

BIBLE ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUESTIONS

And Interesting Facts About the Holy Word of God

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ISSUE 2

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From the President's Desk,

First and foremost, I praise the Lord for those who support the ministry of *Berean Bible Institute*. Each month I receive encouraging notes from those who not only believe in our mission but are also encouraged by our publications. We are so blessed that you take the time to let us know that you are receiving encouragement from our ministry and are standing with us to see pastors, missionaries, and godly leaders trained to serve the Lord Jesus Christ.

With that in mind, I want to let you know about a very special opportunity we have to expand the training ministry of *Berean Bible Institute* into a new country. Coming very soon we will be starting a BBI extension in Brazil. By the time you receive this BABQ, we will have begun our first course offered in Portuguese. Missionary Paul Craesmeyer, a *Berean Bible Institute* graduate serving in Brazil, will be managing this extension and teaching courses leading to the Certificate in Dispensational Studies. Paul's wife and ministry partner Mariana will also have a role in bookkeeping and student records. We praise the Lord for this opportunity and for Paul and Mariana's willingness to see leaders trained in the gospel of the grace of God.

I also want to ask that you continue to pray for *Berean Bible Institute* as we look to sell our property. We recently accepted an offer on our property and ask that you pray that all will go well; we have had two accepted offers that did not work out. Even as I share this with you I am encouraged that we are not walking this path alone. Many of you pray faithfully for BBI and rejoice with us that God has a plan if we continue to put our trust in Him. We serve a God

who is fully engaged in our lives and working in and through us to bring glory to Himself.

Praising and trusting our Savior together,

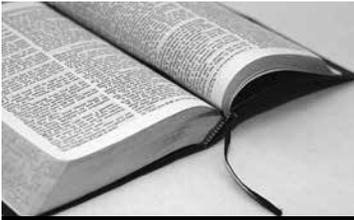
Dr. Robert E. Nix

President, *Berean Bible Institute*

QUESTION: Why is the Land of Israel referred to as Palestine today?

ANSWER: The name Palestine is derived from the Philistines. The Biblical names for the land promised to Abraham's descendants as their inheritance (through Isaac and Jacob) are Canaan and Israel. The name Palestina, or Palestine, is found 4 times in the Bible (Ex. 15:14; Isa. 14:29,31; Joel 3:4) in reference to the coastal strip to the southeast of Israel that was occupied by the Philistines. It was roughly the same area known as the Gaza Strip today. The Romans referred to the southern part of Israel as "Provincia Judea" but this name was changed to "Provincial Syria Palestina" by the Emperor Hadrian in the early second century AD. Eventually the name Palestine came to be used of all of the land that was ever occupied by the Jewish people. It is no coincidence that the land promised to Israel by covenant is now known by the name of her most persistent and troublesome enemy. It is another part of Satan's never ending attack on God's chosen people. It was David who finally subdued the Philistines and brought peace to ancient Israel. With an even greater victory David's greatest Son, the Lord Jesus Christ (Lk. 1:32), will one day once again subdue Israel's enemies. He will defeat not only the Philistines

"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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(Palestinians), but also all of the other people on the earth who are bent on destroying Israel (Lk. 1:30-33). There will be no lasting peace in Israel until Jesus Christ comes the second time (Ezek. 34:28-31).

QUESTION: Question: How old was Isaac when God commanded Abraham to sacrifice him?

ANSWER: I do not know of any information that gives us the precise age of Isaac when Abraham took him to Mount Moriah with the intent of offering him to God as a burnt offering (see Gen. 22:1-19 for a full account of this event). I consulted several reference works and the age given for Isaac at the time ranged from 14-24 years old. At any rate, Isaac had grown strong enough to carry the wood for the burnt offering when Abraham laid it on him as they drew near the place he was to be sacrificed (Gen. 22:6).

Here is what we do know. Abram was 75 when he departed Haran (Gen. 12:4); He was 86 when Ishmael was born (Gen. 16:11); and 99 when God appeared to him, renamed him Abraham and gave him the covenant of circumcision and the promise of a son by Sarah (Gen. 17:1-27). Ishmael was 13 when he was circumcised (Gen. 17:25), 14 when Isaac was born and 137 when he died (Gen. 25:37). Abraham was 100 years old when Isaac was born (Gen. 21:5) and 175 years old when he died, which made Ishmael 89 years old and Isaac 75 years old at that time (Gen. 25:7). Sarah was 127 years old when she died (Gen. 23:1-2) when Isaac was 37 years old. Isaac was 40 when he married Rebekah (Gen. 25:20) and he was 60 years old when Esau and Jacob were born (Gen. 25:26). Esau was 40 when he married 2 Hittite women making Isaac 100 years old at that time (Gen. 26:36). Jacob leaves home, no age given. Serves 14 years for Leah and Rachel and another 6 years for wages; 20 years total (Gen. 29:22-30; Gen. 31). We don't know how old he was when he married Leah and Rachel. Ishmael was 137 when he died, 48 years after Abraham's death (Gen. 25:7). Isaac was 180 when he died (Gen. 35:29) making Esau and Jacob 120 at the time. Jacob had 12 sons, 6 by Leah, 2 by Bilhah, 2 by Zilpah, and 2 by Rachel. No ages are given and no length of time between births. Rachel's son Joseph was sold into slavery by his brothers

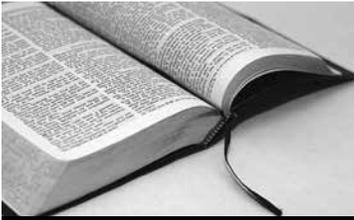
when he was around 17 years old (Gen. 37:2). Joseph was enslaved until he was 30 years old (Gen. 41:46) when he became Pharaoh's second-in-command. There was 7 years of plenty in the land so that made him 37 at the end of those years. Two years into the years of famine his brothers came, which made him 39. Jacob came to Egypt when he was 130 years old (Gen. 47:9), which means he was 91 when Joseph was born, and he died in Egypt 17 years later at the age of 147 (Gen. 47:28). Joseph died in Egypt at 110 years old (Gen. 50:26).

This is the information we have from the Bible. It seems that there may be a piece of the puzzle missing. If so, I haven't found it yet. Dear reader, what do you come up with?

QUESTION: When in Israel's history was it revealed that the nation would go through a tribulation period in the Last Days? Was it revealed to them after their multitude of sins? Who was the first to reveal it to them and why?

ANSWER: This is a good question dealing with the prophesied future of the nation of Israel. The term "the last days" first appears in Scripture in Genesis 49, where Jacob called his sons together to tell them what would befall them in the "last days" (Gen. 49:1-28). It was not his twelve sons personally that were the subject of this prophecy, but rather the twelve tribes that came from them that make up the nation of Israel.

The "last days" is a general term used in reference to a future period in history when God will bring His plan for Israel and the nations to pass. Other terms with the same meaning are "the latter days" and "the last time(s)." They can refer to the Tribulation that will precede Christ's Second Coming or to the Second Coming itself and the reestablishment of David's throne by Jesus Christ. Jacob's prophecy in Genesis 49 seems to blend these different aspects together. It is later in the history of Israel that we find the events of the Tribulation specifically mentioned as a chastisement of Israel for her unfaithfulness. Through Moses, the Lord forewarned Israel about what would happen if she rebelled against Him (Deut. 28:15-68; 29:14-29; 31:16-21; 32:15-33).



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Some of these prophesied judgments against Israel have already come to pass, but many are still future. The judgments that are yet to come will take place after the Rapture of the Church brings the Dispensation of Grace to a close. Most will occur during the Tribulation, which is also known as “*the time of Jacob’s Trouble*” (Jer. 30:7). Others will be realized during the Millennial Kingdom and some at the end of the thousand years

Along with the judgments for disobedience foretold in Deuteronomy are promised blessings; blessings conditioned on Israel’s national repentance and turning back to the Creator God Who delivered her from Egypt, made a covenant with her, and called her to be His own special people (Deut. 29:1-13; 30:1-10). Like the curses, some of the blessings have already been fulfilled and some are still future. Here, our interest is in the future, so let us look at Deuteronomy 30:1-10.

When Israel remembers God’s promises of blessings while she is dispersed among the nations and turns back to the Lord, He will bring them back from among the Gentiles where He has scattered them to enjoy a time of unprecedented prosperity (Deut. 30: 1-5, 9-10). In conjunction with this return, the Lord says that He will circumcise Israel’s heart (Deut. 30:6) and bring the curses down on those persecuting her. This is a picture of what will happen at the end of the Tribulation when Jesus Christ will regather all of Israel into the Promised Land and put a new heart in her (see Ezek. 11:17-20; 36:22-27; Jer. 32:37-40). These passages from Ezekiel and Jeremiah have a definite connection to the Tribulation and Israel’s full return to the Promised Land. So, it seems that it was from Moses that the first direct prophecies of the Tribulation were made, although it wasn’t named as such and it was intermingled with other prophecies about Israel. All of the Major Prophets and most of the Minor Prophets have something to say about the coming Tribulation, but it is in Daniel alone that we find the timeline that reveals to us the seven year window that it will take place in.

QUESTION: If the Tribulation that will take place after the Rapture of the Body of Christ is a

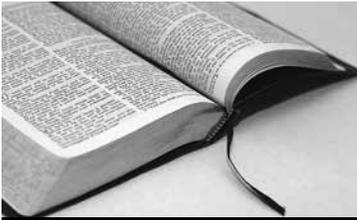
time of God’s judgment on the earth, will people be able to be saved during that terrible time of God’s wrath upon the ungodly?

ANSWER: While the Tribulation will be a time of judgment upon those living on the earth, many individuals will be saved during that time of God’s vengeance. The Dispensation of Grace will come to an end with the Rapture of the Body of Christ, and the Kingdom Gospel will be preached in the Tribulation (Matt. 24:14). People will either harden their hearts even more against God or turn to Him in repentance. For a brief time after the Rapture there will be no saved people on earth, but many will quickly turn to the Lord. These Kingdom believers will suffer strong persecution (Rev. 6:9-11; 7:9-15). The Messiah’s mission is to provide salvation for both Israel and the Gentiles (Isa. 42:5-6; 49:1-7). In the darkness of the Tribulation, the light of Christ (Joh. 8:12) will be seen in believing Israel and will draw God-fearing Gentiles to the Living Creator God of Israel (Isa. 60:1-3). Both Jewish and Gentile believers who survive the Tribulation will enter the Kingdom in their natural bodies and will replenish the earth’s depleted population. Kingdom believers who died for their faith in Jesus Christ during the Tribulation will be resurrected to enter the Kingdom of God on earth (Rev. 20:4-6).

THE BIBLE IS UNIQUE IN MANY WAYS

Here we would like to share with you some unique things about the Bible. They are interesting to say the least, but they are much more than simple curiosities about the greatest Book that has ever been written. They are important facts that set the Bible apart from all other literature. The evidence from its exclusive qualities show the Bible to be the very Word of God just as is claimed within its pages. Here we will look at the uniqueness of its consistency in diversity.

The Bible is a collection of 66 short books and letters that were written over a period of 1,500 to 1,600 years by at least 40 different authors that came from quite diverse backgrounds. Among them were farmers, poets, kings, shepherds, fishermen, dignitaries, priests, prophets, tax collectors, historians, scholars, prisoners, soldiers, musicians, and doctors who lived on three



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continents and used three different languages. Yet, in spite of the separation in time, location, and backgrounds of its human writers, the Bible contains a continuity of purpose and message that cannot be explained as mere coincidence. It reveals God's plan for the redemption of mankind and how it has been unfolded within the confines of human history with a singleness of thought that defies human logic. No three men living today with similar backgrounds, education and goals could write a single work that covers even one third of the number of issues and subjects dealt with in the Bible and end up with the kind of agreement that we find within the pages of the Holy Scriptures.

The evidence of continuity within the Scriptures points to it being a work that has as its source an intelligent and powerful Being who guided its human authors in what they wrote. Of itself, the Bible declares that "*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God...*" and that "*...holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit*" (see II Tim. 3:16-17; II Pet. 1:19-21).

Having briefly looked at the Bible's continuity in diversity, we would like to point out that it also exhibits a single-minded focus on a people [Israel] and a Person [Jesus Christ]. The first eleven chapters of the Bible give us a brief but important history of the origin of man, how he became alienated from his Creator through sin, and the extent of his depravity. This concise record of the origin of man and the dispersion of the nation serves as an introduction to the rest of the Bible as it forms the foundation for understanding the Scriptures.

From the introduction of Abram (later known as Abraham) in chapter twelve on, the focus of the Biblical record is on him and his descendants, who became the nation of Israel. As God's chosen people, everything in the Bible from Genesis chapter twelve on is in some way tied to Israel. In fact, most of it is directly concerned with this particular people. It is

through this nation that the Bible's main personage, the Living Creator God, is ultimately made known through His Son, Jesus Christ.

In the Old Testament the types and shadows of the patriarchs and the Mosaic Law provide the groundwork for the coming of Christ. In the historical books the way is prepared for the coming of Christ. Expressed in the poetical books is a longing for the coming of Christ. In the prophets there is found the promise of the coming of Christ.

In the New Testament we find this same continuity of focus on the Person of Jesus Christ. The Gospel Records give us the history of the first coming of Christ and His life, death, and resurrection. The Book of Acts records the spread of the proclamation of Christ, to the Jew first and then to the Gentiles. The Kingdom Epistles (Hebrews-Jude) anticipate the Second Coming of Christ; and the Revelation foretells the event that will precede the Second Coming of Christ and the things that will follow. The Epistles of Paul (Romans-Philemon) explain the Gospel of the Grace of God through Christ. They are unique in that it is through the Apostle Paul's letters alone that the Lord has chosen to reveal the Mystery of the Dispensation of Grace that we are currently living in (Eph. 3:1-9).

Although the Bible contains many books written over many years by many authors, its continuity shows it to be one Book in essence. This fact stands in stark contrast to the works of the authors who are the most renowned and respected by the world. While they may share some commonalities, the philosophers and thinkers of the world are, for the most part, contradictory to each other in their positions and perspectives. The Bible, God's Word, is the only written work available to mankind that bears the mark of God's hand in its continuity. It is indeed a unique Book. Read it. Believe it. And trust it. "*So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God*" (Rom. 10:17).

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