

BIBLE ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUESTIONS

And Interesting Facts About the Holy Word of God

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ISSUE 1

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From the President's Desk,

Greetings from the frozen tundra called Wisconsin. I hope that you are praising the Lord as you entered a new year. Thinking back to this time last year, I was scheduling churches to visit on behalf of BBI and looking forward to our upcoming Missions Conference. Little did I know that things were about to change. I'm sure as you think back to this time last year you have your own story to tell of changed plans and life interruptions. I still shake my head in disbelief that it's been a little over a year since our lives were turned upside down.

Yet, while it has been hard on so many of us, I am reminded of promises we find in God's Word. One such promise gives me strength and hope. Psalm 139:1-3 declares "*O LORD, You have searched me and known me. You know my sitting down and my rising up; You understand my thought afar off. You comprehend my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways.*" What a fitting reminder that God is not sleeping or unaware of what is taking place in our lives and in our world. In fact, just the opposite is true. God is intimately acquainted with my life and yours. He knows what we are going through and asks us to simply trust Him through whatever we face.

In these times of uncertainty, it is essential that we intentionally turn our focus on the Lord. I say intentionally because, if we are not careful, every care that we face, and every issue that comes across our paths, takes our attention away from the Savior. Take some time and read this powerful and uplifting Psalm of David. What a beautiful thought that we don't have to face life alone.

I also want to thank all of you for your prayers and support of *Berean Bible Institute*. We are blessed to work with many men and women who are committed to the Lord Jesus Christ and His work in their lives. May we continue to look to the Savior for strength and wisdom to face whatever comes our way.

Dr. Robert E. Nix

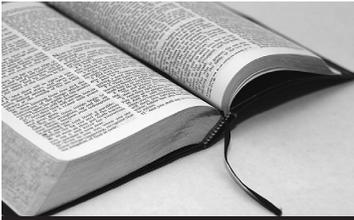
President, *Berean Bible Institute*

QUESTION: I once heard a teaching that said because God had given Adam dominion over the earth, when he sinned Satan was able to claim Adam's rule over the earth for himself and evict God from earth. Consequently, God is presently in exile and will only be able to return to earth if and when Jesus is able to defeat the satanic forces of the anti-Christ at the Battle of Armageddon at His Second Coming. Is there anything to this?

ANSWER: Well, there is no truth to it, if that is what you mean. There are many passages of Scripture found in the Bible that tell us that the God of the Bible is the One True "*Living God, which made the Heaven, and the earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein*" (Acts 4:24; 14:15; 17:24; cf. Ex. 20:11; Neh. 9:6; etc.).

We are also clearly told that "*the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; the world and they that dwell therein*" (Ps. 24:1). While God does allow sin to reign on earth to a certain degree, it is not because He has been defeated and run out of town by the Devil. Nobody tells God what to do, how to do it, or when to do it. One way His sovereignty is demonstrated in Scripture is by the many times His Only Begotten Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, publicly showed His authority over Satan and His demonic forces during His earthly ministry.

"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



BIBLE ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUESTIONS

And Interesting Facts About the Holy Word of God

However, the Lord is under a voluntary self-imposed exile that keeps Him from returning to earth until His people, Israel, repent and confess their personal and national crimes against the Messiah, that the religious leaders of Israel had *“taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain”* (see Acts 2:22-23). After His resurrection, Israel’s leaders remained unrepentant and hostile towards the Messiah and those who followed Him, as He had foretold would happen through the Prophet Hosea. He went back to His place, Heaven, where He came from (see Joh. 3:13; 6:38; I Cor. 15:47) and vowed to stay there until *“they [national Israel] acknowledge their offense and seek My face: in their affliction [the tribulation] they will seek me early”* (Hosea 5:15).

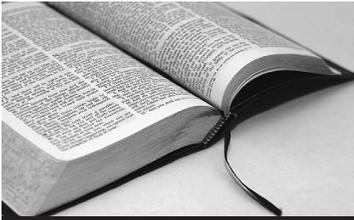
This is what Peter was referring to when he said; *“Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and He shall send Jesus Christ, which was preached unto you: whom the Heaven must receive unto the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began”* (Acts 3:19-21). Simply put, Peter told Israel that only when the nation repented of its wickedness of unbelief towards Messiah and rebellion toward the Father would the Lord return and the Kingdom be restored (*refreshed*). When the Lord Jesus Christ Himself sits on David’s Throne, He will bring about the *“restitution”* of all the Kingdom blessings spoken by all God’s prophets since the time of creation. Notice that God the Father will not send Jesus Christ back for His Second Coming until Israel repents. Until that time, Heaven *“must receive”* Him, that is to say, He must remain in Heaven as He said He would until Israel as a nation at last confesses that Jesus is *“both Lord [the Son of God] and Christ [the Messiah]”* (Acts 2:35; see Acts 2:29-36). It is not that He is not able to come back sooner, but that He has given His Word that He will not return to deliver Jacob/Israel out of the nation’s time of great trouble that is the Tribulation of the Last Days. But deliver them He will when this proud and arrogant people that He has chosen to be His own finally humble themselves, confessing their personal and national sins in the earnest sorrow of true repentance.

Concerning those days of God’s wrath, the Prophet Jeremiah has declared *“Alas! For that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob’s [Israel’s] trouble; but he shall be saved out of it”* (Jer. 30:7). This so great salvation of the Last Days will take place when, as foretold by the Prophet Zechariah, Israel mourns over the Crucified One, *“whom they have pierced”* (see Zech. 12:10-13:1) and it comes to pass that the Lord will *“destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem”* (Zech. 12:9) and will set His feet again on the Mount of Olives, the place He ascended into Heaven from (see Acts 1:9-11; with Zech. 14:3-4). Jesus Christ’s return to earth, His Second Coming, will bring about *“the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of His holy prophets since the world began”* (Acts 3:20-21).

At that time He will reestablish David’s throne and bring about the Kingdom of God on earth that He will rule over in righteousness for one thousand years (Jer. 23:5-6; Rev. 20:4-6). After the one thousand years are finished, man will rebel against God one last time and the wicked dead will be cast into the Lake of Fire to suffer everlasting torment (Rev. 20:5-15) and Jesus Christ will rule eternally over the Eternal Kingdom of God from the Eternal City that is the New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:1-22:21).

QUESTION: We know from Scripture that there will be a Second Coming of Jesus Christ, but does the Bible tell us anything about when He will return? There are many who claim that prophecy is currently being fulfilled and that the Second Coming must happen soon. Can this be true?

ANSWER: No, this cannot be true. For one thing, the claim that End Times, or Last Days, Prophecy is being fulfilled today is most problematic for those who believe this. What is probably the most prevalent flaw in the “prophecy is being fulfilled today” idea is that the same prophecies from Scripture are said to have been, or are now being fulfilled, year after year after year after year, and so on. And quite often these kind of claims are made by the same Bible teachers, researchers, scholars, etc., who seem to have completely forgotten what they have said in the past about specific Bible prophecies



BIBLE ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUESTIONS

And Interesting Facts About the Holy Word of God

in the past years. I know of more than a few popular Bible teachers who focus on Bible prophecies that they say are “currently” being fulfilled. They continually point to the latest news reports that tell of any kind of disaster such as famine, war, social upheaval, riots, political turmoil, wild fires, earthquakes, floods, or anything else that they can find a Bible verse that they can point to that seems to support their claims that the Last Days are most certainly upon us. This erroneous approach to Bible study has been going on for well over one hundred years now and doesn’t show any signs of slowing down. While they are wrong in their understanding of End Times Prophecy, I do believe that most of these preachers and teachers are sincere. Their problem is that they are sincerely wrong because they have failed to rightly divide the Bible in their study of the Word of God. In other words, it is the failure to study the whole Bible dispensationally. In so doing, they cannot help but to mix Prophecy, the foretelling of the Last Days by God’s Prophets, and Mystery, the never before revealed message of Grace that the Lord God kept hidden in Himself until He exclusively and personally made it known to and through Paul, “*the Apostle of the Gentiles*” (see Rom. 11:13; Eph. 3:1-9).

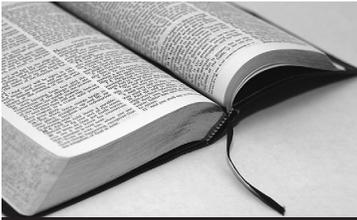
While these Bible teachers are dispensationalists, they make their mistake in thinking that the Church began in Acts chapter two and that Peter and his associate apostles preached the same Gospel message that the Apostle Paul did. This is a serious error because they did not preach the same message at all. Yes, they both preached Jesus Christ as the One and Only Savior, but Peter and the other eleven apostles preached Christ in the context of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, a message “*which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy apostles since the world began*” (Acts 3:21). In contrast, Paul preached Jesus Christ in the context of the Gospel of the Grace of God, “*according to the revelation of the Mystery, which was kept secret since the world began*” (Rom. 16:25). Can these two statements both be true? Yes, they can and in fact, as they are recorded as revealed truth in Scripture, we know that they are both true. But, they do not say the same thing. Rather they actually say the opposite of each other.

How can this be? Simple, the respective Good News that Peter and Paul preached referred to different Dispensations. When Peter preached on the Day of Pentecost, he told the men of Israel that heard him to “*repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit*” (Acts 2:38). On the other hand, the Apostle Paul, in writing to the Corinthians about their salvation, wrote “*I declare unto you the Gospel which I preached unto you... By which also you are saved... For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures*” (I Cor. 15:1-4).

What has happened is that for the time being the Lord has set unrepentant Israel aside in unbelief and suspended the Gospel of the Kingdom and the fulfilling of Last Days prophecies. After the Rapture of the Church, and yes, the Church will be caught up into Heaven no matter what men say, the Gospel of the Kingdom will be reinstated and End Times prophecies will begin to be fulfilled as the Tribulation begins. Then “the signs of the times” will begin to take place as a warning to Israel and the nations at large that the end is near (see Matt. 24:3-35).

For those of us living in the present Dispensation of Grace there is only one sign to watch for that will precede the Tribulation and that is the Rapture of the Church. And when it happens, every saved person on earth will be caught up in the blink of an eye and taken to Heaven (I Cor. 15:51-52). Those remaining on earth will face the most horrible of times as they enter the Last Days and the Last Days prophecies begin to unfold before their eyes. Don’t be too concerned with the Last Days and the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. Rather, if you have never trusted in the Lord Jesus for salvation by grace through faith, thank God you still have the opportunity and “*believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved*” today (Acts 16:31). He could come to Rapture the Church (true believers) at any time, perhaps even today.

Actually this problem has been around for almost two thousand years. The Apostle Paul was confronted with it during his life time.



BIBLE ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUESTIONS

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SIGNS OF THE COVENANT

Beginning with His promise to make Abraham a great nation (Gen. 12:3), God established a covenant with Abraham and his descendants through the lineage of his son Isaac and grandson Jacob/Israel (Ex. 6:8). The verification of this covenant was signs and wonders (Judg. 6:17; Isa. 8:18; Jer. 32:20; Acts 2:22). The Lord used miracles so that His people, Israel, would know that He was God and there is no other God (Ex. 6:7; 16:12; I Kings 20:13, 28; Ezek. 11:12; Joel 2:27; 3:17). These signs are not manifest today because God has temporarily suspended them along with the setting aside of Israel in her unbelief.

The Body of Christ Church of the present Dispensation of Grace has no promise of this kind of verification and should not expect to experience them (I Cor. 13:10; II Cor. 5:7). God is not proving His faithfulness today as He did in the past with miraculous physical signs and as He will do again in the future. Today He is using His revealed Word, the Bible, and the work of the Holy Spirit (II Tim. 3:16-17).

INTERESTING BIBLE FACTS

John Locke (1632-1704)

The Bible had a strong influence on the Founding Fathers of America, but the English philosopher John Locke also influenced their thinking, especially by his "Second Treatise on Government." He also wrote a book on religion entitled "The Reasonableness of Christianity" that was widely read. He claimed to be an orthodox Christian, but minimized the supernatural parts of the Bible without denying their accuracy or truthfulness. He was particularly influential to the Enlightenment. We can't know for sure if Locke was a forgiven and redeemed individual (Eph. 1:6-7, 13-14), one who had trusted

in Jesus Christ alone for his salvation, believing that He died for his sin, was buried, and rose again just as the Scriptures tell us (I Cor. 15:1-4), or if he was just another religious person trying to blend their ideas with Bible truth, but it is evident that he had strong leanings towards Deism as many of the humanist thinkers of his day did. The Apostle Paul warns us against this and it is important that we take heed. *"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in Him, which is the head of all principality and power: (Col. 2:8-10).*

COMMON SAYINGS FROM THE BIBLE

"You Can't Take It With You"

This saying, or some variation of it, is commonly heard today. The principle behind it is true; when we die we cannot take our material possessions with us. We have no choice, but to leave them behind. Regardless of this fact, many people live their lives as if whatever wealth they can accumulate in this life can provide security and give meaning to their life. The Lord Jesus illustrated the futility of this approach to life in the parable of the Rich Fool whose abundant wealth gave him a false sense of well-being (see Lk. 12:16-21ff). The saying comes from the Apostle Paul who put it this way; *"For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out"* (I Tim. 6:7).

Every person should give some serious thought to this truth when planning their future. That which has true value is found only in a personal relationship with the Creator God of the universe. Untold wealth is to be found in the riches of God's grace; riches that are only accessible through faith in Jesus Christ as Savior; eternal riches that cannot be lost, stolen, or destroyed.

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