

BIBLE ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUESTIONS

And Interesting Facts About the Holy Word of God

BEREAN BIBLE INSTITUTE, INC.

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ISSUE 4

From the President's Desk,

EVERY STUDENT AND EVERY CENT A PROVISION OF GOD

This year *Berean Bible Institute* celebrates its 25th anniversary. Our theme for this year is "He is Able" taken from Ephesians 3:20. I am reminded of this when I think about how God has provided over the last 25 years, and how He will provide moving forward. Every student that has taken courses and every cent we have received from our partners has been a provision of God.

With that in mind, I want to share with you three ways God is providing and blessing BBI. First is our increased growth in students. This past year marks a milestone for BBI in that we have not only had more students take courses than ever before, but we also have students taking courses from thirteen different countries. This is truly a reason to celebrate. Second, as a result of this growth, we are facing the challenge of needing more resources to adequately provide the necessary training for our students. While this is a real challenge for us, it is not a challenge for God. We believe that just as God has provided every cent we have needed in the past, He will do the same in the future. Finally, I want to issue a call to action on behalf of the *Berean Bible Institute*. Please pray that just as God has raised up more students, He will also raise up more partners who will support our mission by supporting *Berean Bible Institute* financially. **The mission of Berean Bible Institute is to train pastors, missionaries, and Christian leaders for 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.**

Praying together,
Dr. Robert E. Nix

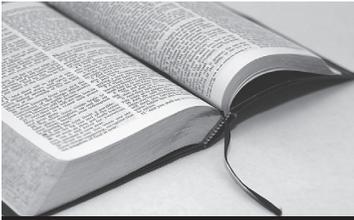
QUESTION: Will Gentile believers come back from heaven and live on the earth?

ANSWER: God's plan for the earth began with its creation. Within the entire universe, the Scriptures tell us "God himself that formed the earth and made it; He established it, He created it not in vain, He created it to be inhabited" (Isa. 45:18). Soon after creation, we read that the first created inhabitants (Adam and Eve) brought perversion to God's creative intents by sinning and bringing death (Gen. 3:1-19; Rom. 5:12). Today, Satan has been allowed to hold influence on earth as the "god of this world" (II Cor. 4:4) and the "prince of the power of the air" (Eph. 2:2). Most of the Bible focuses on a person's obedience on earth and the restoration of the earth to God's eternal purpose.

Israel became the vessel through which God would redeem the earth back to Himself. When the Lord appeared to Abram to ratify His everlasting covenant (Gen. 17:7) part of the promise was to give "the land... all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God" (Gen. 17:8). This covenant was later passed down to Isaac (Gen. 26:3) and then to Jacob (Gen. 28:3) whose name was changed to Israel. After captivity in Egypt, Moses was chosen to lead the people of Israel to the land given to the fathers (Deut. 1:8), and Joshua was responsible for leading the people in to possess it (Josh. 23:5). The land in which Israel was to dwell was reaffirmed with David, and the covenant progressed to include an eternal kingdom (II Sam. 7:10-13). Often unrecognized, the Psalms have much to say regarding dwelling in the land of promise (e.g., Psa. 2:6-8; 22:27-28; 37:11; 47:1-11; 47:1-9; 96:13; 72:11; 98:3,9; 126:1-3; 128:5). The prophets focused on the hope of eternally inheriting the land (e.g., Isa. 11:10-12; 14:1; 27:13; 60:1-3,21; Jer. 16:14-16; 30:3; Ezek. 11:17; 20:42; Zech. 14:9).

The redemption of the earth progresses in the New Testament when the Redeemer arrives. Jesus

"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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Christ speaks concerning the restoration of the earth (Matt. 4:17; 5:5; 16:28; 18:18-19; 24:14; 25:34; 26:29; Mark 9:1; 13:27; Luke 1:32-33; 11:2; 12:31-32; 13:29; 18:8; 22:16,18,30; Acts 1:8). The Hebrew apostles of our Lord also reminded their readers of their hope of earth's restoration (II Pet. 3:10-13 cf. Isa. 65:17; Rev. 1-22).

Grace believers understand that—although the Kingdom apostles use the adjective “*heavenly*” (e.g., Jn. 3:12) and the preposition “*of heaven*” (e.g., Matt. 7:21)—only the Apostle Paul speaks of going to Heaven as an eternal Hope (II Cor. 5:8; Eph. 2:6; Phil. 3:20; Col. 3:1-5a; I Thes. 4:17; 5:10). It is a drastically different thing to have a hope of heavenly things like the Kingdom believers have as opposed to the hope of Heaven like believers today possess. It is equally different to go to be with the Lord in Heaven as revealed in the Mystery versus having Him come to dwell with you in the heavenly Kingdom. Yes, Revelation speaks of the martyrs who followed the Christ as dwelling under the altar in Heaven (Rev. 6:9-11), but they are looking for the Lord to avenge their deaths so they can eternally dwell in the land (their “*rest*” is only for a season, [v.11], meaning they await their eternal rest). It is for these reasons that I believe the distinction between Prophecy and Mystery remains throughout eternity.

First, regarding the Millennial reign, when Christ returns to earth for the second time, there will still be the potential for sin and rebellion. It would seem that we, who are eternally delivered from sin by this time and quite happy in Heaven, would be going backward if we were to return to earth to reign with Christ at this time. Sin and death have not received their final judgment yet; this happens AFTER the thousand years. I am quite comfortable saying that if the Body of Christ comes to earth it will not be with the Lord at His Second Coming. We will remain in Heaven throughout this thousand-year period, while Israel is serving as mediators to the nations.

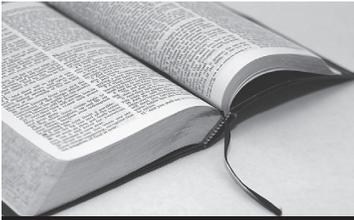
Next, considering the time after the Great White Throne, when sin and death have been cast into the Lake of Fire forever, good men disagree. My understanding is that God had two branches of His eternal purpose: one was for the earth while the other was

for the heavens. God's plan for the earth is completed through His Prophetic program with Israel serving as priests of the Lord. His plan for Heaven was not known until revealed to the Apostle Paul and involves the Body of Christ. While both locales will fall under the authority of Christ, I think the distinction between Israel and the Gentiles will remain forever, and we, members of the Body of Christ, will always be citizens of Heaven (Phil. 3:20-21). The subjects of the kingdom on earth will have a purpose, and the Body of Christ will have a purpose in Heaven. HOWEVER, I do not think that there is going to be a wall of partition separating Earth from Heaven, for all things will be summed up (recollected; united; gathered together) in Christ (I Cor. 15:24-28 cf. Eph. 1:10). Everything is going to be restored fully back to the direct authority of God in His perfect timing. Even with a duty in Heaven, will we be able to “visit” those on earth? Will we be sent on a mission as emissaries? What will our “duties” be? How will we spend our “time”? Will we be able to tour the New Jerusalem? Will we have already seen it? Will earth become part of Heaven in that day? There are so many questions that no one can possibly answer them this side of eternity. Keep in mind, in eternity our biggest concern will not be sitting down with David to interview him on what it was like to defeat Goliath or to catch up with your cousin who died at a young age. Our desire is going to be the Lord Jesus Christ. Wherever eternity specifically entails, I am sure there will be no complaints.

Can I just take a moment to remind you that, however the Lord works out eternity, we can appreciate our direct anticipation of Heaven while also longing for the day when all creation, including the earth, will be subdued to His direct will. Grace believers should care about the authority of the Lord encompassing all matter, time, and space.

QUESTION: Who are the “saints” who return with the Lord at His Second Coming as written in Jude 1:14?

ANSWER: Jude 1:14 states, “*And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of His saints.*”



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Many pastors and Bible teachers will tell you that the “*saints*” in this verse refers to the saved that the Lord brings with Him when He returns to earth. I think the Scriptures point to another answer.

Due to the fact that this is a prophecy that Enoch prophesied before there was even an Israel, the “*saints*” cannot be the Body of Christ, which is an “*unsearchable*” (untraceable) group not mentioned in prophecy (Eph. 3:1-9). We shouldn’t use I Thessalonians 4:14 (“*even so them also which sleep will God bring with Him*”) to help us understand this verse; the coming in Thessalonians is a unique set of circumstances. Jude is discussing the Second Coming of Christ, not the Secret Coming (a.k.a. Rapture) spoken of in Thessalonians and only revealed in the Mystery.

Many consider the saints to be Kingdom believers, like those mentioned in Revelation 6:9. Yet, Revelation 20:6 tells us that the Kingdom saints will be resurrected to enter the Millennium, not descended (cf. Dan. 12:2). Remember, Enoch died almost 1,300 years before Abram was born, so he did not have a direct covenant with God. Enoch’s understanding was not to come back with the Lord; rather, he would have had an outlook like Job who said in Job 19:25-26: “*For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God.*” Job and Enoch looked forward to being bodily resurrected to stand before the Lord on earth when He returned with “*ten thousand of His saints to execute judgment upon all.*”

So, if it is not the Body of Christ and doesn’t seem to be the Old Testament believers or the Kingdom saints, who is left? Are there any correlating verses that would help us understand who is coming with the Lord here? Let’s break it down.

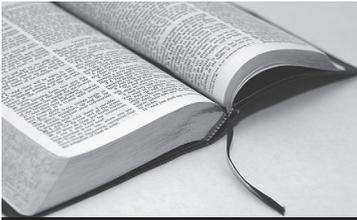
“Ten thousands” is the word for *myriad*. Deuteronomy 33:2 says, “*The LORD came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; He shined forth from mount Paran, and He came with ten thousands of saints: from His right hand went a fiery law for them.*” Moses described the Lord coming with holy myriads. Other verses point to angels having a part in delivering the Law on Sinai (See Acts 7:53; Gal. 3:19; Heb. 2:2). Psalm 68:17 praises, “*The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even*

thousands of angels.” The psalmist declares God has a myriad of chariots for His angelic hosts. These are the same myriad of angelic forces that are returning with the Lord at His Second Coming as recorded in Revelation 19:11-18 which tells us that a myriad of holy angels will be returning with Christ to wage war against His opposition.

The word “*saints*” in Jude 1:14 means *sacred, holy, consecrated, sanctified*. This same Greek word is used elsewhere in the Scriptures to describe the Holy Ghost (Matt. 1:20), Jerusalem (Matt. 4:5), sacred things (Matt. 7:6), angels (Matt. 25:31), people (Matt. 27:52), Jesus (Mark 1:24), John the Baptist (Mark 6:20), name (Luke 1:49), prophets (Luke 1:70), covenant (Luke 1:72), firstfruits (Rom. 11:16), bodies (Rom. 12:1), kiss (Rom. 16:16), children (I Cor. 7:14), and many other things designated holy and consecrated. As you can see, the word has a wide use, so a verse’s context will define the word’s use. Most of the time it is used as an adjective so the assigned meaning is not usually difficult to determine (e.g., Jude 1:20 has “*holy faith*” and “*Holy Ghost*”; also, Jude 1:1 “*sanctified*” is in the same family and 1:3 “*saints*” is the same exact word), but Jude isn’t assigned a word to modify. Many times, the KJV translators used the word “*saints*” in these occasions. The problem is that our church tradition has taught us to treat the word saints as it applies to those persons who have been made holy. Yet, the original Greek word here is not as specific—it simply refers to consecrated or holy ones.

Believers are not the only created beings that God has consecrated or made holy. Which begs the question: Are there any verses speaking of the Lord returning with thousands of consecrated ones?

Matthew 16:27 reveals, “*For the Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels.*” Later, Matthew records “*When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory*” (25:31). The word “*holy*” in the preceding verse is the same word translated “*saints*” in Jude 1:14. Speaking of the consequence for those ashamed of Christ, Mark 8:38 preserves Jesus warning, “*...of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed when He cometh in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.*” Again, the adjective



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“*holy*” is the same word “*saints*” in Jude 1:14. Then, as a word of comfort, II Thessalonians 1:7 reminds, “...when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His *mighty angels*.”

I believe the Scriptural evidence points to the verse in Jude 1:14 quoting Enoch prophesying of the Lord returning to earth with myriads of His holy angelic hosts to reclaim the earth. The next verse in Jude fits well with this conclusion “*to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed...*” This also fits perfectly with what we read of the events foretold in Revelation 19.

COMMON SAYINGS FROM THE BIBLE

“Scapegoat”

Today, we assign the term scapegoat to someone (or something) that takes the blame of another. Someone who received the punishment for the actions of a group may grumble, “Why do I always end up being the scapegoat?”

The Law delivered to Moses is where this term is found (Lev. 16:8-10). The Law provided a way for the priest to atone for the sins of the nation by placing the blame on a scapegoat. The priest would lay his hands on the goat as he was confessing the sins of the nation. The blame would transfer from the nation to the goat, which would then be released into the wilderness to carry the sins outside of the camp. This ceremony took place each year on the Day of Atonement.

The fulfillment of the symbolism of the scapegoat is Jesus Christ. He was the scapegoat for the nation of Israel under the Prophetic program. Hebrews 13:12 declares, “*Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the camp.*”

COMMON SAYINGS FROM THE BIBLE

“Apocalypse”

Earthquakes! Fire! Floods! Tornadoes! It must be the Apocalypse, the end of days. The word is used in contemporary contexts to denote the horrors accompanying the end of the world. When the word was originally assigned in English (about 1200 AD), it was used to categorize Jewish and Christian writings that used figurative writing to speak of the future to come. The most common book classified as Apocalyptic literature came to be titled the Apocalypse of St. John of Patmos. Today, we simply call this the Book of Revelation.

Revelation begins by stating, “The Revelation of Jesus Christ.” The word “revelation” is the Greek word we transliterate *apokalypse*. The word itself is more general than symbolic imagery of the cataclysmic events of the end times. The Greek meaning of *apokalupsis* is “to uncover; to reveal”; thus, revelation.

This word is also found elsewhere in Scripture where it is not referring to the end of the world.

Romans 16:25: “*Now to Him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the [apokalupsis] of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began.*”

Galatians 1:12: “*For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the [apokalupsis] of Jesus Christ.*”

Ephesians 3:3: “*How that by [apokalupsis] He made known unto me the mystery...*”

Despite its original assigned use in English and its current use, the word simply refers to any type of revelation from God. For further examples, see Romans 2:5; I Corinthians 14:6,26; Galatians 2:2; Ephesians 1:17; I Peter 1:13.

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