

BIBLE ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUESTIONS

And Interesting Facts About the Holy Word of God

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ISSUE 5

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From the President's Desk,

There is a principle found in leadership literature that states "begin with the end in mind." The idea being that when you start a project or program you need to evaluate where you want to finish or what the result will look like. This principle speaks of purpose, direction, and focus, not simply activity or being busy. When thinking about the principle of "beginning with the end in mind," I am reminded of the Apostle Paul's declaration in Philippians 1:20 when he states "according to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ will be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death." Paul tells us that his entire life was built around the goal that Christ Jesus would be magnified in his body. As I am sure you recall, the next verse states, "For to me to live is Christ and to die is gain."

As we think of living our lives with purpose, I believe Paul gives us a wonderful example of what it looks like to live with the end in mind. In other words, every aspect of our lives needs to be examined through the question, will Christ be magnified in my life through this decision or action? Or, to put it another way, are my choices bringing glory to Christ and pointing others to Him?

Each day we are faced with many choices and if, as believers, we "begin with the end in mind," we must face these choices and decisions with the same commitment as the Apostle Paul, with the goal and outcome that Christ would be *magnified in my body, whether by life or death.*"

Please continue to keep BBI in your prayers as we continue to stay true to our mission of training Pastors,

Missionaries, and Christian leaders in the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ and the proclamation of the gospel of the grace of God, given to and through the Apostle Paul.

I also want to thank all of you who have been praying for us through the sale of BBI's property and relocation to our new facilities. Your prayers and financial support have been a blessing.

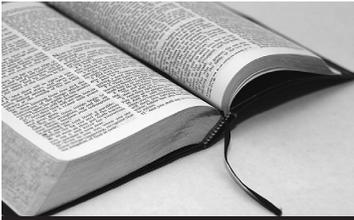
Striving together for the faith of the Gospel,

Dr. Robert E. Nix,
President, Berean Bible Institute

QUESTION: Isaiah 14:12 is a rebuke to the king of Babylon. I have heard it said that the name "Lucifer" is from a Latin word and that this is a reference to Satan. Why can't it be another adjective for the "splendor" of the king of Babylon? To me there is no good logical link to Satan. Please explain.

ANSWER: Lucifer is from a Latin term that means "light bringer" or "light bearer." It has been used throughout most of the history of the Church to refer to Satan. It is used in Isaiah 14:12 for the Hebrew word *halal* which means to "shine," such as a light given off by the celestial bodies. The term "son of the morning" signifies a "bright star." This verse could be literally rendered "How art thou fallen from heaven, O [light bringer] O [bright star of the morning]...." This couplet is a commonly used repetitive parallelism in which the same thing is said in two different ways for emphasis.

"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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The Apostle Paul points out the fact that the Devil pretends to be a light bearer in his warning to the Corinthians about being deceived by false teachers who are pretenders of righteousness. *“And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light”* (II Cor. 11:14). This statement by Paul may not give us a solid link by itself, but it does at least link Satan to the idea of being a deceitful light bearer. I believe that it is within reason to think that the Apostle may have had Isaiah 14:12 in mind when he wrote to the Corinthians. Passages that are often cited as linking Isaiah 14:12-15 are found in Luke and the Revelation. In looking at them we need to keep in mind that all of these passages were prophecies when given. The question is then, which have already come to pass and to what extent have they been fulfilled?

When the seventy who were sent out returned to report that through the name of Jesus Christ demons were subjected to them, the Lord *“said unto them, ‘I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven’”* (Lk. 10:17-18). This was obviously a prophetic declaration as Satan was not then and has not to this very hour been cast out of heaven. That will not happen until the middle of the Tribulation (Rev. 12:8-9). When it does happen, it will be a time of rejoicing for those in heaven and a time of woe for those on Earth (see Rev. 12:7-12).

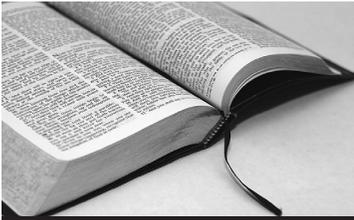
The title Lucifer (shining one or bright one) is applied to the king of Babylon, not as a particular person or individual, but as the very personification of Satan, who is the real power behind the throne of Babylon and all of the evil and arrogant rulers who oppose the Creator God and those who trust in Him. While many wicked kings/rulers of nations have claimed divine authority on earth, they do not assault heaven in the way this king is depicted as doing. Even in hyperbolic language, the huge ego and stupendous ambition expressed in these verses could hardly come from the mouth of any other than that of Satan, who is the arch enemy of God and His people. It is Jesus Christ who is the real *“Bright and Morning Star”* and is rightfully seated at the right hand of the Father (Rev. 22:16; Eph. 1:20).

QUESTION: Could you please give me some Bible references that show that everyone has an immortal soul? I Timothy 1:17; 6:15-16 indicate that God alone is immortal.

ANSWER: I do not know of a verse that explicitly says that man has an immortal soul, but it is taught in Scripture that human beings continue in a state of conscious existence after experiencing physical death. In other words, they are never annihilated or eradicated, but are immortal. Where the Scriptures speak of God alone having immortality, it is in the context of Him having eternal life and supreme authority over all things. He is self-existing and His life reaches as far back into eternity as it reaches forward into eternity. In other words, His life is without beginning and without end. On the other hand, a human is a created being whose life will never end, but does have a definite beginning. The life that the natural man has is not the same kind of life that God has. It is devoid of spiritual vitality and is ruled by the flesh. When a person believes in Jesus Christ as their Savior, they are imparted with eternal life and become spiritually alive (Rom. 6:23; Eph. 2:1-5; Tit. 3:5-7). That believers are said to have been given eternal life tells us that they will always be alive. Eternal life by definition can have no interruptions, it lasts for eternity. The body may die, and even be destroyed, but the soul and spirit live on and will someday be reunited with the body at the resurrection.

That unbelievers continue to exist in a conscious state of being in Hades (see Lk. 16:19-31) tells us that they do not cease to exist at physical death. We are also told that those who take the Mark of the Beast will suffer *“forever and ever”* (Rev. 14:11; see Rev. 20:11-15 for the eventual fate of all unbelievers). The martyred saints of the Tribulation being under the altar of God crying out to Him as they await the resurrection when Christ returns to earth also shows that the soul of man lives on after physical death (see Rev. 6:9-11; 7:9-10, 14; 15:2).

A more thorough exposition of this subject and associated issues concerning what happens when we die is available in my book, *“The State and Place of the Dead,”* available from BBI for \$12.



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QUESTION: What is a “quaternion of soldiers” as mentioned in Acts 12:4? Why did Herod deliver Peter to four quaternions of soldiers after he was already in prison?

ANSWER: A quaternion of soldiers was a squad consisting of four men. In this case, they were assigned to special guard duty, being responsible to make sure Peter did not escape from prison. Four quaternions, sixteen men in all, were appointed to this task because the Roman military divided the night into four watches of three hours each. One quaternion would be on guard duty during each watch with two soldiers chained to Peter in locked cell. The other two would be stationed outside the cell making sure no one could open its door (Acts 12:6). The two soldiers outside the cell constituted “the first and second ward” that Peter was led past in his miraculous prison break (Acts 2:10).

Herod, who had already put the Apostle James to death, intended to kill Peter after the feasts of Passover and Unleavened Bread were past. The special guard put on Peter would have normally made certain that he would stay shut up in prison until Herod would bring him out to be executed. However, the Lord had other plans for Peter and sent an angel to rescue him (see Acts 12:1-11). A whole legion of Roman soldiers, or the entire Roman army for that matter, could not have kept him in that prison.

Having been freed, Peter went to the home of the mother of John Mark where a group of believers had gathered to pray (Acts 12:12-17). When morning came and it was found that Peter had escaped, Herod had the guards put to death (Acts 12:18-19).

INTERESTING BIBLE FACTS

“Translations”

In Exodus it says that Moses’ face “shone” when he came down from Mt. Sinai after talking with God (see Ex. 34:29,30,35). The Hebrew word for shone can also be translated “horned” and some early translations did so. This is why medieval and Renaissance era art often portray Moses with small horns protruding from his head.

“Study Bibles”

While we might think of them as a thoroughly modern innovation, study Bibles have been used for hundreds of years. One example is the Luther Bible. Published in 1534 it included chapter summaries and cross-references.

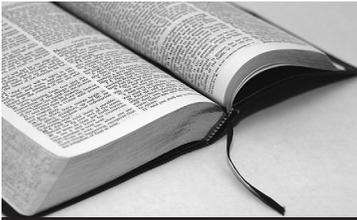
“The Dead Sea Scrolls”

In 1947 a Bedouin shepherd discovered a clay pot containing an ancient scroll in a cave northwest of the Dead Sea. Soon many other manuscripts were found in a total of 11 caves in the area. Altogether 28 nearly complete scrolls and 100,000 fragments of an additional 875 manuscripts were found. Except for Esther, multiple portions of all of the Old Testament were found. These Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek manuscripts are the oldest representative texts of the Old Testament available today. Some of them pre-date the earliest known Old Testament texts that were available when they were discovered by 1,000 years and verified their authenticity.

COMMON SAYINGS FROM THE BIBLE

“At Wit’s End”

To be “at wits end” is to be so severely perplexed, to be so troubled and confused as to be unable to think of what to do next; to be worried to the point of confusion about a course of action to take.. The Psalmist wrote of Israel under the chastening of God as being in such great distress that “*their soul is melted because of trouble*” causing them to, “*reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wit’s end*” (Ps. 107: 26-27). In the next verse we find the proclamation of hope for a dispersed and despairing Israel, “*When they cry out to the Lord in their trouble, and He bringeth them out of their distresses*” (Ps. 107:28). While this Psalm is prophetic in content and looks forward to Israel’s restoration in the Millennial Kingdom, the underlying spiritual principle is applicable to our present Dispensation of Grace. When in distress, God’s people need to turn to Him that He might give comfort to the soul in all circumstances and situations. Our instructions for today are to, “*Be careful [anxious] for nothing; but in*



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everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Jesus Christ (Phil. 4:6-7).

“See Eye-to-Eye”

To see eye-to-eye with someone means to be of the same mind; to be in agreement with them. To not see eye-to-eye is to be in disagreement. The phrase comes from the prophecy of Isaiah who wrote, *“thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion”* (Isa. 52:8). In this passage, the prophet was looking beyond the suffering of the promised Messiah to his glorious second coming at the end of the Tribulation to restore David’s throne in Jerusalem. All of the watchman of Israel will see eye-to-eye in their recognition, understanding, praise, and proclamation of the Person and blessings of Messiah in that day. There will no longer be any disunity among the Children of Israel, but they will be in complete unity in the reign of Jesus Christ during the Millennial Kingdom and beyond.

“Fuel to the Fire”

In speaking of the judgment soon to befall Jerusalem because of the idolatry of its leaders, the Prophet Ezekiel said, *“...as the vine tree among the trees of the forest, which I have given to the fire for fuel, so will I give the inhabitants of Jerusalem”* (Ezek. 15:6; see verses 1-8). In other words, the vine (Israel) that was meant to bear good fruit (holiness) was barren, it was only good to “fuel the fire” of God’s judgment. The persistence of the leadership in Jerusalem in continuing in their idolatrous ways was only adding to the intensity of the wrath of God that would eventually overtake them. It is used today in much the same way. We say that those who have foolishly put themselves in a dire situation and are making matters worse by continuing their actions, “are only adding fuel to the fire.”

“There is a Fly in the Ointment”

This phrase comes from Solomon’s words in Ecclesiastes 10:1; *“Dead flies cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savor (odor): so doth a little folly him that is in reputation for wisdom and honor.”* We use it in reference to something vile that ruins something that is good and apply the principle to many different situations. The verse is particularly pointed toward the fact that, like a fly that has gotten into a container of expensive perfume can ruin the whole batch and make it worthless, with one act of indiscretion a person can irreparably ruin their reputation and the trust and respect that others have for them. We see this dramatically illustrated in our country every year when politicians, and other public figures, careers are destroyed when their “folly” is exposed. But, much worse, the average person can suffer strained and even destroyed relationships on all levels through a little “foolishness.” Families and life-long friendships can be torn apart, jobs lost, bankruptcy, etc. It can also ruin a believer’s testimony, leaving them a poor witness of their Savior and His love and forgiveness.

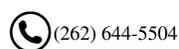
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