-8). It is further said of him that *"he was a mighty hunter before the Lord: wherefore it is said that, 'Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord. And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel'"* (Gen. 10:9-10). Even though many assume that Nimrod being *"a mighty hunter before the Lord"* means that he was a physically robust and talented man who was both famous for and proud of his hunting skills, there is nothing in the context that indicates that to be the case. Genesis 10 is essentially a list of the descendants of Noah's three sons, where they migrated to and the nations that came from them. This chapter has often been called the chart of nations. It should be noted here that Genesis chapters 10 and 11 are not in chronological order. Chapter 10 tell where Noah's descendants went when they were scattered throughout the earth and chapter 11 goes back and tells of their rebellion and how it came about that they were scattered throughout the earth.

As we said before, nothing in the context indicates that Nimrod was an exceptional outdoors sportsman, but rather, being known as *"a mighty one in the earth"* and as *"the mighty hunter before the Lord"* pictures him as a powerful tyrant that preys on men and women. Chapters 10 and 11 speak only of mankind, with no reference to animals

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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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of any kind. Nimrod's kingdom (his rule over men) began at Babel (Gen. 10:10) and it is from Babel that rebellious mankind was dispersed when God confused their languages (Gen. 11:1-9). Nimrod's very name means "rebel" or "we will rebel." Obviously this founder of the first kingdom after Noah's flood intended to rule over the population of the world from Babel (Babylon) by leading them in their rebellion against God. Other passages of Scripture that speak of hunting, buying, selling, and enticing, souls are found in Ezekiel 13:17-10; Nahum 3:4; Rev. 17:1-6 with 18:9-13; and Romans 1:28-32.

QUESTION: Recently I watched a popular pastor on TV. In his message, this pastor said that Christians are to tithe today and referred to Malachi 3:7-11 to support his teaching, but gave no verses from the New Testament to back up his statements about Christian tithing. I understand that the Word of Faith preachers twist and turn these Scriptures to line their pockets, but I was surprised that this well-known and respected conservative pastor was sounding similar. I feel that he was taking these verses out of context. Wasn't the Old Testament tithe a required part of theocratic government rule under the Law "specific to Israel" for the purpose of supporting the needs of the priests and storehouse? And, aren't the blessings promised to follow the giving of the tithe and Israel's obedience to God specific to national Israel also? Is my understanding wrong? Are Christians required to tithe?

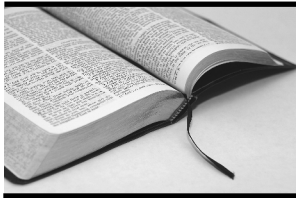
ANSWER: No, you are not wrong, and no, Christians (members of the Body of Christ) are not required to tithe (give the tenth part) today during the present Dispensation of Grace we are living in. And yes, the promises found in Malachi 3:7-11, and the rest of Malachi as well, are specifically to the nation of Israel and we are not free to claim them for ourselves. When the Prophet Malachi wrote,

"bring all the tithes into the storehouse" (Mal. 3:10), he was not simply referring to the giving of ten percent, but rather to the required giving of a tithe at least two and perhaps three times a year by every Israelite. All the tithes then added up to twenty or thirty percent annually. And this did not include the various other sacrifices and offerings any individual might give during the course of a year. The *"storehouse"* referred to by Malachi was a depository, most probably within the Temple complex or close by (II Chron. 31:11-12), used to store the tithe offerings of the people under the oversight of the Levites, who also received their livelihood from the national tithe. The need for such a storage place becomes obvious when you take into account that one-tenth of the entire harvest of the nation would be brought to the storehouse around the same time to later be distributed to and used by the priests and Levites throughout the following year. Instructions for tithing under the Mosaic Law are found in Lev. 27:30-33; Num. 18:31-32; Deut. 12:5-7, 11-12, 17-19; 14:22-29; 26:12-15. Also see II Chron. 31:5 -6; Neh. 10:35-38; 12:44; 13: 5, 10-12; Ezek. 44:29-30; Mal. 3:8-12.

In the New Testament, the giving of the tithe is found in four places (Matt. 23:23; Lk. 11:42; Lk. 18:9-14; and Heb. 7:1-9). In none of these passages is there found any ordinance, or command, or teaching that the Church today is to give a tithe. In Matthew 23:23; Luke 11:42; and Luke 18:9-14, we find the Lord Jesus condemning the Pharisees for their hypocrisy in their diligence in giving the tithe. They were self-righteously using it to exalt themselves rather than to honor God, hardly an example for us to follow today.

The passage in Hebrews is not about tithing today either, but is an illustration from Israel's history that the writer, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, was using to demonstrate to the Hebrew saints (the circumcision) the superiority of Jesus

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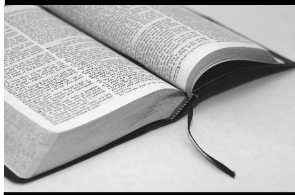
Christ's New Covenant priesthood "after the order of Melchisedec" (Ps. 110:1-4; Heb. 5:8-10) over the Old Covenant priesthood of Aaron under the Law of Moses (Heb. 5:1-4; 7:11-17). While the theme of the superiority of Christ's ministry over that of Aaron's is found throughout Hebrews 5 through 10, our interest here is the writer's reference to the tithe in chapter 7 as evidence of this all important truth. The point made is that Abraham, the chief patriarch of Israel and Aaron's great-grandfather, gave a tithe of the recovered bounty of war (Gen. 14:18-20) to Melchisedec, "the priest of the Most High God," showing the Melchisedec priesthood to be greater than Aaron's. The proof being that Levi, the father of the tribe of Israel that Aaron was from was at that time unborn and figuratively paid tithes to Melchisedec, "...Levi also, who receiveth tithes, paid tithes in Abraham. For he was yet in the loins of his father (Abraham) when he met him" (Heb. 7:9-10). Hebrews makes no mention of individuals being required to tithe.

The principles of Grace-giving for today are laid out for us in II Corinthians chapters 8 and 9. In these chapters the Apostle Paul is encouraging the Corinthian believers to contribute to an offering he was taking up from the various Grace churches he founded to help "the poor saints which are at Jerusalem" (Rom. 15:25-26; Corinth was located in Achaia). A brief summary of Grace giving is that it is to be as one "purposeth in his own heart" (you alone decide when and how much); it is not to be done "grudgingly" (not as a resented obligation); "or of necessity" (not as something required, such as the Law of the tithe), but rather give as "a cheerful giver" (with the joy of a servant's heart which pleases God) (II Cor. 9:7). Some other passages to think about when considering our giving as members of the Body of Christ are Rom. 5:8; 12:1; Eph. 5:1-2; Phil. 2:5-8).

QUESTION: What does it mean that Jesus Christ was "set forth to be a propitiation?"

ANSWER: Your question comes from Romans chapter 3 where the Apostle Paul explains how God has made it possible for Him to save unrighteous sinners, the ungodly, without violating His own righteousness. In other words, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, he is answering the question, "How can an absolutely holy and just God release sinners from their sin debt without it being paid in full?" Justice demands that the debt be paid, therefore God would be unjust to simply ignore their sin and receive sinners into personal fellowship with Himself. Because God is absolutely righteous and holy by nature, this would be impossible because God cannot violate His own nature. If He did any unjust thing at all, He would become unrighteous and cease to be God. But, because God is unchanging in nature, purpose, and attributes, He always does, and can only do that which is consistent with His holy and righteous nature, His holy purpose, and His perfection of attributes. He is a just God and He only and always does that which is just and therefore righteous (Gen. 18:25; Deut. 32:4; Ps. 11:7; Dan. 9:14). The passage in question reads: "But now the righteousness of God without the Law is manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: For there is no difference: for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time His righteousness: **that He might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus**" (Rom. 3:21-26).

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The New Testament doesn't refer to the wrath of God as often as the Old Testament does, but it is there and it is important. Those of Adam's race are subject to receive the just reward for their sins because God's wrath is directed against it (Rom. 1:18, 24,26,28-32; 2:5-6). In the passage quoted above, sinners are facing the wrath of God because of their sins and are in need of justification because their sins have rendered them unrighteous as they have *"come short of the glory of God"* (v. 23). Justification, to be declared righteous in God's sight, is offered *"freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus"* (v. 24). The redemption of sinners was made possible through the cross of Jesus Christ (I Cor. 1:18; 15:3-4; Col. 1:13-14, 21-22). It is important to note that, while they are not the same thing, *"redemption"* and the *"forgiveness of sins"* are inseparable. Whoever has been forgiven of their sins has been redeemed as well. Both come through the blood of Jesus Christ (Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:12-14). Also note the fact that believers are *"justified by His blood"* (Rom. 5:9). Because man is incapable of making himself acceptable to God, God has taken the initiative and *"set forth"* His own Son *"to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God"* (Rom. 3:28). A *"propitiation"* signifies that an adequate provision, or payment, has been made (Christ's sacrifice of Himself) to settle man's sin account, which mandates the death of the sinner (Rom. 1:32; 6:23a). God has accepted this payment as of sufficient value* to pay man's sin debt and offered it to all sinners as a gift that is received *"through faith in His*

(Christ's) blood" (v. 25). All those and only those who put their trust in Christ receive the benefits of His propitiatory death, burial, and resurrection. They are forgiven of their sin, redeemed, justified, reconciled, and given the gift of eternal life. All others remain in their sins and are subject to the wrath of God. Dear reader, have you believed the Gospel and put your trust in Jesus Christ to save you?

*Jesus Christ's death on the cross is sufficient to pay the sin debt of all mankind because His life is of eternal value as proven by His resurrection. He is a Living Savior who gives eternal life to all who believe on Him (Acts 16:31; Rom. 6:23).

COMMON SAYINGS FROM THE BIBLE

"Old As Methuselah"

This phrase is used to emphasize something's or someone's age as being incredibly old, usually in a lighthearted manner. Methuselah, whose age is the oldest recorded in Scripture, was the grandfather of Noah. The Bible tells us he lived to be 969 years old. He was the son of Enoch, a descendant of Seth, a son of Adam (Gen. 5:1-3, ff). *"And all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred sixty and nine years: and he died"* (see Gen. 5:21-27). Besides in Genesis, Methuselah is only mentioned in the genealogy of Jesus Christ that is given in Luke (Lk. 3:37).

QUESTION FOR THE READER

"What tribe was the Apostle Paul from?"

ANSWER TO THE JUNE QUESTION: (*"What type of insect did John the Baptist eat in the desert?"*) **Locust. Matthew 3:3-4.**

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