

BIBLE ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUESTIONS

And Interesting Facts About the Holy Word of God

BEREAN BIBLE INSTITUTE, INC.

NOVEMBER 2021

PO BOX 735, WEST BEND, WI 53095

VOLUME 12

(Published eight times yearly: Feb., Mar., May, June, Aug., Sep., Nov., Dec.)

ISSUE 7

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From the President's Desk,

BBI's Legacy

When I typically write about the subject of "leaving a legacy" it usually has to do with challenging our partners to consider BBI in their estate planning in order to support the mission of *Berean Bible Institute* well into the future. To be sure, BBI has most certainly been blessed in the past from this type of support, and we are extremely thankful for it, but that is not how I want us to think of the term "legacy" today.

This past weekend I was honored to speak at the *Berean Bible Fellowship* Fall Conference held in Alpha, Kentucky. It was a blessed time seeing friends, having great fellowship, and hearing the preaching of the Word. In the days after the conference, I began to reflect on the hospitality of the brothers and sisters at the host church, *Old Bethel Bible Church*, and the blessing I received. I also thought of yet another blessing that I think you will find encouraging as well. *Berean Bible Institute* is leaving a legacy. Our legacy is the legacy of faithful servants who have received training from BBI and are being used for the glory of God.

Out of the eight conference speakers, not including me, five of them had either graduated from BBI or taken classes at the Institute. Not to mention that the pastor of the host church, Pastor Jeff Bertram, had also taken courses at BBI. I hope you are encouraged by this like I am. The support you give for the furtherance of the mission and ministry of BBI is paying dividends in the lives of others. This is just a small sample of the students who are serving the Lord in ministry after receiving training from *Berean Bible Institute*.

The Berean Bible Institute

"Pastor and Elder Leadership Luncheon"

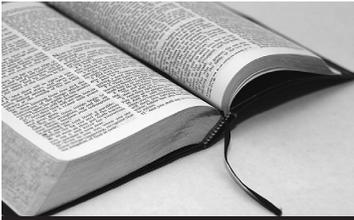
On October 27th, *Berean Bible Institute* hosted the first event in our new building. It was a blessing to have approximately 30 pastors and church elders meet at our new facilities for lunch, prayer, and a ministry challenge. We were blessed to have Mr. Randy Hughes and Mr. Randy Wiskirchen speak to us on the topic "Learning from the Past—Thriving in the Future." Both of these men have a combined 68 years of serving on the elder board of their churches where each currently serves as Chairman of their respective boards. The subject matter of our luncheon centered around how church boards navigated, and are navigating, the Covid pandemic. Churches all over the world have been affected in these difficult times, and BBI is blessed and honored to host a meeting to encourage these leaders and their ministries as they continue to deal with very difficult situations.

A Major Project is Underway in Our New Facility

By the time you read this BABQ, our kitchen renovation will be underway at BBI. While it is not the last thing on the to-do list, it is certainly the largest one remaining on our list. We are also working with a sign company to create a sign for the outside of our building, and in the spring we will be replacing our exterior doors. We are looking forward to getting the last couple of projects done to complete our renovation needs after our relocation. I want to take this opportunity to thank all of you who have and continue to give to our Building Relocation Fund. We desire that in the next couple of months we will bring this fund to a close and have our relocation in the rearview mirror.

Thank you to all who are standing with us to train pastors, missionaries, and Christian leaders for the

"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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ministry and in the proclamation of the Gospel of God's amazing grace. You are truly partnering with us to fulfill a legacy for the glory of God.

Proclaiming the Gospel of Grace,

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

QUESTION: How are we to “glory in tribulations” (Rom. 5:3) in light of the suffering we are seeing now in the world? I am trusting God. Could you please explain this verse? Thank you.

ANSWER: Romans 5:3a reads, “*And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also.*”

You can't pick up the newspaper, go online, watch the news, or walk out your door without hearing about all of the troubles happening around the world. There certainly seems to be a lot of violence, upheaval, disasters, immorality, and confusion. Every generation seems to have had their varying levels of troubled times. Slavery, political upheaval, depression, world wars, terrorist attacks, growing immorality, pandemics...there has never been a lack of tribulations. Yet, within them all, God has instructed us to glory in tribulations. This does not come naturally. Our flesh wants to either lash out at the opposition or crawl under our bed covers to escape. So, what is the key to glorying in tribulations?

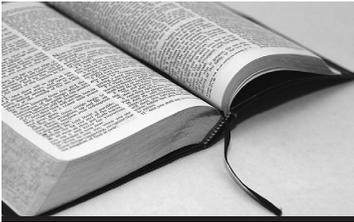
First, notice we are not told to glory **for** tribulations. We do not have to like poverty or disease. We don't praise war and anarchy. We can certainly never be happy with sin and death in the world, but we can glory despite their presence around us. The key is to have the proper focus: our present blessings and eternal hope in Jesus Christ. Instead of concentrating on what we don't have on earth, we can concentrate on the truth that we have been blessed with “*all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ*” (Eph. 1:3). Instead of focusing on those who are unkind to us, we can focus on the truth that we have been

“*accepted in the beloved*” (Eph. 1:6). Instead of fretting over our situation on earth, we can rejoice that we “*sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus*” (Eph. 2:6). We don't have to fear the circumstances of the world, for we have been given a spirit “*of power, of love, and of a sound mind*” (I Tim. 1:7). The key to being able to glory in tribulations is to have our focus on the Lord.

Colossians 3:2 tells us to “*set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.*” We can constantly be reminded that one day we will be free from these fallen bodies of flesh. On that day, we will receive new glorified bodies fashioned after Christ's glorious body. On that day, we will forever be free from tribulations. What a day that will be, and it is guaranteed that we will experience it in God's perfect timing!

Philippians 4:6-7 shares the solution for anxiety brought by tribulations by reminding us that we have a sovereign Savior to converse with (“*let your requests be made known unto God*”). We are assured that we can find joy in the midst of tribulations because the peace of God is available when we share our worries with the Lord and leave the results in His capable hands. If we allow Him, He will exchange our anxiety for His perfect peace (“*the peace of God...shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus*”). This is how, in the midst of tribulations, we find joy in the Lord. Philippians 4:8-9 implores us to dwell on things that are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, of good report, virtuous, and praiseworthy. In other words, filter your thoughts through the things of God. Look at your circumstances from God's vantage point, in light of eternity, and with the reminder of the blessings we have in Christ.

How can we be so joyful when evil is rampant all around us? The Thessalonians were reminded that evil will have its day before God. God will one day justly judge evil and rebellion (II Thess. 1:7-10). Paul tells them to “*rest*” in this fact. Yes, evil may seem to be winning today, but one day it will be stopped permanently. We can take comfort in the fact that our eternity will not involve tribulations; God will redeem everything under His perfect authority and will.



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The question is specifically about Romans 5:3. The key, once again, is our focus, which is seen in the context of the verse. Notice, the word “*also*”; this means there was information that came before the instruction to “*glory in tribulations*” in verse three. As we look back, we see that verse one told us we have been “*justified by faith*.” Our salvation is complete and full. We stand before God having been declared right, nothing will ever change that status. The fact that we were made “*the righteousness of God*” in Christ (II Cor. 5:21) is enough for us to glory in tribulations, but there is more to our salvation.

Romans 5:1 also says, “*we have peace with God*.” The hostility that existed between us and God has been taken away “*through our Lord Jesus Christ*.” Our relationship with God will never be broken. We are connected with God with no barriers to the relationship. We will never be separated from Him again; peace will exist eternally. In addition, verse two states that we stand forever in His grace and have constant access to Him. In addition, we look eagerly forward to basking in His glory. We joy in knowing that our future destination is assured. These are all reasons to “*glory in tribulations*.”

Then, the passage reminds us that there is more. Verses three and four explain that it is because God can use those tribulations to make us more like His Son. Those tribulations we dread, when our focus is correct and our desire is for the Lord to use them, can be used to build up our endurance. This process is not unlike building muscle through lifting weights. You need to tear down the muscles in order for them to get bigger and stronger. In a similar way, those tribulations that you face can be used by God to make you stronger. Then, as you build up your endurance, it leads to character. Character is what you are known by; it is a part of who you are. So, as those tribulations make you stronger, you have been tested and come through to the other side better for it. You are characterized as an overcomer. You have experienced that God’s grace is sufficient and His strength is made perfect during your weak moments. Your focus on Him and trust of Him becomes easier and easier, a part of who you are. This experience, or character, leads to confidence. Now, having gone through this process, when tribulations come, you

stand strong in the Lord, having experienced His strength, knowing He will use these times for His honor and your good. If that isn’t enough, verse five says the indwelling Holy Spirit sheds the love of God abroad in the heart of the believer.

I am not trying to make light of any difficulties that someone may face. The Lord knows this world can be a very difficult place most of the time. Yet, we have something that the world at large does not have. We can face our tribulations with the determination that God is going to use these times to help us grow in Him. This is why we can glory in tribulations. We have a great God who has already blessed us beyond measure and continues to use difficult times to help us grow in Him.

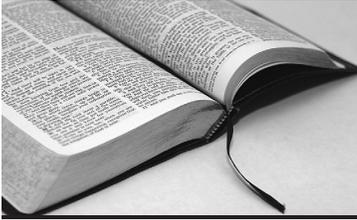
QUESTION: How can I be sure my salvation is eternal?

ANSWER: I can’t tell you how many times questions surrounding eternal security has popped up during my tenure as pastor. Many people have challenged me on the security of the believer in Christ using verses from the Gospels and the non-Pauline epistles. What a blessing it has been to share with them the uniqueness of the message of the Apostle Paul!

Besides an acknowledgment of the Mystery as revealed through Paul, much of the controversy surrounding eternal security would be laid to rest if people understood that the word “*salvation*” is used in many ways. It is used in respect to Israel being saved from her enemies (I Sam. 19:5, II Chron. 20:17, Psa. 35:3). It is used for salvation from the hurts and discouragements of the flesh (Psa. 37:39, 69:29) and from false doctrine (I Tim. 4:16).

Also, there are three uses of the word “*salvation*” when referring to believers in Christ. They are:

PAST—The initial forgiveness of sin and deliverance from an eternity in Hell. We have been delivered, or saved, from the penalty of sin. This is oftentimes referred to as justification, which means “*to be declared righteous*.” Justification occurs the moment we place our faith and trust in the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ Jesus to deliver us from sin. (See Rom. 5:1,2; II Cor. 5:21, and Col. 1:14).



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PRESENT—This refers to the experiential deliverance from the power of sin in our daily lives. While positional sanctification is a part of the past as we have already been declared saints, practical sanctification is ongoing and involves our daily walk as believers. We continually fight against the urgings of the flesh as we seek to serve the Lord by walking in the Spirit. Our physical bodies still await the redemption of the body. On earth, we are called to surround ourselves with the things of the Lord. We are instructed to be active workers in the responsibilities entrusted to us in His Word. As we mature and grow as Christians, we consecrate (sanctify; set apart) more of our lives to God. The key is to recognize that we have been set free from serving the flesh. We have been set at liberty to serve the Lord. Godly living and desires, including the manifestation of the fruits of the Spirit, are marks of maturity. (See Rom. 6, 12:1,2; Gal. 5:16-26; II Tim. 2:16,17; and the Book of Titus).

FUTURE—This aspect looks forward to our everlasting deliverance from the presence of sin in glorified bodies (also known as glorification). It will be at this moment that practical and position sanctification become one and the same. (See Rom. 8:21, I Cor. 15:51-58, Phil. 3:20, 21; and Titus 3:7).

It is important to note that in each of these aspects, God does the work. Even in our daily life right now as we are urged to *“work out our salvation with fear and trembling,”* the next few verses point to God working in us *“to will and to do of His good pleasure”* (Phil. 2:12,13). He does the work in and through those who are willing to allow Him to do so.

2 Timothy 4:18 states, *“And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto His heavenly kingdom to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.”*

Our security today as believers in the dispensation of grace depends on the faithfulness of God to do as

His Word declares. The work depends on His work, not ours. We are secure because our responsibility is faith. God is the deliverer.

I would also like to point out that we have eternal life through faith in Christ due to His faithfulness to humble Himself, come to earth, and willingly give His life on the cross (Phil. 2:5-11).

Romans 3:22 states that God’s righteousness can come upon all them that believe because it is *“by faith (or the faithfulness) of Christ.”* In other words, we have the opportunity of looking forward to an eternal life in heaven due to the fact that Christ was, and is, faithful. Our salvation doesn’t depend on our works, but His finished work.

What a blessing to understand that our salvation—whether it be past, present, or future—is totally dependant on the faithfulness of Christ!

Besides, we have this promise from Ephesians 1:13 that upon believing the gospel we were *“sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise.”* If God is keeping us, we can be sure we are secured eternally.

INTERESTING BIBLE FACT

“The Longest Words in the Bible”

There are two words with 18 letters each that are found in the Bible. Jonath-elem-rechokim, which is in the title of the 56th Psalm, means “the silent dove of distant lands.” In Isaiah 8:1 and 8:3 we find Maher-shalal-hash-baz, the name of the prophet Isaiah’s son. It means “quickly the spoil, hasting the prey.” Jonath-elem-rechokim is the name of the tune that Psalm 56 was to be sung to. Maher-shalal-hash-baz is a symbolic name given to Isaiah’s second son that signified the judgment that would come upon Damascus of Syria and Samaria of Israel because of their forming a military alliance against Jerusalem of Judah (Isa. 7:1; 8:1-4).

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President/Executive Editor: Robert E. Nix, Ph.D. | Managing Editor: Matthew Ritchey, M. BS
Theological Consultant/Contributing Editor: W. Edward Bedore, Th.D. | Layout/Design: Jessica Sadler

BEREAN BIBLE INSTITUTE 204 S. 7th Ave., PO Box 735, West Bend, Wisconsin 53095
Phone: (262) 644-5504 | Fax: (262) 644-5507 | E-mail: bbi@bereanbibleinstitute.org