

AMAZING FACTS

Bible Study Guides

Is There anything left you can Trust?

In these morally challenged times - when billions are embezzled through corporate fraud; when trusted, spiritual leaders prove false; when lying in politics seems to be the norm; when those you depend on the most often hurt you the deepest - is there anything left you can trust? Yes! You can fully trust the Bible! Why? Just take a look at the evidence...

1. What does the Bible claim about itself?

The Bible says, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God." 2 Timothy 3:16. "Prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." 2 Peter 1:21. "The scripture cannot be broken." John 10:35.

Answer: It claims to be inspired. It was written by men who were guided by the Holy Ghost. It cannot be broken or proved untrue.



2. How did Jesus demonstrate His confidence and belief in Scripture?



Jesus said, "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone." "It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." "It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." Matthew 4:4, 7, 10. "Thy word is truth." John 17:17.

Answer: Jesus quoted Scripture when meeting the temptations of Satan. He also stated that the Bible is truth (John 17:17). Jesus often quoted Scripture as authority for the truth He was teaching.

3. Do Bible prophecies confirm inspiration?

The Bible says, "I am the Lord . . . new things do I declare: before they spring forth I tell you of them." Isaiah 42:8, 9. "I am God . . . Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done." Isaiah 46:9, 10.



Answer: Bible predictions of things to happen in the future confirm the inspiration of Scripture as they come to pass. Notice the following examples of fulfilled Bible prophecies:

- A. Four world empires to arise: Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome (Daniel chapters 2, 7, 8).
- B. Cyrus to be the warrior to capture Babylon (Isaiah 45:1-3).
- C. After Babylon's destruction, it would never be inhabited again (Isaiah 13:19, 20; Jeremiah 51:37).
- D. Egypt would never again have a commanding position among the nations (Ezekiel 29:14, 15; 30:12, 13).
- E. Earth-shaking calamities and fear toward the end of time (Luke 21:25, 26).
- F. Moral degeneracy and decline of spirituality in the last days (2 Timothy 3:1-5).

4. Can we expect scientific statements made in the Bible to be accurate?

The Bible says, "Thy word is true from the beginning." Psalms 119:160. "The Spirit . . . will guide you into all truth." John 16:13.

Answer: Yes, the Bible is true. The Holy Spirit, who guided the Bible writers, always speaks the truth. Here are a few Bible statements that have been confirmed by science:

- A. "He . . . hangeth the earth upon nothing."** Job 26:7. This scientific fact is from Job, the Bible's oldest book.
- B. "He . . . sitteth upon the circle of the earth."** Isaiah 40:22. The Bible said the earth is round centuries before man found out.
- C. "To make the weight for the winds."** Job 28:25. Long before scientists knew, God said air has weight.
- D. "By Him [Jesus] all things consist."** Colossians 1:17. The word "consist" here literally means "hold together" or "cohere." Many Bible translations put it "hold together." This is the answer to the nuclear physicists' worrisome question about the atom. The real mystery of the atom does not involve its benumbing mega-power, but rather, "Why doesn't the atom fly apart?" Scientific knowledge says it should, but it doesn't. Some scientists are wondering what puzzling power, completely unknown to them, is holding it together. The Bible says that mysterious power is the Creator, God Himself.

5. Are biblical health principles tuned to the twenty-first century mind?

Answer:

A. Cover body waste with dirt (Deuteronomy 23:12, 13).
The Bible provision of Moses' day that body waste should be buried was 3,500 years ahead of its time and saved countless thousands of Jewish lives. Major problems still arise when sanitation is not properly handled.

B. "Neither let us commit fornication." 1 Corinthians 10:8.
The word "fornication" denotes all kinds of immoral sexual conduct. There would be no AIDS epidemic if this up-to-date Bible counsel were obeyed, nor would abortion be the international scandal that it now is.

C. Leave alcoholic beverages alone (Proverbs 23:29-32).
If this extremely effective Bible solution were implemented, just think what it would mean:



Refusing to abstain from alcohol has brought untold woe to many.

declare what is right." Isaiah

Answer: Yes, Bible historical His book is true. Sometimes, substantiate certain historical

1. Millions of alcoholics becoming sober, respectable citizens.
2. Millions of families reunited.
3. Millions of broken homes mended.
4. Multiplied thousands of lives saved by sober driving.
5. Thousands of government, business, and professional leaders making clear-minded decisions.
6. Billions of dollars available for humanitarian use.

Note: God not only tells us how to succeed with joy amid today's harrowing problems, but He also gives us the miraculous power to do it (1 Corinthians 15:57; Philippians 4:13; Romans 1:16). Bible health principles are relevant and desperately needed, but few are listening. (For more on health, see Study Guide 13.)



6. Are the historical statements of the Bible accurate?

The Bible says, "I the Lord speak the truth, I 45:19, RSV.*

statements are accurate. What God says in temporarily, evidence may not be found to facts from the Bible, but in time the evidence



surfaces. Note the following:

A. For years skeptics said the Bible was unreliable because it mentions the Hittite nation (Deuteronomy 7:1) and cities like Nineveh (Jonah 1:1, 2) and Sodom (Genesis 19:1), which they denied ever existed. But now modern archaeology has confirmed that all three did, indeed, exist.

B. Critics also said that Bible-mentioned kings Belshazzar (Daniel 5:1) and Sargon (Isaiah 20:1) never existed. Once again, it has now been confirmed they did exist.

C. Skeptics also said the Bible record of Moses was not reliable because it mentions writing (Exodus 24:4) and wheeled vehicles (Exodus 14:25), neither of which they said existed at the time. They, of course, know better today.

D. At one time the 39 kings of ancient Israel and Judah who reigned during the divided kingdom were authenticated only from the Bible record, so critics charged fabrication. But then archaeologists found cuneiform records that mentioned many of these kings and, once again, the Bible record was proved accurate. Critics have repeatedly been proved wrong as new discoveries confirm biblical people, places, and events. It will always be so.

**The Revised Standard Version of the Bible (C) 1946, 1952, 1971 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA. Used by permission.*

7. One of the greatest miracles of the Bible is its unity. Please ponder the following amazing facts:

Answer:

A. The 66 books of the Bible were written:

1. On three continents.
2. In three languages.
3. By about 40 different people (kings, shepherds, scientists, attorneys, an army general, fishermen, priests, and a physician).
4. Over a period of about 1,500 years.
5. On the most controversial subjects.
6. By people who, in most cases, had never met.
7. By authors whose education and background varied greatly.

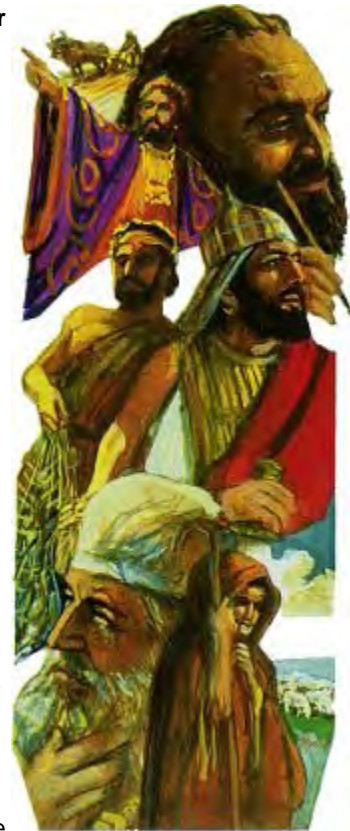
B. Yet, though it seems totally inconceivable,

1. The 66 books maintain harmony with each other.
2. Often new concepts on a subject are expressed, but these concepts do not undermine what other Bible writers say on the same subject.

C. Talk about astounding!

Ask people who have viewed an identical event to each give a report of what happened. They will differ widely and will virtually always contradict each other in some way. Yet the Bible, penned by 40 writers over a 1,500-

year period, reads as if written by one great mind. And, indeed, it was: "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." 2 Peter 1:21. The Holy Ghost "moved" them all. He is the real Bible Author. The four Gospels do sometimes differ in the way they report the same event, but they complement each other.



8. What evidence of Bible inspiration is found in the lives of people?

The Bible says, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." 2 Corinthians 5:17.

Answer: The changed lives of those who follow Jesus and obey Scripture constitute the most heartwarming proof of Bible inspiration. The drunkard becomes sober; the immoral, pure; the addicted, free; the profane, reverent; the fearful, courageous; and the rude, kind.

An American skeptic was visiting an island whose natives were originally cannibals. When he spotted an old man reading the Bible, he ridiculed him for reading a book "full of myths which had already been exposed." The native smiled at him and said, "My friend, be grateful we do believe this book. Otherwise, we would be serving you for dinner." The Bible really does change people, and this amazing fact confirms its inspiration.



9. What evidence for Bible inspiration emerges when we compare Old Testament prophecies of the coming Messiah with New Testament happenings in the life of Jesus?

The Bible says, "And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He [Jesus] expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself." Luke 24:27. "For he [Apollos] vigorously refuted the Jews publicly, showing from the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ." Acts 18:28, NKJV.*

Christians have an inner joy and peace that others do not possess.

Answer: The Old Testament predictions of the Messiah to come were so specific and so clearly fulfilled by Jesus of Nazareth that both Jesus and Apollos used these prophecies to prove to the Jews that Jesus was, indeed, the Messiah. There are more than 125 of these prophecies. Let's review just 12 of them:

Prophecy	Old Testament Scripture	New Testament Fulfillment
1. Born in Bethlehem	Micah 5:2	Matthew 2:1
2. Born of a virgin	Isaiah 7:14	Matthew 1:18-23
3. Of David's lineage	Jeremiah 23:5	Revelation 22:16
4. Attempted murder by Herod	Jeremiah 31:15	Matthew 2:16-18
5. Betrayal by a friend	Psalms 41:9	John 13:18, 19, 26
6. Sold for 30 silver coins	Zechariah 11:12	Matthew 26:14-16
7. Crucified	Zechariah 12:10	John 19:16-18, 37
8. Lots cast for His clothes	Psalms 22:18	Matthew 27:35
9. No bones broken	Psalms 34:20; Exodus 12:46	John 19:31-36
10. Buried in rich man's tomb	Isaiah 53:9	Matthew 27:57-60

Answer: The failure and collapse of communism and the weakening and inconsistency of the theory of evolution have spotlighted the Bible.

Note: *The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics tried communism, atheism, and also evolution, which is Marxism's number one tenet. They all failed. The resultant new democracies realize that only one thing will work, and they are almost with one voice crying out to Christendom: "Bring us the Bible and Christian preaching and teaching. We must now build on the unshakable foundation of prayer and the Christian faith. Nothing else compares. Nor will anything else answer life's great questions and bring peace to the hearts of our people. Please don't keep us waiting! We desperately want and need the Bible, God, and Christianity now." Once again, God's Word triumphs.*

Evolution, like communism, is losing its grip and credibility. We must remember that it is nothing more than an unproved, shaky theory. We will mention three items only:

1. *Robert Gentry's book Creation's Tiny Mystery has unsettled many evolutionists with its apparent, clear evidence of instant creation. (Mystery in the Rocks, an easy-to-understand book based on his research, may be purchased from Amazing Facts.)*

2. *Molecular biology's recent demonstration that the single cell is vastly complex makes the accidental origin of life in a single cell a mathematical absurdity.*

3. *The widely different ages now being assigned to the Grand Canyon layers by current scientific measurements, as opposed to those assigned previously, make evolutionists and their prior measurements seem reckless and irresponsible. The atheistic theory of evolution that humans and apes came from common ancestors scorns the concept that people were created in the image of God. It denies the existence of God, totally disavows Jesus as Saviour, negates the Bible, and ridicules the truth of an eternal home in heaven. Satan loves the evolution theory because it destroys the credibility of salvation. Communists are learning. Will we?*



True science is always in harmony with the Bible because God is the author of both.



12. Why does the Bible have such universal appeal?

The Bible says, "Thy word is a . . . light unto my path." Psalms 119:105. "These things have I spoken unto you . . . that your joy might be full." John 15:11. "In the image of God . . . created he them." Genesis 1:27. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Matthew 5:16. "I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." John 14:3.

Answer: Because it answers life's most

puzzling questions:

A. Where did I come from? God created us in His image. We did not accidentally emerge as nondescript globs from some primeval slime. We are sons and daughters of God, the Mighty King (Galatians 3:26). We are so precious to God that when Adam and Eve sinned, He gave His Son to die and pay the penalty for our sins so we could be free. He wants to restore us to His image and then, shortly, take us back to Eden, the home Adam and Eve lost.

B. Why am I here? Our aims for life today should be to discover the Bible's wonderful answers to life's puzzling problems and to accept Jesus' offer to restore us to His image (Romans 8:29).

C. What does the future hold for me? There is no guesswork about the future. Jesus will come very soon to take His people to the fabulous home He has prepared for them in heaven. There, with supreme joy and happiness, people will live forever (John 14:1-3; Revelation 21:3, 4).

13. I am thankful to God for giving me positive answers to life's most puzzling questions.

Answer:

Thought Questions

1. I'm offended that the Bible gives such repugnant, graphic descriptions of sin in recording the lives of some Bible characters. Is this really necessary? (Romans 15:4)

Yes. It is one of the great facts that give credibility to the Bible. Most biographies skip or soften the bad and often overstate the good. Telling it like it is gives people confidence the Bible can be trusted; it doesn't cover up. Further, Satan's strategy is to convince people they are such great sinners God cannot or will not save them. What joy sweeps over such people when they are shown Bible cases of people like them (and worse) whom God delivered from sin and justified (Romans 15:4)!

2. Is all of the Bible inspired? Many believe only parts of it are. (2 Timothy 3:16)

The Bible has the answer: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." 2 Timothy 3:16. The Bible does not simply contain the word of God. Rather, it is the Word of God. The Bible is the information and operations manual for a human life. Ignore any of it and you will have unnecessary difficulties and problems.

3. The Bible is an ancient book with old-fashioned wording and concepts. Don't you feel it is unsafe to rely on something so far removed from our enlightened day? (1 Peter 1:25)

No. Its age is in its favor. That is, in fact, one of the proofs of its inspiration. The Bible says, "The word of the Lord endureth for ever." 1 Peter 1:25. The Bible stands as a rock. It is God's book--His Word. It cannot be destroyed. Men and even entire nations have burned, banned, and tried to discredit and destroy the Bible, but instead, they discredited themselves. They are gone, and their attacks on the Bible are forgotten. Yet the Bible remains a best-seller, in constant demand. Millions would die for it, if necessary. Its message is God-given and 100 percent up-to-date. Before you study it, pray and ask God to open your heart as you read.

4. Some of the most brilliant people in the world, who have carefully studied the Bible, believe no one can understand it. If the Bible is truly God's book, shouldn't everyone be able to understand it? (1 Corinthians 2:13)

Bright people who can understand and explain virtually anything are often quickly stopped in their tracks when they read the Bible. The reason is that spiritual things "are spiritually discerned." 1 Corinthians 2:13, 14. The deep things of the Word will never be understood by a secular mind, no matter how brilliant. Unless one honestly seeks an experience with God, he cannot understand the things of God. The Holy Spirit, who explains the Bible (John 16:13; 14:26), is not understood by the carnal, secular mind. On the other hand, the humble, even uneducated Christian who studies the Bible receives amazing understanding from the Holy Spirit (Matthew 11:25; 1 Corinthians 2:9, 10).

5. The Bible is full of errors. How can you believe it is inspired? (Isaiah 28:9)

The overwhelming majority of so-called errors in the Bible have been demonstrated to be simply errors of

judgment or lack of understanding on the part of those who make the complaint. They are not errors at all, but simply truth misunderstood. The inspired Bible:

1. Will always tell you the truth.
2. Will never mislead you.
3. Can be fully trusted.
4. Is reliable and authoritative, not only in spiritual matters but also in other matters it addresses, including history and science.

Satan is always digging up some supposed flaw in Scripture, which is not surprising. He found fault even with God and heaven. Copyists may have miscopied in some cases, but no such supposed happening or any other alleged error affects the truth of God's Word. Doctrine is built not upon one Bible passage, but upon the total of God's comments on any subject. We are unaware of any alleged error of any kind that would affect the truthfulness of the content of Scripture. Some things in Scripture are yet difficult to reconcile. There will always be room for doubt to those who prefer to doubt. We believe that even alleged errors, not yet fully explained, will (as in the past) soon be exposed as false alarms. The harder people work to undermine the Bible, the brighter its light shines.

Did God Create a Devil?

Most people in the world are being deceived by an evil genius bent on destroying their lives - a brilliant mastermind called the devil, or Satan. But this dark prince is much more than what you might think... many say he's just a devious mythical figure, but the Bible says he's very real, and he's deceiving families, churches, and even nations to increase sorrow and pain. Here are the Bible's amazing facts about this prince of darkness and how you can overcome him!

1. With whom did sin originate?

"The devil sinneth from the beginning." 1 John 3:8. "That old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan." Revelation 12:9.

Answer: Satan, also called the devil, is the originator of sin. Without the Scriptures, the origin of evil would remain unexplained.



2. What was Satan's name before he sinned? Where was he living at that time?

"How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!" Isaiah 14:12. Jesus said, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven." Luke 10:18. "Thou wast upon the holy mountain of God." Ezekiel 28:14.

Answer: His name was Lucifer, and he was living in heaven. Lucifer is symbolized by the king of Babylon in Isaiah 14 and as the king of Tyrus in Ezekiel 28.

3. What was the origin of Lucifer? What responsible position did he hold? How does the Bible describe him?

"Thou wast created." Ezekiel 28:13, 15. "Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth." Ezekiel 28:14. "Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty ... every precious stone was thy covering ... the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created. ... Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee." Ezekiel 28:12-15.



Answer: Lucifer was *created* by God, as were all other angels (Ephesians 3:9). Lucifer was a "covering" cherub, or angel. One great angel stands on the left side of God's throne and another on the right (Psalms 99:1). Lucifer was one of those highly exalted angel leaders. Lucifer's beauty was flawless and breathtaking. His wisdom was perfect. His brightness was awe-inspiring. Ezekiel 28:13 seems to indicate that his throat was specially prepared to make him an outstanding musician. Some think he led the angelic choir.



4. What happened in Lucifer's life that led him to sin? What blasphemous sin did he then commit?

"Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness." Ezekiel 28:17. "For thou hast said in thine heart, ... I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: ... I will be like the most High." Isaiah 14:13, 14.

Answer: Pride, jealousy, discontent, and self-exaltation arose in his life. Lucifer decided to attempt to unseat God and then demand that all worship him. It was

treason of the worst kind.

Note: Why is worship such a big thing? Worship is the key factor in the ongoing warfare between God and Satan. People were created to be happy and fulfilled only when they worship God solely. Not even unfallen angels of heaven are to be worshiped (Revelation 22:8, 9). Satan sought worship in the beginning. Centuries later, when he tempted Jesus in the wilderness, worship was still the central issue (Matthew 4:8-11). In these last days, God is calling upon all people to worship Him (Revelation 14:6,7). This so infuriates Satan that he will try to force people to worship him or else be killed (Revelation 13:15).



Anything or anyone (other than God) that receives first place in my life becomes an idol which I worship.

Everybody worships somebody or something: power, prestige, food, pleasure, possessions, one's own opinion, etc. God says, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." Exodus 20:3. And unless we worship Him only, He counts us against Him (Matthew 12:30). This news is shocking, but true. If anything or anyone other than God receives first place in my life, I am--innocently perhaps--worshiping and supporting Satan. Does God have first place in my life, or am I unconsciously elevating Satan? It is a sobering question, isn't it?

5. What happened in heaven as a consequence of Lucifer's rebellion?

"And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out

with him." Revelation 12:7-9.



Answer: Lucifer won the support of one-third of the angels (Revelation 12:3, 4) and caused an insurrection in heaven. God had no choice but to oust Lucifer and his angels. This was the greatest battle, by far, ever fought. Lucifer's aim was to usurp God's throne, even if it might eventually lead to murder (John 8:44). After his expulsion from heaven, Lucifer was called Satan (adversary) and devil (slanderer), and his angels were called demons.



6. Where is Satan's present headquarters? How does he feel about people?

"The Lord said unto Satan, From whence comest thou? And Satan answered the Lord, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it." Job 2:2. "Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." Revelation 12:12. "Your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may

devour." 1 Peter 5:8.

Answer: Contrary to popular opinion, Satan's headquarters is the earth, not hell. God gave Adam and Eve dominion over the earth (Genesis 1:26). When they sinned, they lost it to Satan (Romans 6:16), who then became ruler, or prince, of the earth (John 12:31). Satan bitterly hates humans, who were created in God's image. He can't touch God. So, instead, his venom is directed against people who are God's children. He's a hateful, vicious murderer whose aim is to destroy you and thus hurt God.



7. When God created Adam and Eve, what one thing did He forbid them to do? What was to be the penalty for disobedience?

"But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Genesis 2:17.

Answer: They were not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The penalty for eating of the tree was to be death.



8. What medium did Satan use to deceive Eve? What lies did Satan tell her?

"Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall *not* eat of every tree of the garden?" "And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." Genesis 3:1, 4, 5, emphasis added.

Answer: Satan used a serpent--the wisest, most appealing animal God made--to deceive Eve. Some think the serpent originally had wings and flew (Isaiah 14:29; 30:6). Remember, it did not crawl until God cursed it (Genesis 3:14). Satan's lies were: (1) you won't die, and (2) eating the fruit will make you wise. Satan, who invented lying (John 8:44), mixed truth with the lies he told Eve. Lies that include some truth are the most effective of all. It was true they would "know evil" after sinning. In love, God had withheld from them the knowledge of heartache, grief, suffering, pain, and death. Satan, as he does today, made the knowledge of evil appear attractive. Satan told lies to misrepresent God's character because he knew that no one would ever turn away from such a loving God unless he misunderstood His character.

9. Was eating a piece of fruit such a bad thing? Why were Adam and Eve removed from the garden?

"To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." James 4:17. "Sin is the transgression of the law." 1 John 3:4. "He that committeth sin is of the devil." 1 John 3:8. "And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever." "So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." Genesis 3:22, 24.



Answer: Yes, eating of the fruit was a sin because it was a direct rejection of one of God's few requirements. It was open rebellion against God's law and authority. By rejecting one of God's commands, Adam and Eve allied themselves with Satan, God's enemy, and thus brought separation between themselves and God (Isaiah 59:2). Satan hoped the couple would sin and then eat of the tree of life, and thus become immortal sinners. But God removed them from the garden to prevent such a tragedy.

10. What amazing facts does the Bible reveal regarding Satan's methods to hurt, deceive, discourage, and destroy people?

Answer: Satan uses every conceivable approach to deceive and destroy people. His demons can appear and pose as righteous people, even clergymen. And Satan will appear as a glorious angel of light with power to call fire down from heaven. He will impersonate Jesus. But you have been warned, so don't fall for it. When Jesus comes, *every eye will see Him* (Revelation 1:7). He will remain in the clouds and not even touch the earth (1 Thessalonians 4:17).

The Bible Says Satan:

Deceives/persecutes
Revelation 12:9, 13

Quotes/misquotes Bible
Matthew 4:5, 6

Falsely accuses/murders Revelation 12:10; John 8:44	Traps/ensnares 2 Timothy 2:26; 1 Peter 5:8
Makes war against God's people Revelation 12:17	Binds/prompts betrayal Luke 13:16; John 13:2, 21
Imprisons Revelation 2:10	Possesses/hinders Luke 22:3-5; 1 Thessalonians 2:18
Works miracles/lies Revelation 16:13, 14; John 8:44	Appears as angel of light 2 Corinthians 11:13-15
Brings disease/afflicts Job 2:7	His demons impersonate pastors 2 Corinthians 11:13-15
Slanders "Devil" means "slanderer"	Calls fire from heaven Revelation 13:13

11. How powerful and effective are Satan's temptations and strategies?

He convinced: one-third of the angels (Revelation 12:3-9); Adam and Eve (Genesis 3); all but eight people in Noah's day (1 Peter 3:20). He will make the lost feel saved (Matthew 7:21-23). Almost the entire world will follow him (Revelation 13:3). Few will be saved (Matthew 7:14; 22:14).

Answer: Satan's success rate is so astoundingly high that it seems almost unbelievable. He deceived a *third of the angels*. In Noah's day, *all but eight people* were deceived. Before Jesus comes the second time, Satan will appear as an angelic being, posing as Christ. His deceptive power will be so great that *our only safety will lie in refusing to go to see him* (Matthew 24:23-26). If you absolutely refuse to look and listen, Jesus will protect you from deception (John 10:29).



12. When and where will the devil receive his punishment? What will that punishment be?

"So shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; And shall cast them into a furnace of fire." Matthew 13:40-42. "And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone." Revelation 20:10. "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Matthew 25:41. "Therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee,

it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee ... and never shalt thou be any more." Ezekiel 28:18,19.

Answer: The devil will be cast into the lake of fire on this earth at the end of the world. The fire will devour Satan, turn him into ashes, and end his existence for eternity. This fire also will destroy all sinners. In this final showdown, not one being on God's side will die and not one being on Satan's side will survive.

Note: *It is not possible to adequately describe the sadness and anguish the Father and Son will feel at Satan's destruction. He was closer to them than any other being--a warm, personal friend. To destroy him and the millions who have followed him will pain the Father and the Son more than the burning will hurt anyone in the fire.*



13. What is it that forever settles the horrible problem of sin? Will sin ever rise up again?

"As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God." Romans 14:11. (See also Philippians 2:10,11; Isaiah 45:23.) "Affliction shall not rise up the second time." Nahum 1:9.

Answer: Two crucial happenings will settle the sin problem:

First, all beings in heaven and earth, including the devil and his angels, will of their own free choice kneel and publicly confess that God is truthful, fair, and righteous. No questions will remain unanswered. All sinners will openly admit that they are lost because of their determined refusal to accept God's love and salvation. They will admit that justice demands they must die. All will confess that they deserve eternal death.

Second, sin will be purged from the universe by the total and final destruction of sin, sinners, the devil, and his angels. God is positive on this point: Sin will never again arise to mar God's universe.



14. Who makes the final, complete eradication of sin from the universe a certainty?

"For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." 1 John 3:8. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." Hebrews 2:14.

Answer: Through His life, death, and resurrection, *Jesus* made the eradication of sin a certainty.

15. How does God the Father feel about people?

"The Father himself loveth you." John 16:27. (See also John 3:16; 17:22, 23.)

Answer: The Father loves people as much as the Son does. Jesus' key aim in life was to demonstrate His Father's character in His own life so people would know how loving, warm, and caring the Father really is (John 5:19).

Satan Misrepresents the Father

Satan misrepresents the Father as *unfeeling, aloof, exacting, stern, and unapproachable* (the devil's own traits). He even labels his own ugly, calamitous acts as "acts of God." Jesus came to wipe this slander off His Father's name and demonstrate that our heavenly Father loves us more than a mother loves her child (Isaiah 49:15). Jesus' favorite theme was God's patience, tenderness, and abundant mercy.



The Father Can Hardly Wait

In order to make people supremely happy, our heavenly Father has prepared a fabulous eternal home for them. Our dreams here are no match for what He has waiting! He can hardly wait to welcome His people on the glad homecoming day just ahead. Let's get the word out! And let's be ready. The countdown has already begun.

16. I am pleased to know that God the Father loves me as much as Jesus does.

Answer:

Thought Questions

1. Was the fruit that Adam and Eve ate an apple? (Genesis 3:6)

We do not know. The Bible does not say.

2. Where did the concept originate that portrays the devil as a red, half-man and half-beast with horns and tail? (Ezekiel 28:14)

It came from pagan mythology and pleases the devil. He knows thinking people reject monsters as fable and so will be led to deny his existence. Those who do not believe in a devil are the first to be captured by his wiles.

3. God said to Adam and Eve, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Genesis 2:17. Why didn't they die that day? (Genesis 2:17)

The Bible speaks of two deaths:

(1) The "first" death we all die (Hebrews 9:27).

(2) The "second" death the wicked die in hellfire at the end of time (Revelation 21:8).

The difference is that there is no resurrection from the second death. It is eternal.

Jesus Died the Second Death for Every Person

When Adam and Eve sinned, they immediately would have died the second death except for the fact that Jesus stepped forward and offered to die the second death on Calvary for every person. His supreme sacrifice spared them (Hebrews 2:9).

When Adam Sinned, His "Undying" Nature Became a "Dying" Nature

Regarding the first death, the literal rendition of the word "die" in Genesis 2:17 is "dying thou shalt die," which is noted in the margin of most Bibles. It means that Adam and Eve would enter into the process of dying. Before sinning, the couple possessed an undying, sinless nature. This nature was perpetuated by eating of the tree of life. At the moment of sin, their natures changed to dying, sinful natures. This is what God had predicted. Because they were barred from the tree of life, decay and deterioration--leading ultimately to death--began immediately. The grave became a certainty. The Lord stressed this later when He said to them, "For dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Genesis 3:19.

4. But since God created Lucifer, isn't He really responsible for his sin? (Joshua 24:15)

Not at all. God created Lucifer a perfect, sinless angel. Lucifer made a devil of himself. Freedom to choose is a cornerstone principle of God's government. God knew Lucifer would sin when He created him. If at that point God had refused to create him, He would have been repudiating that prime principle of free choice.

"Freedom to Choose" is God's Way

So, knowing full well what Lucifer would do, God still created him. The same facts apply to the creation of Adam and Eve. And, closer to home, these facts apply to you and me. God knows before we are born how we will live, but even so, He permits us to live and choose whether to endorse His government or Satan's. God is willing to be misunderstood and falsely accused and blamed for ages, while taking the time to allow every person to freely choose whom he will follow.

Only a Loving God Would Risk Granting Full Freedom for All

This glorious, crucial gift of freedom could come only from a just, open, loving God. It is an honor and joy to serve such a Lord and friend.

Choose to Serve God

The sin problem will soon end. In the beginning, everything was "very good." Genesis 1:31. Now "the whole world lieth in wickedness." 1 John 5:19. People everywhere are choosing to serve God or Satan. Use *your* fantastic, God-given freedom to choose to serve the Lord.

5. Why didn't God destroy the devil when he sinned, and thus end the sin problem? (1 Corinthians

4:9)

Because sin was something completely new in God's universe, and its inhabitants did not understand it. Probably even Lucifer himself did not fully comprehend it at first. Lucifer was a brilliant, highly respected angelic leader. His approach was doubtless one of great concern for heaven and the angels. It possibly ran something like this: "Heaven is good, but it would be improved with more angel input. Too much unchallenged authority (as the Father and Son have) tends to blind leaders to real life. Angels should not be required to take orders. We should give orders. God knows my suggestions are correct, and He is feeling threatened. We must not permit our noble leaders who are out of touch to jeopardize the very existence of heaven. They will listen if we move in unison. We must not be weak; we must act. Otherwise, we will all be ruined by a government that doesn't appreciate us."

One-Third of the Angels Joined Lucifer

Lucifer's arguments convinced many angels, and one-third joined him. If God had destroyed Lucifer immediately, some angelic beings who did not fully understand God's character may have begun to worship God through fear, saying, "Lucifer may have been correct. Be careful. If you differ with God, He may kill you." So nothing would have been settled. Instead, the problem would have been heightened.

God Accepts Only Loving, Voluntary Service

The only service acceptable to God is cheerful, voluntary service prompted by love. Obedience for any other reason is unacceptable.

God Is Giving Satan Time to Demonstrate His Principles

Satan claimed he had a better plan for the government of the universe. God is giving him time to demonstrate its principles. The Lord will abolish sin only after every soul in the universe is convinced that Satan's government is unfair, hateful, ruthless, lying, and destructive.

The Universe Is Watching This World

The Bible says, "We are made a spectacle [margin says "theatre"] unto the world, and to angels, and to men." 1 Corinthians 4:9. The entire universe is watching as we each play a part in the controversy between Christ and Satan. As the controversy ends, every soul will fully understand the principles of both kingdoms and will have chosen to follow either Christ or Satan. Those who have chosen to ally with sin and Satan will be destroyed with him, and God's people will be taken to the eternal safety of their heavenly home.

Rescue From Above

Picture the horror of being stranded in an ocean with hungry, deadly sharks closing in! Then imagine how grateful and relieved you'd feel to be plucked to safety. The truth is, every person on the planet is lost in an ocean fraught with danger. We urgently need rescue, not from a boat or helicopter, but from our Heavenly Father. God loves you, so much that He sent His Son to save you. You've undoubtedly heard all this before, but are you sure you really understand what it's all about? What does it really mean to you, and can it really change your life? Read on and find out!

1. Does God really care about me?

This is what He says: "Thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee." Isaiah 43:4. "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love." Jeremiah 31:3.

Answer: God's never-ending love for you and me is far beyond our understanding. He loves you as though you were the only lost soul in the universe. He would have given His life for you or me even if there had been no other sinner to redeem. Try never to forget this fact. You are precious in His sight. He loves you.



2. How has God demonstrated His love for us?

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16. "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." 1 John 4:9, 10.

Answer: Because He loved us so deeply, He was willing to see His only Son suffer and die rather than be separated from you and me for eternity. We will not be able to understand it, but He did it--just for you, just for me!

like me?

3. How could He love someone

"But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Romans 5:8.



Answer: Certainly not because I earned it or deserved it. Not one of us has earned anything except the wages of sin, which is death (Romans 6:23). But God's love is unconditional. He loves the thieves, adulterers, and murderers. He also loves the selfish, the hypocritical, and the profane blasphemer. But, greatest of all, He loves me! And because He knows that my sins can lead only to misery and death, He wants to save me from my sins. That's why He died.



4. What does His death do for me?

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." 1 John 3:1. "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." John 1:12.

Answer: Christ died to satisfy the death penalty against me. He was born as a man so He could suffer the kind of death I deserve. Then He offered to give me the credit for what He did. In other words, His sinless life is credited to my account so I can be counted as righteous. His death is accepted by God as full payment for all my past wrongs, and by accepting what He did, as a gift, I am taken into God's own family as His child. It staggers the mind!

Ponder these simple facts for a moment:

- Because of my sins, I am sentenced to death.
- I cannot pay that penalty without losing eternal life, because if I died for my sins, I could not resurrect myself. I would be dead forever.
- I owe something I cannot pay! But a friend comes along, in the person of Jesus, and says, "I will pay. I will die in your place and give you credit for it. You will not have to die for your sins."
- I must accept the offer! Simple, isn't it? I openly acknowledge and accept His death for my sins. The moment I do this, I have become a son or daughter of God!

5. How do I receive Him and pass from death to life?

Just admit three things:

1. I am a sinner. "All have sinned." Romans 3:23.
2. I am doomed to die. "The wages of sin is death." Romans 6:23.
3. I cannot save myself. "Without me ye can do nothing." John 15:5.

Then, believe three things:

1. He died for me. "That he ... should taste death for every man." Hebrews 2:9.
2. He forgives me. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins." 1 John 1:9.
3. He saves me. "He that believeth on me hath everlasting life." John 6:47.



Answer: By asking for, believing in, and accepting the great gift of God, our Lord Jesus Christ.



6. What must I do in order to obtain this gift of salvation?

"Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." Romans 3:24. "A man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." Romans 3:28.

Answer: The only thing I can do is to accept it as a pure gift. My works of obedience will not help me one bit in the justification experience. All who ask for salvation in faith will receive it. The worst reprobate sinner will be accepted on the same basis as the most moral do-gooder. The past does not count. Remember, God loves everyone alike, and forgiveness is for the asking. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." Ephesians 2:8, 9.

7. When I join His family through faith, what change does Jesus make in my life?

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." 2 Corinthians 5:17.

Answer: As Christ is received into my heart, He destroys the old sinful self and actually changes me into a new spiritual creation. The old life of sin now becomes



repulsive and undesirable. Joyfully I begin to experience, for the first time, glorious freedom from guilt and condemnation. I begin to see how empty my life has been without Christ. Rather than feeding on husks under the table, I now feast at the banquet of the King. One minute with God provides more happiness than does a lifetime of serving the devil. What an exchange! Why did I wait so long to accept it?



8. Will this changed life really be happier than the pleasures of the old life?

Jesus said: "These things have I spoken unto you ... that your joy might be full." John 15:11. "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." John 8:36. "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." John 10:10.

Answer:

Many feel that the Christian life will not be a happy one because of restrictions and self-denial. The exact opposite is true. When you accept the love of Jesus, a fantastic exuberance springs up from within. Unbelievable peace and joy permeate your life. Talk about excitement! There is no comparison to the old life of selfishness and failure. Like a bad dream, the painful past fades away, and you experience life "more abundantly," the way God intended it should be.



9. But can I make myself do all the things a Christian should do?

I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Galatians 2:20. "I can do all strengtheneth me."



No joy on earth can compare to the happiness and joy of a Christian home.

things through Christ which Philippians 4:13.

Answer: Here is where the revealed. There is no forcing Christian is the spontaneous outflowing of another Person's life within you. Obedience is the natural response of love in your life. Being born of God, as a new creature, you want to obey Him because His life has become a part of your life. To please someone you love is not a burden, but a delight. "I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart." Psalms 40:8.

greatest miracle of the Christian life is yourself to be good! What you do as a

10. Do you mean that even the Ten Commandments would not be hard to obey?



"If ye love me, keep my commandments." John 14:15. "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous." 1 John 5:3. "But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected." 1 John 2:5.

Answer: The Bible always ties obedience to a love relationship. Born-again Christians find it no wearying struggle to keep the Ten Commandments. With all past sins covered by His atoning death, my present and future obedience is rooted in His victorious life within me. In fact, because I love Him so deeply for changing my life, I go beyond the requirements of the Ten Commandments. Daily I search the Bible for indications of His will, trying to

find more little ways of expressing my love to Him. "And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and *do those things that are pleasing in his sight.*" 1 John 3:22, emphasis added.

11. How can I be certain that the commandment-keeping mentioned of God's people in the Bible is not legalism?

"Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Revelation 14:12.
"And they [the saints] overcame him [Satan] by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death." Revelation 12:11.

Answer: Do not mistake obedience for legalism. Legalism is trying to earn salvation by good works. The saints are identified in the Bible as having four characteristics: (1) keeping the commandments, (2) trusting the blood of the Lamb, (3) sharing their faith with others, and (4) choosing to die rather than to sin. These are the true marks of the person who is in love with Christ and who has made a life commitment to follow Him.



12. What significant act seals the love relationship with Christ, and what does it symbolize?

"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." "That the body of sin might be destroyed." Romans 6:4, 6. "I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." 2 Corinthians 11:2.

Answer:

Baptism symbolizes three significant events in the life of the true believer: (1) death to sin, (2) birth to a new life in Christ, and (3) marriage to Christ for eternity. This spiritual union will grow stronger and sweeter with time, as long as love continues to grow. As in any marriage, the loss of love can turn a paradise into hell. When love disappears, the home is held together only by the mechanical, forced duty of the marriage law. Likewise, when the Christian ceases to love Christ supremely, his religion exists only as restrictive compliance to a set of rules.

13. How can I be certain that the faith and love of my marriage to Christ will continue to increase?

"Search the scriptures." John 5:39. "Pray without ceasing." 1 Thessalonians 5:17. "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him." Colossians 2:6. "I die daily." 1 Corinthians 15:31.



Answer: No love affair can prosper without communication. Prayer and Bible study are absolutely essential to keep this relationship growing. His Word constitutes a love letter that I must read daily to nourish the spiritual life. Conversing with Him in prayer deepens the devotion and opens my mind to a more thrilling and intimate knowledge of His concern for me. Daily I am amazed to discover details of His incredible provision for my happiness.

God Seals Our Spiritual Marriage

To seal our spiritual marriage for eternity, He has promised never to forsake me (Psalms 55:22; Matthew 28:20; Hebrews 13:5), to take care of me in sickness or in health (Psalms 41:3; Isaiah 41:10), and to provide for every need that could possibly develop in my life (Matthew 6:25-34). Just as I received Him by faith and found His promises all-sufficient, I keep on trusting Him for every future need, and He never lets me down.

14. It is my desire to invite Jesus into my life and experience the new birth.

Answer:

Thought Questions

1. How could one Man's death pay the penalty for the sins of all mankind? I have lived a terrible life of sin. I am afraid God would have to do something very special to atone for someone so evil. (Hebrews 7:25)

Romans 3:23 tells us that "all have sinned." Because "the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23) and since "all have sinned," therefore "something special" is required for every person who has been born. Only One whose life is equal to all mankind could die for the sins of the race. Because Jesus is the Creator and Author of all life, the life He laid down was equivalent to the lives of all people who would ever live. Not only did atonement have to be made by One whose life could stand for all other created beings, but the One who died the atoning death had to be able to rise from that death. Why? In order to administer the benefits of the atonement to all who would apply for it in faith. "Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." Hebrews 7:25.

2. If I accept Christ and His forgiveness and then fall again, will He forgive me again? (1 John 1:9)

We can trust God to forgive us again if we are sorry for our sin and confess it. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:9.

3. How can I approach God in my sinful condition? Wouldn't it be better for me to have a priest or minister pray for me? (Hebrews 4:16)

Since Jesus Christ lived in the flesh and was "tempted like as we are" (Hebrews 4:15), we have a God who can understand and who desires to be merciful to us. Hebrews 4:16 tells us we can "come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy." We may approach God directly through Jesus Christ, without an intermediary; and trusting in His mercy, we may "boldly" come to Him in Jesus' name (John 14:14). 1 Timothy 2:5 reads: "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."

4. Is there anything I can do to help God save me? (Romans 4:5)

No. His plan is wholly of grace (Romans 3:24; 4:5); it is "the gift of God." Ephesians 2:8. It is true that as God grants us grace through faith, He also gives us the desire and strength to obey Him. This results in compliance with His laws. So, even this obedience results from God's free grace. Obedience--the service and allegiance of love--is the true test of discipleship and a natural fruit of faith in Jesus Christ.

5. If God forgives my sin and restores me to His family, will that eliminate any future punishment for my sins, or will I still be required to do some kind of penance? (Micah 7:18)

The Scriptures say, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." Romans 8:1. Christ paid the full penalty for our transgressions, and those who accept Him in faith owe no works of penance for cleansing, but are already considered "washed" in the blood of the Lamb! Isaiah 43:25 contains a beautiful promise of forgiveness: "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." Micah 7:18, 19 shows the beautiful attitude of the Redeemer-God toward His people: "Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy. He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea."

Awesome Space City

Talk about a great city! New York, Tokyo, and London are nothing in comparison! Just wait until you grasp the amazing facts about this gigantic city that can travel through space. It's all fact, not science fiction! The information in this Study Guide will thrill your soul and give you hope for the future.

1. Who is the architect and builder of this space city?

"Wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city." Hebrews 11:16.

Answer: The Bible declares that God is building a great city for His people. And this city is as real and literal as any you have ever known.



2. Where is this amazing city that God is preparing?

"And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven." Revelation 21:2. "O Lord my God ... hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place." 1 Kings 8:28-30.

Answer: This great city that is being constructed is, at this moment, in far outer space in God's dwelling place, which is called heaven.



3. How do the Scriptures describe this amazing space city?

Answer:

(A) SIZE

"The city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs." Revelation 21:16. The city is perfectly square. Its perimeter is 12,000 furlongs, or 1,500 miles (a furlong is 1/8 mile). It is 375 miles long on each side.



(B) NAME

The city is called "new Jerusalem" in Revelation 21:2.



(C) WALLS

"And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits. ... And the building of the wall of it was of jasper." Revelation 21:17, 18. A wall 144 cubits, or 216 feet high (a cubit is 18 inches), surrounds the city. The wall is made of solid jasper, with radiance and beauty beyond description. Think of it! Nearly 20 stories high and solid jasper!

The city's
jasper walls
are nearly 20
stories tall.

(D) GATES

"And had twelve gates ... On the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates." And the twelve gates were twelve pearls: every several gate was of one pearl." Revelation 21:12, 13, 21. The city has 12 gates—three on each side—each one made of a single pearl.



Each city gate is made of one solid pearl.

(E) FOUNDATIONS

"The wall of the city had twelve foundations ... garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald; The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolyte; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst." Revelation 21:14-20. The city has 12 full, complete foundations—each one made of precious stone. Every color of the rainbow will be represented, so at a distance the city will no doubt appear to be resting upon a rainbow.

(F) STREETS

"The street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass." Revelation 21:21.

(G) APPEARANCE

"The holy city, ... prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." "Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal." "The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal [proportionate]." Revelation 21:2, 11, 16. The city, with all of its precious stones, gold, and shimmering beauty, will be lighted with the glory of God. In its breathtaking majesty and purity it is compared to "a bride adorned for her husband."



The city streets will be pure gold-reflecting heaven's glories as a mirror.



4. What phenomenal feature of this majestic city assures every citizen eternal vigor and youth?

"In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." Revelation 22:2. "Take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever." Genesis 3:22.

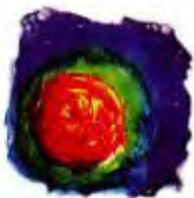
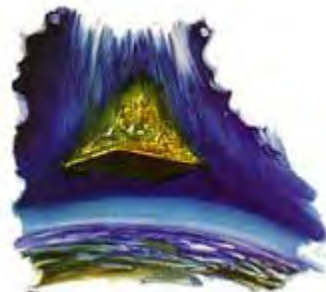
Answer: The tree of life, which bears 12 kinds of fruit (and is in the middle of the city--Revelation 2:7), brings unending life and youth to all who partake of it. Even its leaves will contain marvelous sustaining qualities. This tree will yield a new

crop of fruit each month.

5. Is it true that this amazing city will descend to this earth?

"And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." Revelation 21:2. "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth." Matthew 5:5. "The righteous shall be recompensed in the earth." Proverbs 11:31.

Answer: Yes, the majestic holy city will come down to this earth to become the capital of the earth made new. All the righteous will have a home in this city.



6. What will happen to sin and sinners?

"All the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up." Malachi 4:1. "Fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them." Revelation 20:9. "The elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." 2 Peter 3:10. "Ye shall tread

down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet." Malachi 4:3. "Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." 2 Peter 3:13.

Answer: God will destroy all sin and sinners with fire. This fire will melt the earth and turn everything into ashes. Then God will make a perfect new earth, and the holy city will be its capital. Here the righteous will live in joy, peace, and holiness throughout eternity. God promises that sin will not rise up again. See Nahum 1:9.

7. What refreshing, thrilling promises does God make to the people who enter His new kingdom?

Answer:

A. The Lord, in person, will live with them (Revelation 21:3).

B. They will never become bored. There will be pleasures forevermore (Psalms 16:11).

C. There will be no more death, pain, tears, sorrow, sickness, hospitals, operations, tragedy, disappointment, trouble, hunger, or thirst (Revelation 21:4; Isaiah 33:24; Revelation 22:3; Isaiah 65:23; Revelation 7:16).

D. They will not get tired (Isaiah 40:31).

E. Every saved person will be physically whole in every way. The deaf will hear, the blind will see, the dumb will sing, and the lame will be able to run (Isaiah 35:5, 6; Philippians 3:21).

F. Jealousy, fear, hatred, falsehood, envy, impurity, cynicism, filth, worry, and all evil will be forever shut out of God's kingdom (Revelation 21:8, 27; 22:15). People will no longer be burdened with the worries and the cares that drive them to distraction. There will be no more nervous breakdowns. Time will become eternity, and the pressures and deadlines of earth will be gone forever.



8. How will the new earth differ from our earth today?

Answer:

A. Vast seas as we know them today will be gone (Revelation 21:1).

The oceans and seas cover three-fourths of the earth's surface today.

This will not be the case in God's new kingdom. The whole world will be one huge garden of unsurpassed beauty, interspersed with lakes, rivers, and mountains

(Revelation 22:1; Acts 3:20, 21).

B. The deserts will become gardens (Isaiah 35:1, 2).

C. The animals will all be tame. None will prey upon others, and a little child will lead them (Isaiah 11:6-9; 65:25).



Children will safely play with lions in the earth made new.



There will be no use for crutches and wheelchairs in heaven.



There will be no more natural disasters in



D. There will be no more curse (Revelation 22:3).

E. There will be no more violence of any kind (Isaiah 60:18). This precludes crime, storms, floods, earthquakes, tornadoes, injury, etc.

F. Nothing defiling will be found in the new earth (Revelation 21:27). There will be no cigarette butts, tobacco juice, drunkards, taverns, alcoholic beverages, brothels, lewd pictures, or any other wickedness or impurity of any kind.

the new earth.

9. Will there be children in God's kingdom? If so, will they grow up?



"And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof." Zechariah 8:5. "And ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall." Malachi 4:2.

Answer: Yes, there will be many boys and girls in the holy city (Isaiah 11:6-9), and these youngsters will grow up (Malachi 4:2). We have degenerated much in stature, intellect, and vitality since Adam, but all of this will be restored (Acts 3:20, 21).

10. When reunited with loved ones in heaven, will the saved know each other?

Then shall I know even as also I am known." 1 Corinthians 13:12.

Answer: The Bible clearly teaches that righteous loved ones who have died will be raised to join the righteous living in God's kingdom (Isaiah 26:19; Jeremiah 31:15-17; 1 Corinthians 15:51-55; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18). And the Scriptures also teach that people in God's new kingdom will know each other, just as people recognize each other on the earth today.

11. Will people in heaven be real, with flesh and bones?

"Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." "And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And he took it, and did eat before them." "And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and ... while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven." Luke 24:36-39, 41-43, 50, 51. "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." Acts 1:11. "The Lord Jesus Christ ... shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body." Philippians 3:20, 21.



Answer: After His resurrection, Jesus proved to His disciples that He was flesh and bones by having them feel Him and by eating food. This same Jesus of flesh and bones ascended to His Father and will come again to the earth. The righteous will be given bodies just like the body of Christ and will be real people with flesh and bones throughout eternity. The difference will be that the heavenly body will not be subject to death, decay, or deterioration. The teaching that the saved in heaven will be ghosts who float on mist clouds and do nothing but play harps has no foundation in the Scriptures. Jesus did not die on the cross to provide any such trivial and foolish future for those who accept His love and nobly follow His way of life. Most people have no interest in such an ethereal existence and, therefore, have little or no desire to enter God's heavenly kingdom--often preferring it only because they fear hell. If only all people everywhere could learn the truth about God's holy city and new earth, millions would begin to understand His love and would turn to Him with

all their hearts. A person who misses out on God's kingdom has made the supreme blunder of a lifetime.



12. How will the righteous spend their time in the heavenly kingdom?

"They shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: ... mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands." Isaiah 65:21, 22.

Answer: The righteous will build their own homes in the new earth. (Each will also have a city mansion built by Christ--John 14:1-3.) They will plant vineyards and eat the fruit from them. The Bible is plain. Real people do real things in heaven, and they will thoroughly enjoy it all.

13. In what other thrilling activities will the redeemed participate in?

Answer:

- A. Sing and play heavenly music (Isaiah 35:10; 51:11; Psalms 87:7; Revelation 14:2, 3).
- B. Worship before God's throne every Sabbath (Isaiah 66:22, 23).
- C. Enjoy never-fading flowers and trees (Ezekiel 47:12; Isaiah 35:1, 2).
- D. Visit with loved ones, patriarchs, prophets, etc. (Matthew 8:11; Revelation 7:9-17).
- E. Study the animals of heaven (Isaiah 11:6-9; 65:25).
- F. Travel and explore without ever becoming weary (Isaiah 40:31).
- G. Listen to God sing (Zephaniah 3:17).
- H. Realize fondest ambitions (Psalms 37:3, 4; Isaiah 65:24).
- I. Greatest joy of all--the privilege of being like Jesus, traveling with Him, and seeing Him face to face (Revelation 14:4; 22:4; 21:3; 1 John 3:2).



14. Can feeble human language really describe the glories of the heavenly home?

"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." 1 Corinthians 2:9.

Answer: Not even in its wildest dreams can the heart of man begin to comprehend the marvels of God's eternal kingdom. All that Adam lost will be restored (Acts 3:20, 21).

Heaven will bring us the privilege of becoming friends with Bible patriarchs and prophets.

personally?

15. Is this kingdom being prepared for me

"Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Revelation 22:17. "To an inheritance incorruptible ... reserved in heaven for you." 1 Peter 1:4. "I go to prepare a place for you." John 14:2.

Answer: It is prepared for you personally. The invitation from the Lord is to you personally. If rejected, friend, you will have no one to blame but yourself.





16. How can I be assured of a place in that great and glorious kingdom?

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in." Revelation 3:20. "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that and may enter in

they may have right to the tree of life, through the gates into the city." Revelation 22:14. "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." Matthew 7:21. "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God." John 1:12. "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." 1 John 1:7.

Answer: The Bible makes it plain. It is simple. Give your life to Christ for cleansing from sin. When you do this, He also gives you power to do His will and keep His commandments. This means, of course, that you will begin to live as Christ lived and will overcome all sin. "He that overcometh shall inherit all things." Revelation 21:7. In short, a person is prepared for heaven when he has heaven in his heart.

17. I have decided to accept Jesus' offer to live with Him forever in His heavenly kingdom.

Answer:

Thought Questions

1. How can heaven be a happy place when the saved think of loved ones who are lost? (Revelation 21:4)

The Bible says that God will "wipe away all tears from their eyes." Revelation 21:4. Surrounded by the beauty and joys of the new earth, God's redeemed people will forget the tragedies and heartaches of the past; "the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind." Isaiah 65:17.

2. The Bible says, "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." 1 Corinthians 15:50. How, then, can the redeemed be flesh and bones? (1 Corinthians 15:50)

Here the Bible uses the term "flesh" to describe the unconverted person. A similar thought is expressed in Romans 8:8, 9: "They that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you." John 3:6 says, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." The term "flesh" here again refers to the unconverted person, while the term "spirit" refers to the converted or "born again" person. So the Bible is simply saying in 1 Corinthians 15:50 that no one can enter God's kingdom unless conversion first takes place and flesh becomes spirit. Christ, in His resurrected body, declared that He was truly "flesh and bones." Luke 24:39. We shall have a body like His, according to Philippians 3:21.

3. Is the apostle Peter in charge of the gate of the holy city? (Matthew 16:19)

No! The Bible says in Revelation 21:12 that the new Jerusalem--the holy city of God--has 12 gates, and at the gates are 12 angels. No reference is made in the Bible to any of the apostles as guardians of the gates.

4. Is the holy city really big enough to hold all the saved people of all ages? (Matthew 7:14)

If the city were to be crowded and each saved person given only 100 square feet of ground space, there would be room for 39 billion people in the city, which is many times the present population of the world. Many statisticians believe that if all the people who have ever lived were saved, there would be plenty of room for them in the city. The Scriptures make it clear, however, that only a few will be saved (Matthew 7:14). So there will be more than enough room in the great city.

5. Sometimes I wonder if the reward is worth the sacrifice. It seems that Satan is about to overwhelm me at times. Does the Bible offer me any encouragement? (Romans 8:18)

Yes. In fact, the apostle Paul must have been thinking of someone like you when he wrote, "The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." Romans 8:18. Just one glimpse of that eternal kingdom will cause the worst trials and persecutions of earth to pale into insignificance, and the redeemed will cry out: "Hallelujah, heaven is cheap enough!"

6. Will little babies who die be saved in God's kingdom? (Matthew 2:16-18)

We do not have a specific Bible answer to this question, but many choose to believe that infants will be saved on the basis of Matthew 2:16-18. There the Bible tells of wicked king Herod slaying all the male babies in Bethlehem who were two years old or younger. The Old Testament foretold this tragic, cruel incident, and God told the mothers to stop crying because their children would one day be restored to them. "Refrain thy voice from weeping, ... they [the slain children] shall come again from the land of the enemy. ... Thy children shall come again to their own border." Jeremiah 31:16, 17. This is an obvious reference to the resurrection.

7. Do I understand correctly that heaven, the home of the saved, will be right here on this earth? (Revelation 21:2,3;22:1,3)

That is correct. Although the holy city is now in God's dwelling place, He is going to move it to this earth. Sin and sinners will be destroyed with fire, and the earth will be made new and given to the righteous in all of its Edenic glory and beauty. The holy city will be the capital of the new earth, and God will move His throne here (Revelation 21:2, 3; 22:1, 3) and live with the righteous right here on this earth throughout eternity. And where the Lord abides, that is heaven. God's plan is to restore to man what Adam lost: the glories of a perfect life on a perfect planet. Satan and sin interrupted God's plan, but the plan will be carried out. We can all share in this new kingdom--and we must! It's too much to miss.

8. Why do so many teach and believe that the home of the saved is a misty place with ghostlike inhabitants who float on clouds and do nothing but play harps? (John 8:44)

This teaching originated with the devil, the father of lies (John 8:44). He is anxious to distort God's loving plan and present heaven as an unreal, "spooky" place so people will lose interest or become skeptical of God's Word altogether. Satan well knows that when men and women fully understand the Bible truth regarding the home of the saved, his power over them is broken, because they will begin making plans to enter that kingdom. This is why he works so hard to becloud the issue and spread falsehood regarding that heavenly home.

Written in Stone

Centuries ago, God wrote His law in stone, and you're still supposed to keep it today! It's absolutely true that violating any part of God's law always brings negative consequences. As crime overruns our cities, doesn't it make sense that for peace and safety we need to obey the laws of the land? Well, this same principle applies with God's law - the Ten Commandments - in our own lives too! They aren't called the ten suggestions, ten recommendations, or the ten greatest ideas. Since so much is at stake, you should take a few minutes to seriously consider your responsibility.

1. Did God Himself really write the Ten Commandments?

"And he gave unto Moses ... two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God." "And the tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables." Exodus 31:18; 32:16.

Answer: Yes, the great God of heaven wrote the Ten Commandments on tables of stone with His own finger.



2. What is God's definition of sin?

"Sin is the transgression of the law." 1 John 3:4.

Answer: Sin is breaking God's Ten Commandment law. And since the law of God is perfect (Psalms 19:7), it covers every conceivable sin. It is impossible to commit a sin that is not condemned by at least one of God's Ten Commandments. The commandments cover "the whole duty of man." Ecclesiastes 12:13. Nothing is left

out.

3. Why did God give us the Ten Commandments?

"He that keepeth the law, happy is he." Proverbs 29:18. "Keep my commandments: For length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee." Proverbs 3:1, 2.

Answer: A. As a guide for happy, abundant living.

God created us to enjoy happiness, peace, long life, contentment, accomplishment, and all the other great blessings for which our hearts long. God's law is the road map that points out the right paths to follow in order to find this true, supreme happiness.



"By the law is the knowledge of sin." Romans 3:20. "I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." Romans 7:7.

B. To show me the difference between right and wrong.

God's law is like a mirror (James 1:23-25). It points out wrongdoing in my life as a mirror points out dirt on my face. The only possible way for a person to know if he is sinning is for him to carefully check his life by the mirror of God's law. Hope for this mixed-up, sinking generation is found in God's Ten Commandment law. It tells where to draw the line!

"And the Lord commanded us to do all these statutes [commandments] ... for our good always." Deuteronomy 6:24. "Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe: and I will have respect unto thy statutes continually. Thou hast trodden down all them that err from thy statutes." Psalms 119:117, 118.

C. To protect me from danger and tragedy.



God's law is His road map to happy, abundant living.

God's law is like a strong cage at the zoo, which protects us from fierce, destructive animals. It protects us from impurity, falsehood, murder, idolatry, theft, and many other evils that destroy life, peace, and happiness. All good laws protect, and God's law is no exception.

Special Note: The eternal principles of God's law are written deep in every person's nature by the God who created us. The writing may be dim and smudged, but it is still there. This means, of course, that you cannot find true peace unless you are willing to live in harmony with your inner nature, upon which God has written these principles. We were created to live in harmony with them. When we choose to ignore them, the result is always tension, unrest, and tragedy--just as ignoring the rules for safe driving leads to serious trouble.



4. Why is God's law exceedingly important to me personally?

"So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty." James 2:12.

Answer: Because the Ten Commandment law is the standard by which God examines people in the heavenly judgment. How are you measuring up? It is a

life-or-death matter!

5. Can God's law (the Ten Commandments) ever be changed or abolished?

"It is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail." Luke 16:17. "My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips." Psalms 89:34. "All his commandments are sure. They stand fast for ever and ever." Psalms 111:7, 8.

Answer: Absolutely not! The Bible is very clear on this point. If the law could have been changed, God would have immediately made that change when Adam and Eve sinned instead of sending His Son to die in the sinner's behalf to pay the penalty of the broken law. But this was impossible, because the commandments are not laws in the sense of rules or regulations that have been enacted. They are revealed principles of God's holy character that will always be true as long as God exists.



Notice on the chart below that God and His law have the same characteristics. Do you see what this means? The Ten Commandment law is God's character in written form--written so we can comprehend it. It is no more possible to change God's law than to pull God out of heaven and change Him. Jesus came to show us what the law (which is the pattern for holy living) looked like when made up in human form. God's character can never change. Neither can His law, for it is His character in human language.

	GOD IS	THE LAW IS
Good	Luke 18:19	1 Timothy 1:8
Holy	Isaiah 5:16	Romans 7:12
Perfect	Matthew 5:48	Psalms 19:7
Pure	1 John 3:2,3	Psalms 19:8
Just	Deuteronomy 32:4	Romans 7:12
True	John 3:33	Psalms 19:9
Spiritual	1 Corinthians 10:4	Romans 7:14
Righteousness	Jeremiah 23:6	Psalms 119:172
Faithful	1 Corinthians 1:9	Psalms 119:86

Love	1 John 4:8	Romans 13:10
Unchangeable	James 1:17	Matthew 5:18
Eternal	Genesis 21:33	Psalms 111:7,8



6. Did Jesus abolish God's law while He was here on earth?

"Think not that I am come to destroy the law. ... I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. ... Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." Matthew 5:17, 18.

Answer: No, indeed! Jesus specifically asserted that He did not come to destroy the law, but to fulfill (or keep) it. Instead of doing away with the law, Jesus magnified it (Isaiah 42:21) as the perfect guide for right living. For example, Jesus pointed out that "thou shalt not kill" condemns anger "without a cause" (Matthew 5:21, 22) and hatred (1 John 3:15), and that lust is adultery (Matthew 5:27, 28). He says, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." John 14:15.

7. Will people who knowingly continue to break even one of God's commandments be saved?

"The wages of sin is death." Romans 6:23. "He shall destroy the sinners." Isaiah 13:9. "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." James 2:10.



Answer: No! They will be lost. The Ten Commandment law is the guide we must use in finding our way to God and holy living. If I ignore even one of the commandments, I am neglecting part of the divine pattern, or blueprint. If only one link of a chain is broken, its entire purpose is undone. The Bible says that when we knowingly break any command of God, we are sinning (James 4:17), because we have refused His will for us. Only those who do His will can enter the kingdom of heaven. Sinners will be lost.



8. Can anyone be saved by keeping the law?

"By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight." Romans 3:20. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." Ephesians 2:8, 9.

Answer: No! The answer is too plain to miss. No one can be saved by keeping the law. Salvation comes only through grace, as a free gift from Jesus Christ, and we receive this gift by faith, not by works. The law serves only as a mirror to point out sin in our lives. Cleansing and forgiveness from that sin come only through Christ.

9. Why, then, is the law an absolute essential for perfecting Christian character?

"Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." Ecclesiastes 12:13. "By the law is the knowledge of sin." Romans 3:20.

Answer:

Because the full pattern, or "whole duty," for Christian living is contained in God's law. Like a 6-year-old boy who made his own ruler, measured himself, and told his mother that he was 12 feet tall, our own standards are never safe. I cannot know whether I am a sinner unless I look carefully into the perfect standard--God's law-mirror. Millions who have cast out devils, prophesied, and done many wonderful works in Jesus' name will be lost (Matthew 7:21-23) because they did not bother to check their lives with His great law-pattern. Hence, they think they are righteous and saved when, instead, they are sinful and lost. "Hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments." 1 John 2:3.





10. What enables a truly Christian to follow the God's law?

"I will put my laws into their them in their hearts."
 "I can do all things through
 Philippians 4:13. "God
 Son ... That the
 of the law might be fulfilled in
 8:3, 4.



**converted
pattern of**

mind, and write
 Hebrews 8:10.
 Christ."
 sending his own
 righteousness
 us." Romans

Answer: Christ not only pardons repentant sinners, but He restores in them the image of God. He brings them into harmony with His law through the power of His indwelling presence. "Thou shalt not" then becomes a promise that the Christian will not steal, lie, murder, etc., because Jesus lives inside and is in control. God could not change His law, but He made a blessed provision through Jesus to change the sinner so he can measure up to that law.

11. But isn't a Christian who has faith and is living under grace freed from keeping the law?

"For sin [breaking God's law--1 John 3:4] shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. What then? shall we sin [break the law], because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid." Romans 6:14, 15. "Do we then make void the law through faith?



God forbid: yea, we establish the law." Romans 3:31.



The law serves as a mirror to point out sin in our lives. As repentant sinners come to Jesus, He restores in them the image of God, bringing them into harmony with His law through the power of His indwelling presence.

Testament?

Answer: No! The Scriptures teach the very opposite. Grace is like the governor's pardon to a prisoner. It forgives him, but it does not give him freedom to break one single law on the statute books. The forgiven person, living under grace, is under double obligation to keep the law. A person who refuses to keep God's law, saying that he is living under grace, is mistaken. He is living under *dis*grace.

12. Are the Ten Commandments of God reaffirmed in the New

Answer: Yes, and very clearly so. Look the following over very carefully.

THE LAW OF GOD IN THE NEW TESTAMENT	THE LAW OF GOD IN THE OLD TESTAMENT
1. "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." Matthew 4:10.	1. "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." Exodus 20:3.
2. "Little children, keep yourselves from idols." 1 John 5:21. "Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device." Acts 17:29.	2. "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments." Exodus 20:4-6.
3. "That the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed." 1 Timothy 6:1.	3. "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain." Exodus 20:7.
4. "For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works." "There remaineth therefore a rest ["keeping of a sabbath," margin] to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his." Hebrews 4:4, 9, 10.	4. "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it." Exodus 20:8-11.
5. "Honour thy father and thy mother." Matthew 19:19.	5. "Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." Exodus 20:12.
6. "Thou shalt not kill." Romans 13:9.	6. "Thou shalt not kill." Exodus 20:13.
7. "Thou shalt not commit adultery."	7. "Thou shalt not commit adultery."

Matthew 19:18.	Exodus 20:14.
8. "Thou shalt not steal." Romans 13:9.	8. "Thou shalt not steal." Exodus 20:15.
9. "Thou shalt not bear false witness." Romans 13:9.	9. "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour." Exodus 20:16.
10. "Thou shalt not covet." Romans 7:7.	10. "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's." Exodus 20:17.

13. Are God's law and Moses' law the same?

Answer: No, they are not the same. Study the following notes and comparison carefully.



Note: Moses' law was the temporary, ceremonial law of the Old Testament. It regulated the priesthood, sacrifices, rituals, meat and drink offerings, etc., all of which foreshadowed the cross. This law was added "till the seed should come," and that seed was Christ (Galatians 3:16, 19). The ritual and ceremony of Moses' law pointed forward to Christ's sacrifice. When He died, this law came to an end, but the Ten Commandments (God's law) "stand fast for ever and ever." Psalms 111:8. That there are two laws is made crystal clear in Daniel 9:10, 11.

Special Note: Please note that God's law has existed at least as long as sin has existed. The Bible says, "Where no law is, there is no transgression [or sin]." Romans 4:15. So God's Ten Commandment law existed from the beginning. Men broke that law (sinned--1 John 3:4). Because of sin (or breaking God's law), Moses' law was given (or "added"--Galatians 3:16, 19) till Christ should come and die. Two separate laws are involved: God's law and Moses' law.

MOSES' LAW

Called "the law of Moses" (Luke 2:22).
 Called "law ... contained in ordinances" (Ephesians 2:15).
 Written by Moses in a book (2 Chronicles 35:12).
 Placed in the side of the ark (Deuteronomy 31:26).
 Ended at the cross (Ephesians 2:15).
 Added because of sin (Galatians 3:19).
 Contrary to us, against us (Colossians 2:14).
 Judges no one (Colossians 2:14-16).
 Carnal (Hebrews 7:16).

GOD'S LAW

Called "the law of the Lord" (Isaiah 5:24).
 Called "the royal law" (James 2:8).
 Written by God on stone (Exodus 31:18; 32:16).
 Placed inside the ark (Exodus 40:20).
 Will stand forever (Luke 16:17).
 Points out sin (Romans 7:7; 3:20).
 Not grievous (1 John 5:3).
 Judges all people (James 2:10-12).
 Spiritual (Romans 7:14).



Made nothing perfect (Hebrews 7:19). Perfect (Psalms 19:7).

14. How does the devil feel about the people who pattern their lives after God's Ten Commandments?

"And the dragon [the devil] was wroth with the woman [true church], and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God." Revelation 12:17. "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God." Revelation 14:12.

Answer: The devil hates the people who uphold God's law because the law is the pattern of right living. And if you decide to follow the pattern outlined in God's law, you will feel the devil's wrath upon you at once and with all fury. It is not surprising that the devil hates and bitterly opposes all who uphold God's law. But it is shocking and astounding to hear religious leaders denying the binding claims of the Ten Commandments while at the same time upholding the traditions of men. No wonder Jesus said, "Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?" "In vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Matthew 15:3, 9. And David said, "It is time for thee, Lord, to work: for they have made void thy law." Psalms 119:126. Christians must wake up and restore God's law to its rightful, exalted position. It is folly for this undisciplined generation to presume that it can break the laws of the living God with impunity.

15. I believe a Christian must obey God's Ten Commandments, and I am asking Jesus to help me bring my life into harmony with them.

Answer:

Thought Questions

1. Doesn't the Bible say the law was (or is) faulty? (Hebrews 8:8)

No. The Bible says the people were faulty. God found "fault with them." Hebrews 8:8. And in Romans 8:3 the Bible says that the law "was weak through the flesh." It is always the same story. The law is perfect, but the people are faulty, or weak. So God would have His Son live within His people "that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us" (Romans 8:4) through the indwelling Christ.

2. Galatians 3:13 says we are redeemed from the curse of the law. Can you explain this? (Galatians 3:13)

The curse of the law is death (Romans 6:23). Christ tasted "death for every man." Hebrews 2:9. Thus He redeemed all from the curse of the law (death) and in its place provided eternal life.

3. Don't Colossians 2:14-17 and Ephesians 2:15 teach that God's law ended at the cross? (Ephesians 2:15)

No, these passages both refer to the law containing "ordinances," or Moses' law, which was a ceremonial law governing the sacrificial system and the priesthood. All of this ceremony and ritual foreshadowed the

cross and ended at Christ's death, as God had intended. Moses' law was added till the "seed should come," and that "seed ... is Christ." Galatians 3:19, 16. God's law could not be involved here, for Paul spoke of it as holy, just, and good many years after the cross (Romans 7:7, 12).

4. The Bible says, "Love is the fulfilling of the law." Romans 13:10. The Bible also, in Matthew 22:37-40, commands us to love God and to love our neighbors, and ends with the words, "On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." Do these commands replace the Ten Commandments? (Matthew 22:40)

No, the Ten Commandments hang from these two commands like our 10 fingers hang from our two hands. They are inseparable. Love to God makes keeping the first four commandments (which concern God) a pleasure, and love toward our neighbor makes keeping the last six (which concern our neighbor) a joy. Love fulfills the law by taking away the drudgery and by making lawkeeping a delight (Psalms 40:8). When we truly love a person, honoring his or her requests becomes a joy. Jesus said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." John 14:15. It is impossible to love the Lord and not keep His commandments, because the Bible says, "This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments: and his commandments are not grievous." 1 John 5:3. "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." 1 John 2:4.

5. Doesn't 2 Corinthians 3:7 teach that the law written and engraved in stone "was to be done away"? (2 Corinthians 3:7)

No. The passage says that the "glory" of Moses' ministration of the law was to be done away, but not the law. Read the whole passage of 2 Corinthians 3:3-9 again, carefully. The subject is not the doing away with the law or its establishment, but rather, the change of the location of the law from "tables of stone" to the "tables of the heart." Under Moses' ministration the law was on stones. Under the Holy Spirit's ministration, through Christ, the law is written upon the heart (Hebrews 8:10). A rule posted on a school bulletin board becomes effective only when it enters a student's heart. Christ's ministration of the law is effective because He transfers the law to the heart of the Christian. Then keeping the law becomes a delight and a joyful way of living because the Christian has true love for both God and man.

6. Romans 10:4 says that "Christ is the end of the law." So it has ended, hasn't it? (Romans 10:4)

"End" in this verse means purpose or object, as it does in James 5:11. The meaning is clear. To lead men to Christ--where they find righteousness--is the goal, purpose, or end of the law.

7. Why do so many people deny the binding claims of God's law? (Romans 8:7)

"Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you." Romans 8:7-9.

8. Were the righteous people of the Old Testament saved by the law? (2 Timothy 1:9)

No one has ever been saved by the law. All who have been saved in all ages have been saved by grace. This "grace ... was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." 2 Timothy 1:9. The law only points out sin. Christ alone can save. Noah "found grace" (Genesis 6:8); Moses found grace (Exodus 33:17); the Israelites in the wilderness found grace (Jeremiah 31:2); and Abel, Enoch, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, and many other Old Testament worthies were saved "by faith" according to Hebrews 11. They were saved by looking forward to the cross; we, by looking back to it. The law is necessary because, like a mirror, it reveals the "dirt" in our lives. Without it, people are sinners but are not aware of it. However, the law has no saving power. It can only point out sin. Jesus, and He alone, can save a person from sin. This has always been true, even in Old Testament times. (Acts 4:10, 12; 2 Timothy 1:9).

9. Why worry about the law? Isn't conscience a safe guide? (Proverbs 14:12)

No! A thousand times, no! The Bible speaks of an evil conscience, a defiled conscience, and a seared conscience--none of which is safe. "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." Proverbs 14:12. God says, "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool." Proverbs 28:26.

Lost Day of History

Did you know there is a very important day that almost everyone has forgotten about? It's astounding that only a few people are aware of it, because it's one of the most significant days in all of human history! It's not only a day in the past, but the present and future. Furthermore, what happened on this neglected day can have a profound effect on your life. Want to know more amazing facts about this lost day of history? Then read over this Study Guide carefully.

1. On what day did Jesus customarily worship?

"And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read." Luke 4:16.

Answer: Jesus' custom was to worship on the Sabbath.



2. But which day of the week is the Sabbath?

"The seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God." Exodus 20:10. "And when the sabbath was past, ...very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre." Mark 16:1, 2.

Answer: The Sabbath is not the first day of the week (Sunday), as many believe, but the seventh day (Saturday). Notice from the above Scripture that the Sabbath is the day that comes just before the first day of the week.

3. Who made the Sabbath and when?

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." "And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it." Genesis 1:1; 2:2, 3.

Answer: God made the Sabbath at the time of Creation, when He made the world. He rested on the Sabbath and blessed and sanctified it (set it apart for a holy use).



4. What does God say about Sabbathkeeping in the Ten Commandments, which He wrote with His own finger?

"Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it." Exodus 20:8-11. "And the Lord delivered unto me two tables of stone written with the finger of God." Deuteronomy 9:10.

Answer: In the fourth commandment of the 10, God commands us to observe the seventh-day Sabbath as His holy day. God knew people would forget His Sabbath, so He began this commandment with the word "remember." He has never commanded anyone anywhere to keep any other day as a weekly holy day.

5. But haven't the Ten Commandments been changed?

Jesus says: "And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail." Luke 16:17. God says: "My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips." Psalms 89:34. Notice, the Ten Commandments came from His lips. Exodus 20:1 says, "And God spake all these words, saying ... [the Ten Commandments follow in verses 2-17]."

Answer: No, indeed! It is utterly impossible for any of God's moral law ever to change. All Ten Commandments are binding today.



6. Did the apostles keep the Sabbath?

"And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures." Acts 17:2. "Paul and his company ... went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and sat down." Acts 13:13, 14. "And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither." Acts 16:13. "And he [Paul] reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks." Acts 18:4.

Answer: Yes, the book of Acts makes it clear that Paul and the early church kept the Sabbath.

7. Did the Gentiles also worship on Sabbath?

God commanded it:

"Blessed is the man ... that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it."
"Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the Lord, ... every one that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant; Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer ... for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for *all people*." Isaiah 56:2, 6, 7, emphasis added.

Apostles taught it:

"And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, *the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next sabbath.*" "And the next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God." Acts 13:42, 44, emphasis added. "And he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks." Acts 18:4.



Answer: The apostles in the early New Testament church not only obeyed God's Sabbath command, but they also taught the converted Gentiles to worship on Sabbath. Never once do they refer to Sunday as a holy day.

8. But wasn't the Sabbath changed to Sunday at Christ's death or resurrection?

Answer: No, there is not the remotest hint that the Sabbath was changed at Christ's death or resurrection. The Bible teaches just the opposite. Please carefully review the following evidence:

A. God blessed the Sabbath.

"The Lord blessed the sabbath day and hallowed it." Exodus 20:11. "And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it." Genesis 2:3.

B. Christ expected His people to be still keeping the Sabbath in A.D. 70 when

Jerusalem was destroyed.

Knowing full well that Jerusalem would be destroyed by Rome in A.D. 70, Jesus warned His followers of that time, saying, "But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, *neither on the sabbath day*." Matthew 24:20, emphasis added. Jesus made it clear that He intended for the Sabbath to be kept even 40 years after His resurrection. In fact, there is no intimation anywhere in the Scriptures that Jesus, His Father, or the apostles ever (at any time, under any circumstances) changed the holy seventh-day Sabbath to any other day.

C. The women who came to anoint Christ's dead body kept the Sabbath. Jesus died on "the day before the sabbath" (Mark 15:37, 42), which is now called Good Friday.

The women prepared spices and ointments to anoint His body, then "rested the sabbath day according to the commandment." Luke 23:56. Only "when the sabbath was past" (Mark 16:1) did the women come "the first day of the week" (Mark 16:2) to continue their sad work. They found "Jesus was risen early the first day of the week" (verse 9), commonly called Easter Sunday. Please note that the Sabbath "according to the commandment" was the day preceding Easter Sunday, which we now call Saturday.

D. Christ's follower, Luke, wrote two books of the Bible--Luke and Acts. He says that in the book of Luke he wrote about "all" of Jesus' teachings (Acts 1:1-3). But he never wrote about Sundaykeeping or a change of the Sabbath.

9. Some people say the Sabbath will be kept in God's new earth. Is this correct?

"For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord." Isaiah 66:22, 23.



Answer: Yes, the Bible says the saved people of all ages will keep the Sabbath in the new earth.



10. But isn't Sunday the Lord's day?

"Call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord." Isaiah 58:13. "For the son of man is Lord even of the sabbath day." Matthew 12:8.

Answer: The Bible speaks of the "Lord's day" in Revelation 1:10, so the Lord does have a special day. But no verse of Scripture refers to Sunday as the Lord's day. Rather, the Bible plainly identifies Sabbath as the Lord's day. The only day ever blessed by the Lord or claimed by Him as His holy day is the

seventh-day Sabbath.

11. Shouldn't I keep Sunday in honor of Christ's resurrection?

"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." Romans 6:3-6.



Answer: No! No more than you would keep Friday in honor of the crucifixion. Christ gave the ordinance of baptism in honor of His death, burial, and resurrection. The Bible never suggests Sundaykeeping in honor of the resurrection (or for any other reason, for that matter). We honor Christ by obeying Him (John 14:15)--not

by substituting man-made requirements in place of His.



12. Well, if Sundaykeeping isn't in the Bible, whose idea was it anyway?

"And he shall think to change the times and the law." Daniel 7:25, RSV.* "Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition." "In vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Matthew 15:6, 9. "Her priests have violated my law." "And her prophets have daubed them with untempered mortar, ... saying, Thus saith the Lord God, when the Lord hath not spoken." Ezekiel 22:26, 28.

Answer: Misguided men of long years past announced that God's holy day was changed from Sabbath to Sunday. God predicted it would happen, and it did. This error was passed on to our unsuspecting generation as gospel fact. Sundaykeeping is a tradition of uninspired men and breaks God's law, which commands Sabbathkeeping. Only God can make a day holy. God blessed the Sabbath, and when God blesses, no man can "reverse it." Numbers 23:20.

**The Revised Standard Version of the Bible, (C) 1946, 1952, 1971 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA. Used by permission.*

13. But isn't it very dangerous to tamper with God's law?

"Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God." Deuteronomy 4:2. "Every word of God is pure. ... Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar." Proverbs 30:5, 6.



Answer: God has specifically and positively forbidden men to change His law by deletions or additions. To tamper with God's holy law in any way is one of the most fearful and dangerous things a person can do.



14. Why did God make the Sabbath anyway?

A. Sign of Creation.

"Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy." "For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it." Exodus 20:8, 11.

B. Sign of redemption and sanctification.

"Moreover also I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them." Ezekiel 20:12.

Answer: God gave the Sabbath as a twofold sign: (1) It is a sign that He created the world in six literal 24-hour days, and (2) it is also a sign of God's mighty power to redeem and sanctify men. Surely every Christian will love the Sabbath as God's precious sign of Creation and redemption (Exodus 31:13, 17; Ezekiel 20:12, 20). It is a great insult to God for people to trample upon His Sabbath. In Isaiah 58:13, 14, God says all who would be blessed must first get their feet off His Sabbath.

15. How important is Sabbathkeeping?

"Sin is the transgression of the law." 1 John 3:4. "The wages of sin is death." Romans 6:23. "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." James 2:10. "Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps." 1 Peter 2:21. "He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." Hebrews 5:9.



Answer: It is a matter of life and death. Sabbathkeeping is enjoined in the



fourth commandment of God's law. The deliberate breaking of any one of the Ten Commandments is a sin. Christians will gladly follow Christ's example of Sabbathkeeping. Our only safety is to diligently study the Bible, "rightly dividing the word of truth." 2 Timothy 2:15. We must have positive Scripture support for every Christian practice we follow.



16. How does God feel about religious leaders who ignore the Sabbath?

"Her priests have violated my law, and have profaned mine holy things: they have put no difference between the holy and profane ... and have hid their eyes from my sabbaths, and I am profaned among them." "Therefore have I poured out my indignation upon them." Ezekiel 22:26, 31.

Answer: In hiding their eyes from God's true Sabbath, religious leaders offend the God of heaven. God promises punishment for such false shepherds. Millions have been misled on this matter. God cannot treat it lightly. Jesus condemned the Pharisees for pretending to love God while making void one of the Ten Commandments by their tradition (Mark 7:7-13).



17. Does Sabbathkeeping really affect me personally?

"If ye love me, keep my commandments." John 14:15. "So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God." Romans 14:12. "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." James 4:17. "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Revelation 22:14. "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God." Revelation 14:12.

Answer: Yes, by all means, the Sabbath is *your* Sabbath. God made it for *you*, and if you love Him you will keep it, because it is one of His commandments. Love without commandment-keeping is no love at all (1 John 2:4). You must make a decision. You cannot avoid it. No one can excuse you. You yourself will answer before God on this most important matter. God asks you to love and obey Him now!

18. I am willing to follow Jesus' example of Sabbathkeeping.

Answer:

Thought Questions

1. But isn't the Sabbath for the Jews only? (Mark 2:27)

No. Jesus said, "The sabbath was made for man." Mark 2:27. It is not for the Jews only, but for mankind--all men and women everywhere. The Jewish nation did not even exist until 2,500 years after the Sabbath was made.

2. Isn't Acts 20:7-12 proof that the disciples kept Sunday as a holy day? (Acts 20:7)

According to the Bible, each day begins at sundown and ends at the next sundown (Genesis 1:5, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31; Leviticus 23:32) and the dark part of the day comes first. So Sabbath begins Friday night at sundown and ends Saturday night at sundown. This meeting of Acts 20 was held on the dark part of Sunday, or on

what we now call Saturday night. *The New English Bible** begins Acts 20:7 like this: "On the Saturday night in our assembly ..." It was a Saturday-night meeting, and it lasted until midnight. Paul was on a farewell tour and knew he would not see these people again before his death (verse 25). No wonder he preached so long! (No regular weekly service would have lasted all night.) Paul was "ready to depart on the morrow." The "breaking of bread" has no "holy day" significance whatever, because they broke bread daily (Acts 2:46). There is not the slightest indication in this Scripture passage that the first day is holy, nor that these early Christians considered it so. Nor is there the remotest evidence that the Sabbath had been changed. Incidentally, this meeting is probably mentioned in the Scripture only because of the miracle of raising Eutychus back to life after he fell to his death from a third-floor window. In Ezekiel 46:1, God refers to Sunday as one of the six "working days."

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3. Doesn't 1 Corinthians 16:1, 2 speak of Sunday school offerings? (1 Corinthians 16:2)

No, there is no reference here to a public meeting. The money was to be laid aside privately at home. A famine was raging in Judea (Romans 15:26; Acts 11:26-30), and Paul was writing to ask the churches in Asia Minor to assist their famine-stricken brethren. These Christians all kept Sabbath holy, so Paul suggested that on Sunday morning (which was the time they paid bills and settled accounts), after the Sabbath was over, they put aside something for their needy brethren so it would be on hand when he came. It was to be done privately or, as *La Santa Biblia* (a Spanish translation) says, "at home." Notice also that there is no reference here to Sunday as a holy day. In fact, the Bible nowhere commands or even suggests Sundaykeeping.

4. But hasn't time been lost and the days of the week changed since the time of Christ? (Luke 4:16)

No! Reliable encyclopedias and reference books make it clear that our seventh day is the same one that Jesus kept holy. It is a simple matter of research.

5. But isn't John 20:19 the record of the disciples instituting Sundaykeeping in honor of the resurrection? (John 20:19)

On the contrary, the disciples at this time did not believe that the resurrection had taken place (Mark 16:14). They had met there "for fear of the Jews" and had the doors bolted. When Jesus appeared in their midst, He rebuked them "because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen." There is no implication that they counted Sunday as a holy day. Only eight texts in the New Testament mention the first day of the week; none of them imply that it is holy.

6. Doesn't Colossians 2:14-17 do away with the seventh-day Sabbath? (Colossians 2:14)

Not at all. It refers only to the sabbaths which were "a shadow of things to come" and not to the seventh-day Sabbath. There were seven yearly holy days, or holidays, in ancient Israel which were also called sabbaths. These were in addition to, or "beside the sabbaths of the Lord" (Leviticus 23:38), or seventh-day Sabbath. These all foreshadowed, or pointed to, the cross and ended at the cross. God's seventh-day Sabbath was made before sin entered, and therefore could foreshadow nothing about deliverance from sin. That's why Colossians chapter 2 differentiates and specifically mentions the sabbaths that were "a shadow." These seven yearly sabbaths which were abolished are listed in Leviticus chapter 23.

7. According to Romans 14:5, the day we keep is a matter of personal opinion, isn't it? (Romans 14:5)

Notice that the whole chapter is on judging one another (Verses 4, 10, 13). The issue here is not over the seventh-day Sabbath, which was a part of the great moral law, but over the yearly feast days of the ceremonial law. Jewish Christians were judging Gentile Christians for not observing them. Paul is simply saying, "Don't judge each other. That ceremonial law is no longer binding."

The Ultimate Deliverance

It's no fairytale - one day, you can be free from all the hurt, hunger, aloneness, crime, and chaos infecting the world today. Doesn't that sound wonderful? But it's not going to be some charismatic earthly leader who's going to deliver you... no, He's much more superior than that! Jesus is coming soon, but there is a lot of popular misconceptions regarding just how He's coming. So take a few minutes to understand what the Bible really says about the second coming so you won't be left behind!

1. Will Jesus return to this earth the second time? Can we be positive?

"Christ ... shall ... appear the second time." Hebrews 9:28. "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again." John 14:3.

Answer: Yes! In Matthew 26:64, Jesus testified under oath that He would come back to this earth again. Since the Scripture cannot be broken (John 10:35), this is proof positive. Believe it just as it reads. It is Christ's own personal guarantee.



2. In what manner will Jesus return the second time?

"While they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." Acts 1:9-11.

Answer: The Scriptures promise that Jesus will return to this earth in the same manner that He left at His ascension--in a visible, literal, bodily, personal manner.

Matthew 24:30 says, "They shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." He will come in the clouds literally, as a personal being with a body of flesh and bones (Luke 24:36-43, 50, 51), and His coming will be visible. Scripture is clear on these facts.

3. Will the second coming of Christ be visible to all men or only to a select group?

"Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him." Revelation 1:7. "For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Matthew 24:27.

Answer: Every man, woman, and child living in the world when Jesus returns will see Him at His second coming. The staggering threefold (Luke 9:26) brightness of His coming will stretch from horizon to horizon, and the atmosphere will be charged with brilliant glory like lightning. No one will be able to hide. Every living soul will be forced to face Christ. Christ left no loophole for doubt or misunderstanding.



Note: The secret rapture so commonly believed and taught today is not in the Bible. It is a human invention. Nor is the second coming a spiritual coming into the heart at conversion. It does not take place at a man's death, nor is it figurative--to be manifested by better world conditions. These theories are all of human origin. The second coming will be a literal, worldwide, visible, personal appearance of Christ in the clouds to bring this world to an end and to reward or punish all men and women.

4. Who will come with Jesus at His second coming, and why?

"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." Matthew 25:31.

Answer: All the angels of heaven will come with Jesus at His second coming. As the cloud nears the earth, Jesus will send His angels, and they will quickly gather together all of the righteous people in preparation for the trip back to heaven (Matthew 24:31).

5. What is the purpose of Jesus' second coming to this earth?

"And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Revelation 22:12. "I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." John 14:3. "And he shall send Jesus Christ ... Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things." Acts 3:20, 21.



Answer: Jesus is coming back to this earth to reward His people as He promised and to take them to the beautiful home He has prepared for them. He will restore to His people all of the joys and glories of Eden that Adam and Eve lost by sinning. His second coming will bring an end to this present age of evil.



6. What will happen to the righteous people when Jesus comes the second time?

"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven ... and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17. "We shall all be changed, ... and the dead shall be raised incorruptible. For ... this mortal must put on immortality." 1 Corinthians 15:51-53. "We look for ... the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his

glorious body." Philippians 3:20, 21.

Answer: The righteous dead will be raised from their graves, given perfect, immortal bodies like that of Christ, and caught up into the clouds to meet the Lord. Then the righteous living will also be given bodies like Christ and will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. And Jesus will take the righteous to heaven with Him. Note that Jesus does not touch the earth at His second coming. The saints meet Him "in the air." So God's people will ignore any report that Christ is in Baltimore, New Orleans, Los Angeles, etc. False christs will appear and do miracles on the earth (Matthew 24:23-27), but Jesus will remain in the clouds above the earth at His second coming.

7. What will happen to the wicked people when Jesus comes again?

"With the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked." Isaiah 11:4. "And the slain of the Lord shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth." Jeremiah 25:33.

Answer: The wicked will be slain by Jesus.



8. How will Christ's second coming affect the earth itself?

"And there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great." "And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found." Revelation 16:18, 20. "I beheld, and, lo, the fruitful place was a wilderness, and all the cities thereof were broken down at the presence of the Lord." Jeremiah 4:26. "The Lord maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste." "The land shall be utterly emptied."

Isaiah 24:1, 3.

Answer: The earth will be seized by a great earthquake at the coming of the Lord. This earthquake will be of such a devastating nature that it will leave the world in a state of total destruction.

9. Does the Bible give specific information regarding the nearness of Christ's second coming?

Answer: Yes, it does! And Jesus Himself said, "When ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors." Matthew 24:33. The Lord placed signs all along the way from His ascension to His second coming. They are listed below. Study them carefully.



A. The Destruction of Jerusalem

Prophecy: "There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." "Let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains." Matthew 24:2, 16.

Fulfillment: Jerusalem was destroyed in A.D. 70 by the Roman warrior Titus.

B. A Great Persecution, or Tribulation

Prophecy: "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world." Matthew 24:21.

Fulfillment: This prophecy points primarily to the long period of tribulation that took place during the Dark Ages and was instigated by the apostate church. It lasted more than 1,000 years. Over 50 million Christians were slain for their faith in this terrible tribulation period. One writer says the apostate church "has shed more innocent blood than any other institution that has ever existed among mankind." W.E.H. Lecky, *History of the Rise and Influence of the Spirit of Rationalism in Europe*, (Reprint; New York: Braziller, 1955) Vol. 2, pp. 40-45.

C. The Sun Turned into Darkness

Prophecy: "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened." Matthew 24:29.

Fulfillment: This was fulfilled by a day of supernatural darkness on May 19, 1780. It was not an eclipse. Timothy Dwight says, "The 19th of May, 1780, was a remarkable dark day. Candles were lighted in many houses; the birds were silent and disappeared, and the fowls retired to roost. ... A very general opinion prevailed, that the day of judgment was at hand." Quoted in *Connecticut Historical Collections*, compiled by John Warner Barber (2nd ed.; New Haven: Durrie & Peck and J.W. Barber, 1836) p. 403.

D. The Moon Turned into Blood

Prophecy: "The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come." Joel 2:31.

Fulfillment: The moon became as red as blood on the night of the "dark day," May 19, 1780. Milo Bostick in *Stone's History of Massachusetts* says, "The moon which was at its full, had the appearance of blood."

E. The Stars Fall from Heaven

Prophecy: "And the stars shall fall from heaven." Matthew 24:29.

Fulfillment: The great star shower took place on the night of November 13, 1833. It was so bright that a newspaper could be read on the street. One writer says, "For nearly four hours the sky was literally ablaze."* Men thought the end of the world had come. Look into this. It is most fascinating, and a sign of Christ's coming.

*Peter A. Millman, "The Falling of the Stars," *The Telescope*, 7 (May-June, 1940) 57.



F. Jesus Comes in the Clouds

Prophecy: "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." Matthew 24:30.

The great star shower took place on November 13, 1833.

Fulfillment: This is the next great event. Are you ready?



10. How may we know when we have reached the very last days of earth's history? Does the Bible clearly describe the world and its people in the last generation?

Answer: Yes, indeed it does. Look at the following specific signs of the last days. You will be amazed. And these are just a few of many, many positive signs that show we are in the closing days of earth's history.

A. Capital-labor troubles

"The hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord." "Be ... patient; ... for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh." James 5:4, 8.

Trouble between capital and labor is predicted for the last days. For fulfillment, consult your newspaper.

B. Wars and commotions

"But when ye shall hear of wars and commotions, be not terrified: for these things must first come to pass." Luke 21:9.

Wars and the ravages of civil distress are affecting thousands worldwide. Only Jesus' soon coming will bring an end to the pain and destruction of war.

C. Unrest, fear, and upheaval

"And there shall be ... upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; ... Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth." Luke 21:25, 26.

This sounds strangely like an editorial from a current newspaper--a perfect picture of the world today--and there is a reason: We are the people of the very last days of earth's history. The tense atmosphere present in the world today should not surprise us. Christ foretold it. It should convince us that His coming is near.



Fear and dread of the future are signs of Jesus' return.

D. Increase of knowledge

"Even to the time of the end ... knowledge shall be increased." Daniel 12:4.

The Information Age makes this one all too obvious. Even the most skeptical mind must admit that this sign is fulfilled. Knowledge is exploding in all directions. It is said that

80 percent of the world's total knowledge has been brought forth in the last decade

and that 90 percent of all the scientists who have ever lived are alive today.

E. Scoffers and religious skeptics who turn away from Bible truth

"There shall come in the last days scoffers." 2 Peter 3:3. "They will not endure sound doctrine; ... And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." 2 Timothy 4:3, 4.

It is not difficult to find scoffers today in fulfillment of this prophecy. Even religious leaders are denying the plain Bible teachings of Creation, the Flood, the divinity of Christ, the second coming of Christ, and many other vital Bible truths. Psychiatry and the traditions of pseudo-intellectuals have replaced the Bible in many religious circles. Secular educators teach our youth to scoff at the Bible record of these great truths and substitute evolution and other man-made, false teachings for the plain, simple facts of God's Holy Word. A recent poll discovered that only two percent of American student ministers believe in the literal second coming of Christ.



An epidemic of pornography, crime, illegal drugs, and moral degeneracy is threatening to overwhelm us.

F. Moral degeneracy--decline of spirituality

"In the last days ... men shall be lovers of their own selves, ... Without natural affection, ... incontinent, ... despisers of those that are good, ... Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." 2 Timothy 3:1-5.

America is in the midst of a tremendous crisis. People from all walks of life are saying so. Suicide is becoming a popular solution to human problems. Divorce rates are climbing wildly, with nearly one marriage in two ending in the divorce court. The current immoral generation--with its obsession with sex and filth, with its increasing church membership but decreasing true spirituality--is plain and positive fulfillment of God's Word. For a real shock, see how many of the last-day sins listed in 2 Timothy 3:1-5 you can find depicted in any issue of your Sunday newspaper. Nothing short of the coming of the Lord will stem the tide of evil that is now engulfing the world.

G. Craze for pleasure

"In the last days ... men shall be ... lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God." 2 Timothy 3:1-4.

The world has gone crazy for pleasure. Only a small percentage of the citizens of our large cities attend church services regularly, but they jam pleasure resorts by the thousands. America is spending billions each year for pleasure and only "peanuts" (in comparison) for God. Pleasure-mad Americans waste billions of hours in front of the TV set in direct fulfillment of 2 Timothy 3:4.



H. Increasing lawlessness, bloody crimes, and violence

"Iniquity shall abound." Matthew 24:12. "Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse." 2 Timothy 3:13. "The land is full of bloody crimes, and the city is full of violence." Ezekiel 7:23.

It is all too obvious that this sign is fulfilled. Crime and lawlessness are increasing with shocking rapidity. Most people in large cities do not answer their doorbells after dark. The wisest statesmen of our time are concerned for the survival of civilization because crime sweeps forward seemingly beyond control.

"In the last days men shall be lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God." 2 Timothy 3:1-4.

I. Destructive earthquakes, storms, and famines

"And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences." Luke 21:11.

Earthquakes, tornadoes, floods, etc. are increasing at an unprecedented rate. One-third of the people of the world are hungry, and thousands die daily of starvation. All these things are further proof that we live in earth's last hours.

J. A special message to the world in the very last days

"This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Matthew 24:14.

The great, solemn, last warning message of Christ's second coming is now being presented in more than 900 languages and dialects. Nearly 95 percent of the world's population has access to this message. Before Jesus' second coming, every person in the world will be warned of His soon return. People will be lost only if they reject the warning message.



Reliance on psychics,

channelers, and spiritualists is evidence that we are living in the last days.

K. A turning to spiritism

"In the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits." 1 Timothy 4:1. "They are the spirits of devils." Revelation 16:14.

People today, including a vast number of the heads of nations, seek counsel from psychics, channelers, and spiritualists. Spiritism has invaded the churches, as well, with the false teaching of the immortality of the soul. The Bible teaches that the dead are dead.

11. Just how near is the Lord's second coming?

"Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled." Matthew 24:32-34.



Answer: The Bible is very specific and plain on this point. The signs have almost all been fulfilled. We cannot know the exact day and hour of Christ's return (Matthew 24:36), but we can be confident that we are the people who will live to see Jesus return. God has promised to finish things very quickly now and cut the work short (Romans 9:28). Christ is coming back to this earth for His people very soon. Are you ready?



12. Satan is telling many falsehoods regarding the second coming of Christ and, with lying wonders and miracles, will deceive millions. How can I be certain I will not be deceived?

"They are the spirits of devils, working miracles." Revelation 16:14. "And shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." Matthew 24:24. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Isaiah 8:20.

Answer:

Satan has invented many false teachings about the second coming and is deceiving millions into believing that Christ has already come or that He will come in some non-biblical manner. But Christ has warned us of Satan's strategy, saying, "Take heed that no man deceive you." Matthew 24:4. He then exposes Satan's plans and falsehoods so we will be forewarned, and He reminds us, "Behold, I have told you before." Matthew 24:25. For example, Jesus stated specifically that He will not appear in the desert or come to the seance chambers (verse 26). There is no reason to be deceived if we learn what God's book teaches about Christ's second coming. The acid test is this: What does the Bible teach about it? People who know what the Bible says about the second coming will not be led astray by Satan. All others will be deceived.

13. How can I be certain to be ready when Jesus comes back?

"Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." John 6:37. "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God." John 1:12. "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts." Hebrews 8:10. "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Corinthians 15:57.

Answer: Jesus says, "Behold, I stand at the door [this door represents the human mind or heart], and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in." Revelation 3:20. Through the Holy Spirit and my conscience, Jesus knocks and asks to come into my heart so that He can change my life. If I unreservedly turn my life over to Him, He will erase all my sins of the past (Romans 3:25)





when my life is changed by Jesus.

will becomes a pleasure. It is so many doubt its reality. But it's true. My part is simply to give my life to Christ and let Him live within me. His part is to work the mighty miracle within me that changes my life and prepares me for His second coming. It is a free gift. I need only to accept it.

and give me the power to live a godly life (John 1:12). As a free gift, He bestows upon me His own righteous character so I can stand unafraid before a holy God. Then doing His simple that

14. Of what great danger does Christ solemnly warn?

"Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." Matthew 24:44. "And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares." Luke 21:34. "But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Matthew 24:37.

Answer: There is great danger in becoming so busy with the cares of this life or so entranced by the pleasures of sin that the coming of the Lord may slip up on us as the Flood did on the world in Noah's day, and we will be surprised, unprepared, and lost. This will be the experience of millions. How is it with you? Jesus is coming back very, very soon--in our present day. Are you ready? Nothing else matters.

15. I am planning to be ready when Jesus returns.

Answer:

Thought Questions

1. Isn't the great tribulation yet to come? (Matthew 24:21)

It is true that a terrible tribulation will cover the earth just before Jesus returns to deliver His people. Daniel describes it as "a time of trouble, such as never was." Daniel 12:1. In context, though, the "great tribulation" of Matthew 24:21 refers to the awful persecution of God's people during the Dark Ages. Millions were slain for their faith at that time.

2. Since the Lord is coming "as a thief in the night," how can anyone know anything about it? (1 Thessalonians 5:4)

The answer is found in 1 Thessalonians 5:2-4: "For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief." Notice, the day of the Lord comes as a thief to the unprepared, but not to those who are called "brethren."

3. When will Christ set up His kingdom upon the earth? (Revelation 21:2)

After the great 1,000-year period of Revelation 20. The 1,000-year period begins at the second coming of Christ, when Jesus takes the righteous from this earth to heaven to live and reign with Him "a thousand years." Revelation 20:4. At the close of the 1,000 years "the holy city, new Jerusalem" (Revelation 21:2)

comes down from heaven to the earth with all the saints (Zechariah 14:1, 4, 5) and the wicked dead of all ages are raised to life (Revelation 20:5). They surround the holy city to capture it (Revelation 20:9), and fire comes down from God out of heaven and devours them. This fire purifies the earth and burns up all traces of sin and sinners (2 Peter 3:10). Finally the fire goes out (Isaiah 47:14), leaving only ashes (Malachi 4:3). Then God creates a new earth (2 Peter 3:13; Isaiah 65:17; Revelation 21:1) and gives it to the righteous, and "God ... will dwell with them, ... and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God." Revelation 21:3. Perfect, holy, happy beings, restored once again to the perfect image of God, will at last be at home in a sinless, spotless world as God originally planned. Only the most foolish person would choose to miss this.

4. Why don't we hear more preaching and teaching today regarding Christ's second coming? (Titus 2:13)

The devil is responsible. He well knows that the second coming is the "blessed hope" (Titus 2:13) of the Christian, and that once understood, it changes the lives of men and women and leads them to take a personal, diligent, active part in spreading that good news to others so that Christ's coming may be hastened. This infuriates Satan, so he influences those who have "a form of godliness" (2 Timothy 3:5) but deny "the power thereof" to scoff, saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning." 2 Peter 3:3, 4. Those who deny, ignore, or make light of Christ's second advent (as a literal, soon-coming event) are specifically fulfilling Bible prophecy--and doing the devil a very great service.

5. But wasn't Jesus speaking of the secret rapture when He said in Luke 17:36, "One shall be taken, and the other left"? (Luke 17:36)

No. There is not the slightest indication that the event is secret. Jesus was describing Noah's flood and the destruction of Sodom. (See Luke 17:26-37.) He told how God spared Noah and Lot and destroyed the wicked. He says specifically that the flood and fire "destroyed them all." Verses 27, 29. Plainly, in each case, a few were taken to safety and the rest were destroyed. Then He added, "Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed." Verse 30. To illustrate, Jesus continued, "Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left." Verse 36. There is nothing secret about it. "Every eye shall see Him." Revelation 1:7. At His second coming, Christ publicly and openly takes the righteous up into the clouds (1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17) and slays the wicked (Isaiah 11:4; 2 Thessalonians 2:8). That's why Luke 17:37 speaks of the bodies of the wicked and mentions the eagles (or vultures) gathered around them. (See also Revelation 19:17, 18.) The wicked who are left behind at Christ's coming are left dead.

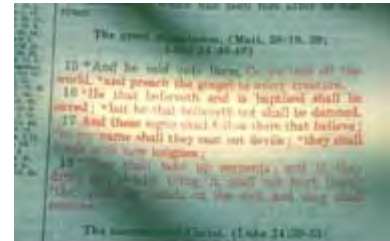
Purity And Power

Are you tired of hurting your loved ones and wounding your conscience? Do you live in constant regret for your past mistakes? Have you ever wished you could take a bath and come out clean inside and out? Then we have great news for you... you can! God has a plan that can totally wash all your sins away and supercharge your character - preposterous? Not at all! Christ says, "We are buried with him by baptism" (Romans 6:4). When you accept Christ, the old life dies and the Lord promises to forget all our sins! Not only that, He can help you overcome every sinful habit in your life. Did you know the cross is mentioned 28 times in the Bible, but baptism is mentioned 97 times? It must be pretty important then, and no wonder, because it signifies a new life with the haunting, sinful past buried and forgotten forever. Read the Bible's amazing facts on this incredible subject... you'll never be the same!

1. Is baptism really essential?

"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Mark 16:16.

Answer: Yes, indeed! How could any language or words make it plainer?



2. But the thief on the cross was not baptized, so why should I be?

"For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust." Psalms 103:14.

Answer: Neither did he restore what he had stolen, as the Lord specifically directs in Ezekiel 33:15. God holds us accountable for what we can do, but He also recognizes the limitations of "dust." He will not require a physical impossibility. Could the thief have come down from the cross, he immediately would have been baptized. This is the only example in the Bible of an exception to this rule. God wanted to make certain that no one would be presumptuous in refusing baptism.

3. There are many ordinances called baptism. Isn't any one of these acceptable, provided a person is sincere and earnest about it?

"One Lord, one faith, one baptism." Ephesians 4:5.

HOW MANY METHODS OF BAPTISM ARE BIBLICAL?

Triune Rose Petals
Immersion

Oil Water

Affusion No Water

Answer: No! There is only one true baptism. All other so-called baptisms are counterfeits.

Wine

Sprinkling

Note: The devil's "buffet" plan for baptism says, "Take your pick. The method of baptism doesn't matter. It is the spirit that counts." But the Bible says, "One Lord, one faith, one baptism." Ephesians 4:5. It also says, "Obey, I beseech thee, the voice of the Lord." Jeremiah 38:20.

Telephone

Mail

4. How was Jesus baptized?

Holy Spirit
Only

Immersion

"Jesus ... was baptized of John in Jordan. And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened." Mark 1:9, 10.

Salt

Not Required



Answer: By immersion! Notice that after the ordinance, He came "up out of the water." Jesus was baptized "in Jordan," not on the bank, as many

Only ONE method of baptism is biblical, not 14.

believe. John always found a place to baptize where "there was much water" (John 3:23), so it would be deep enough. The Bible commands us to follow Jesus' example (1 Peter 2:21). Any baptism other than immersion breaks this command. The word "baptism" comes from the Greek word "baptizo." It means "to dip under or submerge or immerse." There are eight different Greek words in the New Testament used to describe the application of liquids. But among these various words--meaning to sprinkle, to pour, or to immerse--only the one meaning "to immerse" (baptizo) is used to describe baptism.

5. But didn't the disciples or the apostles change the method of baptism?

"They went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip." Acts 8:38, 39.



Answer: No! Please notice that Philip, a leader in the early church, baptized the treasurer of Ethiopia by immersion precisely as John baptized Jesus. And the apostle Paul warned that any who teach contrary to what Jesus taught should be "accursed." Galatians 1:8. No person--no matter how godly--is authorized to change God's words and commands.



6. Since Jesus and the disciples baptized by immersion, who introduced these other so-called baptisms which exist today?

"In vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Matthew 15:9.

Answer: Misguided men introduced other forms of baptism in direct contradiction of God's Word. Jesus says, "Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?" "Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition." Matthew 15:3, 6. Worship that follows human teaching is "vain." Just think of it! The sacred ordinance of baptism has been changed and made of little consequence

during truth's hazardous journey through the centuries. No wonder the Bible exhorts us to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." Jude 3.

7. What must a person do to prepare for baptism?

Answer:

A. Learn God's requirements. "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them ... Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Matthew 28:19, 20.

B. Believe the truth of God's Word. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Mark 16:16.

C. Repent of and turn away from his sins and experience conversion. "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins." Acts 2:38. "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out." Acts 3:19.



8. What is the meaning of baptism?

"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." Romans 6:4-6.

Answer: It represents the believer following Christ into His death, burial, and resurrection. The symbolism is perfect and filled with deep meaning. In baptism the eyes are closed, hands are folded, and breath is suspended as in death. Then comes burial in the water and resurrection from the watery grave to a new life in Christ. When raised from the water, the eyes open and the candidate begins breathing again and mingles with friends--a complete likeness of resurrection. The great difference between Christianity and every other religion is simply the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. In these three acts is made possible all that God desires to do for us. To keep these three vital acts alive in the minds of Christians until the end of time, the Lord instituted baptism by immersion as a memorial. There is no symbolism of death, burial, and resurrection in other forms of baptism. Only immersion fulfills the meaning of Romans 6:4-6.



Death to
sin.

Old life
buried in
the waters.

Raised a
new
person in
Christ.

9. But a person shouldn't be baptized until he is certain he will never slip and fall, should he?

"If there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not." 2 Corinthians 8:12.

Answer: This is like saying a baby should never try to walk until certain that he will never slip and fall. A Christian is a newborn "babe" in Christ. This is why the experience of conversion is called "the new birth." The ugly, sinful past no longer exists for a child of



God. A person's sinful past is forgiven and forgotten by God at conversion. And baptism symbolizes the burial of that old life. We begin the Christian life as babies, rather than adults, and God judges us on our attitude and the trend of our life, rather than on a few slips and falls that we may experience as immature Christians.



10. Why is baptism an urgent matter for a converted sinner?

"And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." Acts 22:16.

Answer:

Baptism is a public testimony that the repentant sinner has been forgiven and cleansed by Jesus (1 John 1:9) and that his sinful, traitorous past is behind him. No incriminating evidence against a person exists after conversion.

Men and women today stagger and struggle along under heavy loads of guilt and sin. This contamination and burden is so devastating to the human personality that people will go to almost any length to achieve a sense of forgiveness and cleansing. Many have been driven to the psychiatrist's couch, where human beings earnestly attempt to assist other human beings. But the real help is found in coming to Christ, who says to all who approach Him, "I will; be thou clean." Matthew 8:3. Not only does He cleanse, but He crucifies the old nature of sin within you. Burial in the water of baptism symbolizes the burial of the ugly corpse of the old sinful life. The ordinance is of utmost importance because it publicly represents the most stupendous provisions ever made for people.

11. How long does it take to prepare for baptism?

Answer: That depends on the person. Some grasp things more quickly than others. But in most cases, preparation can be made in short order. Here are some Bible examples:

A. Ethiopian treasurer (Acts 8:26-39)--baptized same day he heard truth.

B. Philippian jailer and his family (Acts 16:23-34)--baptized same night they heard truth.

C. Saul of Tarsus (Acts 9:1-18)--baptized three days after Jesus spoke to him on the road to Damascus.

D. Cornelius (Acts 10:1-48)--baptized same day he heard truth.



At conversion, God:

1. Forgives and forgets our past.
2. Miraculously transforms us into new spiritual beings.
3. Adopts us as His own sons and daughters.

Certainly no truly converted person would want to delay baptism, which publicly pays tribute to Jesus for working all these miracles.



12. How does God feel about the baptism of a converted person?

Answer: He said at His Son's baptism, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Matthew 3:17. So, today, God is well pleased when a person is baptized by immersion in harmony with His command. Those who love the Lord will always strive to please Him (1 John 3:22; 1 Thessalonians 4:1). Is God pleased with your baptism?

13. Can a person experience true baptism without becoming a member of God's church?

Answer: No! God clearly outlines this. Notice the steps:

A. All are called into one body. "Ye are called in one body." Colossians 3:15.

B. The church is the body. "He is the head of the body, the church." Colossians 1:18.

C. We enter that body by baptism. "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body." 1 Corinthians 12:13.

D. God's converted people are added to the church. "The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." Acts 2:47.



14. Notice four things that baptism does not do:

Answer:

First: Baptism itself does not change the heart of man; it is a symbol of the change that has taken place. A man might be baptized without faith, without repentance, and without a new heart. He might even be immersed after the example of Jesus, but he would simply come up a wet sinner instead of a dry one--still without faith, without repentance, without a new heart. Baptism cannot make a new person.



Neither can it change or regenerate anyone. It is the transforming power of the Holy Spirit that changes the heart in conversion. One must be born of the Spirit as well as born of water.

Second: Baptism does not necessarily make a person feel better. It doesn't necessarily change his feelings. Some people are disappointed because they do not feel different after baptism. Salvation is a matter not of feeling, but of faith and obedience.

Third: Baptism does not remove temptations. The devil is not through with a person when he is baptized. But Jesus is the helper of every believer. He says, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Hebrews 13:5. No temptation will come without a way of escape. This is the promise of Scripture (1 Corinthians 10:13).

Fourth: Baptism does not guarantee salvation. It is not a magical rite. Salvation comes only as a free gift from Jesus Christ when one experiences the new birth. Baptism is a symbol of true conversion, and unless conversion precedes baptism, the ceremony is meaningless.

15. Jesus asks you to be baptized by immersion as a symbol that your sins have been washed away. Would you like to plan for this sacred ordinance soon?

Answer:

Thought Questions

1. Is it ever proper to be baptized more than once? (Acts 19:5)

Yes, Acts 19:1-5 shows that the Bible endorses rebaptism in certain cases.

2. Should infants be baptized? (Acts 2:38)

No! No one should be baptized unless he (1) knows the truth of God, (2) believes it, (3) has repented, and (4) has experienced conversion. No baby could possibly qualify here. No one has a right to baptize a baby. In fact, to do so completely disregards God's direct commands regarding baptism. Misguided men in the church years ago decreed that unbaptized babies are lost, but this is scripturally untrue. It defames God as an unjust tyrant who would destroy innocent infants who died, simply because unworthy parents failed to have baptism administered. Such a teaching is tragic beyond words. It is bad enough to sprinkle babies and call it baptism. It is infinitely worse to hold to the unscriptural concept that babies are lost eternally because careless parents failed to do their duty.

3. Isn't baptism just a matter of personal opinion? (John 3:5)

Yes, but not your opinion or mine. It's Christ's opinion that matters. Christ says baptism is important to Him. "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." John 3:5. To refuse baptism is to refuse the direct counsel of God (Luke 7:29, 30).

4. How old should one be to qualify for baptism? (John 3:5)

Old enough to understand the difference between wrongdoing and right-doing, and to make an intelligent decision to surrender to Christ and follow Him. Many children are ready for baptism at 9 or 10 years of age, some at 7 or 8. And some are not ready at 12 or 13. No age level is specified in the Bible, because children have different levels of experience and understanding. Some are ready for baptism earlier than others.

5. Can baptism in and of itself save you? (Hebrews 5:9)

No! But refusing baptism can cause one to be lost, because it means disobedience. Salvation is for "all them that obey Him." Hebrews 5:9.

6. Isn't baptism of the Holy Spirit all that is necessary? (Acts 10:47)

No! The Bible shows in Acts 10:44-48 that water baptism is necessary, even when the baptism of the Holy Spirit has preceded it.

7. Shouldn't we be baptized in Jesus' name only? (Matthew 28:19)

In Matthew 28:19, we are told to be baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. These are Jesus' words, and we consider them very sacred. In the book of Acts, we find the new believers were baptized in the name of Jesus. Identifying Jesus as the Christ and Messiah was present truth for the people of that day; therefore, it was crucial for them to be baptized in His name. We believe it is very important for today as well. Combining the testimonies of Matthew with the book of Acts, we baptize people in the name of the Father, and the Son, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost. Following this method prevents exalting one Scripture above another.

8. There is one sin I do not wish to surrender. Should I be baptized? (Luke 3:7)

No! Obviously you are not ready to be buried in the baptismal waters, because the old life of sin is not dead. It would be a criminal act for a funeral director to bury someone who is not dead and equally serious for a minister to baptize one whose old sinful life is not dead.

9. Can you explain Galatians 3:27? (Galatians 3:27)

Here God compares baptism to marriage. The person who is baptized thus publicly acknowledges that he has taken Christ's name (Christian), just as a bride publicly announces the taking of her husband's name at the time of the wedding. In baptism, as with marriage, several rules always apply:

A. It should never be entered into unless true love rules supreme.

B. It should never be entered into unless the candidate has determined to be faithful through thick and thin.

- C. It should be approached with full understanding.
- D. It should not be unduly delayed.

Are the Dead really Dead?

Death just might be one of the most misunderstood subjects today. To many it is enshrouded in mystery and evokes dreaded feelings of fear, uncertainty, and even hopelessness. Others believe that their deceased loved ones are not dead at all, but instead live with them or in other realms! Still others are confused about the relationship between the body, spirit, and soul. But does it really matter what you believe? Yes... absolutely! Because what you believe about the dead will have a profound impact on what happens to you in the end-times. There's no room for guessing, so this Study Guide will give you exactly what God says on this subject. Get ready for a real eye-opener!

1. How did we get here in the first place?

"And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." Genesis 2:7.

Answer: God made us from dust in the beginning.



2. What happens when a person dies?

"Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." Ecclesiastes 12:7.

Answer: The body turns to dust again, and the spirit goes back to God, who gave it. The spirit of every person who dies--whether righteous or wicked--returns to God at death.

3. What is the "spirit" that returns to God at death?

"The body without the spirit ["breath," see margin] is dead." James 2:26. "The spirit of God ["the breath which God gave him," see margin] is in my nostrils." Job 27:3.

Answer: The spirit that returns to God at death is the breath of life. Nowhere in all of God's book does the "spirit" have any life, wisdom, or feeling after a person dies. It is the "breath of life" and nothing more.



4. What is a "soul"?

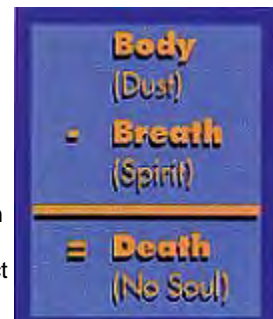
"And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." Genesis 2:7.

Answer: A soul is a living being. A soul is always a combination of two things: *body plus breath*. A soul cannot exist unless body and breath are combined. God's Word teaches that we are souls.

5. Do souls die?

"The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Ezekiel 18:20. "Every living soul died in the sea." Revelation 16:3.

Answer: According to God's Word, souls do die! We are souls, and souls die. Man is mortal (Job 4:17). Only God is immortal (1 Timothy 6:15, 16). The concept of an undying, immortal soul goes against the Bible, which teaches that souls are subject





to death.

6. Do good people go to heaven when they die?

"All that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth." John 5:28, 29. "David ... is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day." "For David is not ascended into the heavens." Acts 2:29, 34. "If I wait, the grave is mine house." Job 17:13.

Answer: No, people do not go either to heaven or hell at death. They go to their graves to await the resurrection day.

7. How much does one know or comprehend after death?

"The living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the sun." "There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest." Ecclesiastes 9:5, 6, 10. "The dead praise not the Lord." Psalms 115:17.



Answer: God says that the dead know absolutely nothing!

King David will be saved in God's kingdom. However, he is in his grave now, where he awaits the resurrection.



8. But can't the dead communicate with the living, and aren't they aware of what the living are doing?

"So man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep." "His sons come to honour, and he knoweth it not; and they are brought low, but he perceiveth it not of them." Job 14:12, 21. "Neither have they any more a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the sun." Ecclesiastes 9:6.

Answer: No, the dead cannot contact the living, nor do they know what the living are doing. They are dead. Their thoughts have perished (Psalms 146:4).

9. Jesus called the unconscious state of the dead "sleep" in John 11:11-14. How long will they sleep?

"So man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens be no more." Job 14:12. "The day of the Lord will come ... in the which the heavens shall pass away." 2 Peter 3:10.



Answer: The dead will sleep until the great day of the Lord at the end of the world. In death, humans are totally unconscious with no activity or knowledge of any kind.

10. What happens to the righteous dead at the second coming of Christ?

"Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according

as his work shall be." Revelation 22:12. "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, ... and the dead in Christ shall rise ... and so shall we ever be with the Lord." 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17. "We shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, ... and the dead shall be raised incorruptible. ... For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." 1 Corinthians 15:51-53.

Answer: They will be rewarded. They will be raised, given immortal bodies, and caught up to meet the Lord in the air. There would be no purpose in a resurrection if people were taken to heaven at death.

11. What was the devil's first lie?

"And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die." Genesis 3:4. "That old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan." Revelation 12:9.

Answer: Satan told Eve that sin would not bring death. "Ye shall not surely die," he said.



12. Why did the devil lie to Eve about death? Could this subject be more important than many think?

Answer: It is one of the cornerstones of the devil's kingdom. He has worked powerful miracles down through the ages through people who claim to receive their power from the spirits of the dead. (Examples: Magicians of Egypt--Exodus 7:11; Woman of Endor--1 Samuel 28:3-25; Sorcerers--Daniel 2:2; A certain damsel--Acts 16:16-18.)

A Solemn Warning

In the end-time Satan will again use sorcery--as he did in Daniel's day--to deceive the world (Revelation 18:23). Sorcery is a supernatural agency that claims to receive its power and wisdom from the spirits of the dead.

Posing as Jesus' Disciples

Posing as godly loved ones who have died, saintly clergymen who are now dead, Bible prophets, or even the apostles or disciples of Christ (2 Corinthians 11:13), Satan and his angels will deceive billions. Those who believe the dead are alive, in any form, will most assuredly be deceived.

13. Do devils really work miracles?

"They are the spirits of devils, working miracles." Revelation 16:14. "For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." Matthew 24:24.

Answer: Yes, indeed! Devils work incredibly convincing miracles (Revelation 13:13, 14). Satan and his angels will appear as angels of light (2 Corinthians 11:14) and, even more shocking, as Christ Himself (Matthew 24:23, 24). The



universal feeling will be that Christ and His angels are leading out in a fantastic worldwide revival. The entire emphasis will seem so spiritual and be so supernatural that only God's elect will not be deceived.

14. Why will God's people not be deceived?

"They received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so." Acts 17:11. "If they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Isaiah 8:20.

Answer: God's people will know from their earnest study of His book that the

dead are dead, not alive. Spirits of the dead do not exist. Therefore, God's people will reject all miracle workers and teachers who claim to receive special "light" or work miracles by contacting the spirits of the dead. And God's people will likewise reject as dangerous and false all teachings that claim the dead are alive in any form, anywhere.

15. Back in Moses' day, what did God command should be done to people who taught that the dead were alive?

"A man also or woman that hath a familiar spirit, or that is a wizard, shall surely be put to death: they shall stone them with stones." Leviticus 20:27.

Answer: God insisted that wizards and others with "familiar spirits" (who claimed to be able to contact the dead) should be stoned to death. This shows how God regards the false teaching that the dead are alive.



16. Will the righteous people who are raised in the resurrection ever die again?

"They which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, ... Neither can they die any more." Luke 20:35, 36. "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away." Revelation 21:4.

into God's new kingdom.

Answer: No! Death, sorrow, crying, and tragedy will never enter

17. Belief in reincarnation is expanding rapidly today. Is this teaching biblical?

"The living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing. ... Neither have they any more a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the sun." Ecclesiastes 9:5, 6.



Answer: Almost half the people on earth believe in reincarnation--a teaching that the soul never dies but is instead continually reborn in a different kind of body with each succeeding generation. This teaching, however, is contrary to Scripture.

The Bible Says

After death a person: returns to dust (Psalms 104:29), knows nothing (Ecclesiastes 9:5), possesses no mental powers (Psalms 146:4), has nothing to do with anything on earth (Ecclesiastes 9:6), does not live (2 Kings 20:1), waits in the grave (Job 17:13), and continues not (Job 14:1, 2).

Satan's Invention

We learned in questions 11 and 12 that Satan invented the teaching that the dead are alive. Reincarnation, channeling, communication with spirits, spirit worship, and the "undying soul" are all inventions of Satan, with one aim--to convince people that when you die you are not really dead. When people believe that the dead are alive, "spirits of devils, working miracles" (Revelation 16:14) and posing as spirits of the dead will be able to deceive and lead them astray virtually 100 percent of the time (Matthew 24:24).



18. I am thankful for the Bible, which tells us the truth on this sensitive subject of death.

Answer:

Thought Questions

1. Didn't the thief on the cross go to paradise with Christ the day He died? (Luke 23:43)

No. In fact, on Sunday morning Jesus said to Mary, "I am not yet ascended to my Father." John 20:17. This shows that Christ did not go to heaven at death. Also note that the punctuation of the Bible is not inspired, but was added by men. The comma in Luke 23:43 should be placed after the words "to day" rather than before, so the passage should read, "Verily I say unto thee to day, shalt thou be with me in paradise." Or, "I'm telling you today--when it seems that I can save no one, when I myself am being crucified as a criminal--I give you the assurance today that you will be with me in paradise." Christ's kingdom is set up at His second coming (Matthew 25:31), and all the righteous of all ages will enter it at that time (1 Thessalonians 4:15-17) and not at death.

2. Doesn't the Bible speak of the "undying," "immortal" soul? (1 Timothy 1:17)

No, the undying, immortal soul is not mentioned in the Bible. The word "immortal" is found only once in the Bible, and it is in reference to God (1 Timothy 1:17).

3. At death the body returns to dust and the spirit (or breath) returns to God. But where does the soul go? (Ecclesiastes 12:7)

It goes nowhere. Instead, it simply ceases to exist. Two things must be combined to make a soul: *body and breath*. When the breath departs, the soul ceases to exist because it is a combination of two things. When you turn off a light, where does the light go? It doesn't go anywhere. It just ceases to exist. Two things must combine to make a light: *a bulb and electricity*. Without the combination, a light is impossible. So with the soul; unless body and breath are combined, there can be no soul. There is no such thing as a disembodied soul.

4. Does the word "soul" ever mean anything other than a living being? (Psalms 139:14)

Yes, it may mean also (1) life itself, or (2) the mind, or intellect. No matter which meaning is intended, the soul is still a combination of two things (body and breath), and it ceases to exist at death.

5. Can you explain John 11:26, which says, "And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die"? (John 11:26)

This refers not to the first death, which all people die (Hebrews 9:27), but to the second death, which only the wicked die and from which there is no resurrection (Revelation 2:11; 21:8).

6. Matthew 10:28 says, "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul." Doesn't this prove that the soul is undying? (Matthew 10:28)

No, it proves the opposite. The last half of the same verse proves that souls do die. It says, "But rather fear him which is *able to destroy both soul and body in hell*." The word "soul" here means life and refers to eternal life, which is a gift (Romans 6:23) that will be given to the righteous at the last day (John 6:54). No one can take away the eternal life that God bestows. (See also Luke 12:4, 5.)

7. Doesn't 1 Peter 4:6 say the gospel was preached to dead people? (1 Peter 4:6)

No, it says the gospel "was" preached to those who "are" dead. They are dead now, but the gospel "was" preached to them while they were yet living.

8. What about the souls crying out from under the altar in Revelation 6:9, 10? Doesn't this show that souls do not die? (Revelation 6:9)

No. This cry was figurative, as was the cry of Abel's blood (Genesis 4:10). The word "soul" here means people (or living beings) who had been slain for their faith. Surely no one believes that souls who die literally lie under the altar, nor do people believe that the righteous beg God to punish their enemies. Rather, the righteous beg for mercy for their enemies, as Christ did on the cross (Luke 23:34).

9. Doesn't the Bible say Christ went and preached to lost souls in hell between His crucifixion and resurrection? (1 Peter 3:18)

No, the Bible passage in question is 1 Peter 3:18-20. The preaching was done "by the Spirit" (verse 18) in Noah's day--to people who were then living (verses 19, 20). The "spirits in prison" refers to people whose lives were in bondage to Satan. (See Psalms 142:7; Isaiah 42:6, 7; 61:1; and Luke 4:18.)

Is The Devil in charge of Hell?

Well? Does God really keep the devil on His payroll - is he the chief superintendent of hell measuring out the punishment of the lost? Nearly the entire world holds a very unbiblical view about hell, and you owe it to yourself to know what the Bible really says about it. Don't be fooled, because what you think about hell certainly affects what you think about God's character! Take a few moments to get the amazing facts you need to know today!

1. How many lost souls are being punished in hell today?

"The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished." 2 Peter 2:9.

Answer: There is not one single soul in hellfire today. The Bible says that God reserves, or holds back, the wicked until the day of judgment to be punished.



2. When will sinners be cast into hellfire?

"So shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; And shall cast them into a furnace of fire." Matthew 13:40-42. "The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." John 12:48.

Answer: Sinners will be cast into hellfire at the great judgment day at the end of the world--not when they die. God would not punish a person in fire until his case was tried and decided in court at the end of the world. Nor would God burn a murderer who died 5,000 years ago 5,000 years longer than one who dies and deserves punishment for the same sin today.

3. Where are sinners (who have died) now?

"The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." John 5:28, 29. "The wicked is reserved to the day of destruction." "Yet shall he be brought to the grave, and shall remain in the tomb." Job 21:30, 32.



Answer: The Bible is specific. Both the wicked and the righteous who

have died are in their graves "sleeping" until the resurrection day.



4. What is the end result of sin?

"The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Romans 6:23. "Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." James 1:15. "God ... gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16.

Answer: The wages (or punishment) for sin is death, not everlasting life in hellfire. The wicked "perish," or receive "death." The righteous receive "everlasting life."

5. What will happen to the wicked in hellfire?

"But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death." Revelation 21:8.



Answer: The wicked die the second death in hellfire. If the wicked lived forever being tortured in hell, they would be immortal. But this is impossible, because the Bible says God "only hath immortality." 1 Timothy 6:16. When Adam and Eve were driven from the Garden of Eden, an angel was posted to guard the tree of life so that sinners would not eat of the tree and "live for ever." Genesis 3:22-24. The teaching that sinners are immortal in hell originated with Satan and is completely untrue. God prevented this when sin entered this earth by guarding the tree of life.

Bible Clear--Wicked Obliterated

The Bible says the wicked suffer "death" (Romans 6:23), will suffer "destruction" (Job 21:30), "shall perish" (Psalms 37:20), will "burn" up (Malachi 4:1), "shall be destroyed together" (Psalms 37:38), will "consume away" (Psalms 37:20), "shall be cut off" (Psalms 37:9), "shall be slain" (Psalms 62:3). God will "destroy" them (Psalms 145:20), and "fire shall devour them" (Psalms 21:9). Note that all of these references make it clear that the wicked die and are destroyed. They do not live forever in misery.



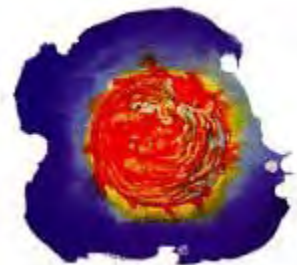
6. When and how will hellfire be kindled?

"So shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of man ... shall cast them into a furnace of fire." Matthew 13:40-42. "They went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them." Revelation 20:9. "The righteous shall be recompensed in the earth: much more the wicked and the sinner." Proverbs 11:31.

Answer: At the end of the world, God Himself will kindle hellfire. As the holy city comes down from God out of heaven (Revelation 21:2), the wicked attempt to capture it. At that time, God will rain down fire from heaven upon the earth, and it will devour the wicked. This fire is Bible hellfire.

7. How big and how hot will hellfire be?

"The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." 2 Peter 3:10.



Answer: Hellfire will be just as big as this earth because it will be the earth on fire. This fire will be so hot as to melt the earth and burn up all "the works that are therein." The atmospheric heavens will explode and "pass away with a great noise."



8. How long will the wicked suffer in the fire?

"And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Revelation 22:12. "And then he shall reward every man according to his works." Matthew 16:27. "That servant, which knew his lord's will, and ... neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes." Luke 12:47, 48.

Answer: The Bible does not tell how long the wicked will be punished before receiving death in the fire. God does specifically state, however, that all will be punished according to their deeds. This means some will receive greater punishment than others, based upon their works.

9. Will the fire eventually go out?

"Behold, they shall be as stubble; the fire shall burn them; they shall not deliver themselves from the power of the flame: there shall not be a coal to warm at, nor fire to sit before it." Isaiah 47:14. "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth." "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." Revelation 21:1, 4.



Answer: Yes, indeed, the Bible specifically teaches that hellfire will go out and that there will not be left "a coal to warm at, nor fire to sit before it." The Bible also teaches that in God's new kingdom all "former things" will be passed away. Hell, being one of the former things, is included, so we have God's promise that it will be abolished.

Is God a Torturer?

If God tortured His enemies in a fiery horror chamber throughout eternity, He would be more vicious and heartless than men have ever been in the worst of war atrocities. An eternal hell of torment would be hell for God also, who loves even the vilest sinner.



10. What will be left when the fire goes out?

"For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch." "And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts." Malachi 4:1, 3.

Answer: Notice the verse does not say the wicked will burn like asbestos, as many today believe, but rather like stubble, which will be burned up. The little word "up" denotes completion. Nothing but ashes will be left when the fire goes out. In Psalms 37:10, 20, the Bible says the wicked will go up in smoke and be

completely destroyed.

11. Will the wicked enter hell in bodily form and be destroyed both soul and body?

"It is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell." Matthew 5:30. "Rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." Matthew 10:28. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Ezekiel 18:20.



Answer: Yes. Real, live people enter hell in bodily form and are destroyed both soul and body. The fire from God out of heaven will fall upon real people and blot them out of existence.



12. Will the devil be in charge of hellfire?

"And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire." Revelation 20:10. "I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee. ... And never shall thou be any more." Ezekiel 28:18, 19.

Answer: Absolutely not! The devil will be cast into the fire, and it will turn him into ashes.

13. Does the word "hell" as used in the Bible always refer to a place of burning or punishment?

Answer: No, the word "hell" is used 54 times in the Bible, and in only 12 cases does it refer to "a place of burning."

The word "hell" is translated from several different words with various meanings, as indicated below:

IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

31 times from "Sheol," which means "the grave."

IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

10 times from "Hades," which means "the grave."

12 times from "Gehenna," which means "the place of burning."

1 time from "Tartarus," which means "a place of darkness."

54 TIMES TOTAL

Note: The Greek word "Gehenna" (mentioned above) is a transliteration of the Hebrew "Ge-Hinnom," which means the "Valley of Hinnom." This valley, which lies immediately south and west of Jerusalem, was a place where dead animals, garbage, and other refuse were dumped. Fire burned constantly, as it does at modern sanitation dump sites. The Bible uses "Gehenna" or the "Valley of Hinnom" as a symbol of the fire that will destroy the lost at the end of time. The fire of Gehenna was not unending. Otherwise it would be still burning southwest of Jerusalem today. Neither will the fire of hell be unending.



14. What is God's real purpose in hellfire?

"Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Matthew 25:41. "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." Revelation 20:15. "For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be." "The enemies of the Lord ... shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away." Psalms 37:10, 20.

Fire smoldered constantly in the "Valley of Hinnom".

Answer: God's purpose is that hell will destroy the devil and all sin and sinners and make the world safe for eternity. One sinner, if left on this planet, would be a deadly virus forever threatening the universe. It is God's plan to isolate sin and blot it out of existence for all time.

Eternal Hell Would Perpetuate Sin

An eternal hell of torment would perpetuate sin and make its eradication impossible. An eternal hell of torment is not part of God's great plan at all. Such a horrible theory is slander against the holy name of a loving God. The devil delights to see our loving Creator pictured as such a monstrous tyrant, and he alone can benefit from such teachings.

Eternal Hell a Man-made Theory

The "eternal hell of torment" theory originated not from the Bible, but from misguided people who were (perhaps inadvertently) led of the devil. And, incidentally, no one will be in heaven because he feared hell.

People are saved because they love and obey Christ.

15. Isn't the work of destroying sinners foreign to God's nature?

"As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die?" Ezekiel 33:11. "For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." Luke 9:56. "For the Lord shall rise up ... that he may do his work, his strange work; and bring to pass his act, his strange act." Isaiah 28:21.

Answer: Yes, the work of God has always been to save rather than destroy. The work of destroying the wicked in hellfire is so foreign to God's nature that the Bible calls it His "strange act." God's great heart will ache at the destruction of the wicked. Oh, how diligently He works to save every soul! But if one spurns His love and clings to sin, God will have no choice but to destroy the sinner with his sin when He rids the universe of that horrible, malignant growth called "sin" in the fires of the last day.



16. What are God's post-hell plans for the earth and His people?

"He will make an utter end: affliction shall not rise up the second time." Nahum 1:9. "For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind." Isaiah 65:17. "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain." Revelation 21:3, 4.

Answer: After hellfire goes out, God will create a new earth and restore it to His people--with all the beauties and glories of Eden before sin entered. The horrors of sin and the past will be forgotten. Pain, death, tragedy, woe, tears, sickness, disappointment, sorrow, and all sin will be banished forever.

Sin Will Not Rise Again

God promises that sin will never rise again. His people will be filled with perfect peace, love, joy, and contentment. Their lives of complete happiness will be far more glorious and thrilling than mere words could ever describe. The real tragedy of hell is in missing heaven. A person who fails to enter this magnificent kingdom has made the saddest choice of a lifetime.

17. I am thankful to learn that God does not punish the wicked throughout eternity in hellfire.

Answer:

Thought Questions

1. Doesn't the Bible speak of "eternal torment"? (Jude 1:7)

No, the phrase "eternal torment" does not appear in the Bible.

2. Then why does the Bible say that the wicked will be destroyed with unquenchable fire? (Jeremiah 17:27)

Unquenchable fire is fire that cannot be put out, but which goes out when it has turned everything to ashes. Jeremiah 17:27 says Jerusalem was to be destroyed with unquenchable fire, and in 2 Chronicles 36:19-21

the Bible says this fire burned the city "to fulfill the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah" and left it desolate. Yet we know this fire went out, because Jerusalem is not burning today.

3. Doesn't Matthew 25:46 say the wicked will receive "everlasting punishment"? (Matthew 25:46)

Notice the word is *punishment*, not *punishing*. Punishing would be continuous, while punishment is one act. The punishment of the wicked is *death*, and this death is everlasting.

4. Can you explain Matthew 10:28: "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul"? (Matthew 10:28)

The word "soul" has three meanings in the Bible: (1) a living being—Genesis 2:7, (2) the mind—Psalms 139:14, and (3) life—1 Samuel 18:1, which here refers to eternal life that God guarantees all who reach His kingdom. No one can take this away. The last part of Matthew 10:28 says both soul and body will be destroyed in hell.

5. Matthew 25:41 speaks of "everlasting fire" for the wicked. Does it go out? (2 Peter 2:6)

Yes, according to the Bible, it does. We must let the Bible explain itself. Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed with everlasting, or eternal, fire (Jude 7), and that fire turned them "into ashes" as a warning to "those that after should live ungodly." 2 Peter 2:6. These cities are not burning today. The fire went out after everything was burned up. Likewise, everlasting fire will go out after it has turned the wicked to ashes (Malachi 4:3). The effects of the fire are everlasting, but not the burning itself.

6. Doesn't the story of the rich man and Lazarus in Luke 16:19-31 teach an eternal hell of torment? (Luke 16:19)

No, indeed! It is simply a parable used to emphasize a point. Many facts make it clear that this is a parable. A few are as follows:

- A.** Abraham's bosom is not heaven (Hebrews 11:8-10, 16).
- B.** People in hell can't talk to those in heaven (Isaiah 65:17).
- C.** The dead are in their graves (Job 17:13; John 5:28, 29). The rich man was in bodily form with eyes, a tongue, etc., yet we know that the body does not go to hell at death. It is very obvious that the body remains in the grave, as the Bible says.
- D.** Men are rewarded at Christ's second coming, not at death (Revelation 22:11, 12).
- E.** The lost are punished in hell at the end of the world, not when they die (Matthew 13:40-42). The point of the story is found in verse 31 of Luke 16. Parables cannot be taken literally. If we took parables literally, then we must believe that trees talk! (See this parable in Judges 9:8-15.)

7. But the Bible speaks of the wicked being tormented "forever," doesn't it? (Revelation 14:11)

The term "for ever," as used in the Bible, means simply a period of time, limited or unlimited. It is used 56 times in the Bible in connection with things that have already ended. (To check in a concordance, look up the word "ever.") It is like the word "tall," which means something different in describing men, trees, or mountains. In Jonah 2:6, "for ever" means "three days and nights." (See also Jonah 1:17.) In Deuteronomy 23:3, this means "10 generations." In the case of man, this means "as long as he lives" or "until death." (See 1 Samuel 1:22, 28; Exodus 21:6; Psalms 48:14.) So the wicked will burn in the fire as long as they live, or until death. This fiery punishment for sin will vary according to the degree of sins for each individual, but after the punishment, the fire will go out. The teaching of eternal torment has done more to drive people to atheism and insanity than any other invention of the devil. It is slander upon the loving character of a tender, gracious heavenly Father and has done untold harm to the Christian cause.

A Thousand Years of Peace

You can be certain that it's coming - an incredible millennium that will be ushered in after Christ's return. And the devil doesn't want you to know about his 1,000-year prison sentence because it reveals his true character. In fact, Satan has concocted a counterfeit message on the millennium to trick you! It's an awesome, fascinating study that will utterly shake everything you've ever known! Now you can have the Bible's amazing truths about the coming 1,000-year reign.

1. What event begins this 1,000-year period?

"These came to life again and reigned with Christ for a thousand years." Revelation 20:4, NEB, last part of verse.*

Answer: A resurrection begins the 1,000-year period.



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2. What is this resurrection called? Who will be raised in it?

"This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection." Revelation 20:5, 6.

Answer: It is called the first resurrection. The righteous people--"blessed and holy" of all ages--will be raised in it.

raised in it?

3. The Bible says there are two resurrections. When is the second resurrection, and who will be

"The rest of the dead [those who were wicked] lived not again until the thousand years were finished." Revelation 20:5. "All that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." John 5:28, 29.



Answer: The second resurrection takes place at the close of the 1,000-year period. The wicked will be raised in this resurrection. It is called the resurrection of damnation.

Please notice: *The resurrection of the righteous begins the 1,000 years. The resurrection of the wicked ends the 1,000 years.*



4. What other momentous events take place when the 1,000 years begin?

"Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him." Revelation 1:7. "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, ... and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we

which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air." 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17. "And there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great." "And every island fled away, and the mountains were not

found. And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent [scholarly estimates vary from 58 to 100 pounds]." Revelation 16:18, 20, 21. (See also Jeremiah 4:23-26; Isaiah 24:1, 3, 19, 20; Isaiah 2:21.)

Answer: Other momentous events that take place as the 1,000 years begin are: the most devastating earthquake and hailstorm in history strike the earth; Jesus returns in the clouds for His people; and all the saints are caught up into the air to meet Jesus.

5. What happens to the wicked--living and dead--at Jesus' second coming?

"With the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked." Isaiah 11:4. "When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God." 2 Thessalonians 1:7, 8. "Let the wicked perish at the presence of God." Psalms 68:2. "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished." Revelation 20:5.



Answer: The living wicked will be slain by the very presence of Christ at the second coming. When an angel appeared at Jesus' tomb, the entire group of Roman guards fell as dead men (Matthew 28:2, 4). When the brightness of all the angels, God the Father, and God the Son combine, the wicked will die as if hit by lightning. The wicked already dead when Jesus returns will remain in their graves until the end of the 1,000 years.



6. Many believe the unsaved will have an opportunity to repent during the 1,000 years. What does the Bible say about this?

"The slain of the Lord shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth: they shall not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried; they shall be dung upon the ground." Jeremiah 25:33. "I beheld, and, lo, there was no man." Jeremiah 4:25.

Answer:

It is impossible for any person to repent during the 1,000 years because there will not be a person alive on earth. The righteous will all be in heaven. All the wicked will be lying dead upon the earth. Revelation 22:11, 12 makes it clear that the case of every person is closed before Jesus returns. Those who wait to accept Christ until the 1,000 years begin will have waited too long.

7. The Bible says that Satan will be bound in the bottomless pit during the 1,000 years. What is this

down from heaven, bottomless pit. ... And that old serpent, and bound him a

into the bottomless pit ... till the thousand years should be fulfilled." Revelation 20:1-3.



The wicked dead will lie upon the earth during the 1,000 years.

pit?

"And I saw an angel come having the key of the he laid hold on the dragon, which is the Devil, and Satan, thousand years, And cast him

Answer: The word for "bottomless pit" in the original Greek is "abussos," or abyss. That same word is used

in the Greek version of the Old Testament in Genesis 1:2 in connection with the creation of the earth, but there it is translated "deep." "The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep." How interesting! The words "deep," "bottomless pit," and "abyss" here refer to the same thing--the earth in its totally dark, disorganized form before God made order of it. Jeremiah, in describing this earth during the 1,000 years, used virtually the same terms as these in Genesis 1:2: "without form and void," "no light," "no man," "black." Jeremiah 4:23, 25, 28. So the battered, dark earth with no people alive will be called the bottomless pit, or abyss, during the 1,000 years just as it was in the beginning before Creation was completed. Isaiah 24:22 also speaks of Satan and his angels during the 1,000 years as "gathered in the pit" and "shut up in the prison."

8. What is the chain that binds Satan? Why is he bound?

"An angel ... having ... a great chain in his hand ... laid hold on ... Satan, and bound him a thousand years, ... and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled." Revelation 20:1-3.

Answer: The chain is symbolic--a chain of circumstances. A spirit being cannot be confined with a literal chain. Satan is "tied down" because he has no people to deceive. The wicked are all dead and the righteous are all in heaven. The Lord confines the devil to this earth so he cannot roam the universe hoping to find someone to deceive. Forcing the devil to stay on the earth, alone with his demons for a thousand years with no one to deceive, will be for him the most galling chain ever forged.

REVIEW THE EVENTS OCCURRING AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 1,000 YEARS:

1. Devastating earthquake and hailstorm (Revelation 16:18-21; Revelation 6:14-17).
2. Second coming of Jesus *for* His saints (Matthew 24:30, 31).
3. Righteous dead raised to life (1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17).
4. Righteous given immortality (1 Corinthians 15:51-55).
5. Righteous given bodies like Jesus (1 John 3:2; Philippians 3:21).
6. All righteous caught up into the clouds (1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17).
7. Living wicked slain by the breath of the Lord's mouth (Isaiah 11:4).
8. Wicked in graves remain dead until the end of the 1,000 years (Revelation 20:5).
9. Jesus takes righteous to heaven (John 13:33, 36; 14:1-3).
10. Satan bound (Revelation 20:1-3).

9. Revelation 20:4 says there will be a judgment in heaven during the 1,000 years. What for? Who will participate?

"I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them ... and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." Revelation 20:4. "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? ... Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" 1 Corinthians 6:2, 3.

Answer: The righteous of all ages (and probably even good angels) will participate in the judgment during the 1,000 years. The cases of all who are lost, including the devil and his angels, will be reviewed. This judgment will make details regarding the lost clear to each saved person. In the end, all will see that people are shut out of heaven only if they did not really want to live like Jesus or to be with Him.

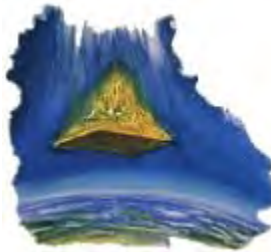
REVIEW THE EVENTS AND CONDITIONS DURING THE 1,000 YEARS:

1. Earth in battered condition from huge hailstones and devastating earthquake (Revelation 16:18-21; 6:14-17).
2. Earth in total blackout/bottomless pit (Jeremiah 4:23, 28).
3. Satan and his angels forced to stay on the earth/bound (Revelation 20:1-3).
4. Righteous in heaven participating in the judgment (Revelation 20:4).
5. Wicked are all dead (Jeremiah 4:25; Isaiah 11:4).



During the 1,000 years, every soul who has ever lived on earth will be in one of two places: (1) on the earth, dead and lost, or (2) in heaven, taking part in the judgment. The Lord invites you to be in heaven. Please accept His invitation.

During the 1,000 years, all God's righteous people will participate in the judgment in heaven.



10. At the close of the 1,000 years the holy city, new Jerusalem, will come down from heaven to this earth. Who will come with it? Where will it settle?

"And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven. ... And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men." Revelation 21:2, 3. "Behold, the day of the Lord cometh." "And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof. ... And the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee." "All the land shall be turned as a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem." Zechariah

14:1, 4, 5, 10.

Answer: The new Jerusalem will settle where the mount of Olives now stands. The mountain will be flattened to make a great plain, upon which the city will come to rest. All of the righteous people of all ages (Zechariah 14:5), the angels of heaven (Matthew 25:31), plus God the Father (Revelation 21:2, 3) and God the Son (Matthew 25:31) will return to earth with the holy city for Jesus' special third coming. The second coming will be *for* His saints; the third will be *with* His saints.

Jesus' Three Advents:

1. First coming, to Bethlehem in a manger.



2. Second coming, in the clouds at the beginning of the 1,000 years to take His people to heaven.



3. Third coming, with the holy city and all righteous people at the close of the 1,000 years.

11. What will happen to the wicked dead at this time? How will this affect Satan?

"The rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished." "And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, And shall go out to deceive the nations." Revelation 20:5, 7, 8.

Answer: At the close of the 1,000 years (when Jesus comes the third time) the wicked will be raised. Satan, loosed from his bonds, will then have an earth full of people (all the nations of the world) to deceive.



12. What will Satan do then?

"Satan shall ... go out to deceive the nations ... of the earth, ... to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city." Revelation 20:7-9.

Answer: Satan, true to his nature, will immediately begin lying to the people left on the earth--the wicked from all ages. He will probably claim that the city is really his, that he was unjustly deposed from the heavenly kingdom, that God is power-hungry and ruthless, and that God is getting ready to wipe them all off the face of the earth with a devastating, inescapable fire. He will convince them that, if they unify, God does not have a chance. With the entire world against one city, the victory will appear certain. The nations will then unite and marshal their armies to surround the new Jerusalem.

13. What will interrupt Satan's plan to capture or destroy the city?

"Fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. And the devil that deceived them was cast into ... the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death." Revelation 20:9, 10; 21:8. "The wicked ... shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts." Malachi 4:3.



Answer: Fire will suddenly come down from heaven (not up from hell, as many believe) upon the wicked and all will be turned into ashes, including the devil and his angels (Matthew 25:41). This fire that destroys sin and sinners is called the second death. There is no resurrection from this death. It is final. Notice that the devil will not be tending the fire, as is commonly believed. He will be in it, and it will put him out of existence.

14. When the wicked are burned up and the fire goes out, what glorious, thrilling event will take place next?

"Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth." Isaiah 65:17. "Look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." 2 Peter 3:13. "He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new." Revelation 21:5. "The tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God." Revelation 21:3.

Answer:



God will create new heavens and a new earth, and the new Jerusalem will be the capital city of the earth made new. Sin and its ugliness will be gone forever. God's people will at long last receive the kingdom promised to them. "They shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Isaiah 35:10. Too fabulous to describe! Too glorious to miss! Too near for us to be unsure! God has a place prepared there for you (John 14:1-3). Plan to live in it. Jesus is waiting for your consent.

When the fire goes out, God will create a fantastic new earth, with the holy city as its capital, and give it to His people. Please decide now to be there.

REVIEW THE EVENTS AT THE CLOSE OF THE 1,000 YEARS:

1. Third coming of Jesus *with* His saints (Zechariah 14:5).
2. Holy city settles on mount of Olives, which becomes a great plain (Zechariah 14:4, 10).
3. The Father, angels, and all of the righteous come with Jesus (Revelation 21:1-3; Matthew 25:31; Zechariah 14:5).
4. Wicked dead raised; Satan loosed (Revelation 20:5, 7).
5. Satan deceives entire world (Revelation 20:8).
6. Wicked surround the holy city (Revelation 20:9).
7. Wicked destroyed by fire (Revelation 20:9).
8. New heavens and earth created (Isaiah 65:17; 2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:1).
9. God's people enjoy eternity with Christ on the new earth (Revelation 21:2-4).

THE 1,000 YEARS OF REVELATION 20

EVENTS DURING THE 1,000 YEARS

1. Earth torn up, desolate, and dark.
2. All wicked are dead on earth.
3. Satan bound to this earth.
4. Righteous judging in heaven.

FIRST RESURRECTION

AT BEGINNING OF THE 1,000 YEARS

1. Devastating earthquake and hailstorm.
2. Second coming of Jesus for the saints.
3. Righteous dead raised to life.
4. Righteous given immortality.

SECOND RESURRECTION

AT CLOSE OF THE 1,000 YEARS

1. Third coming of Jesus with the saints.
2. Holy city descends onto the mount of Olives, which becomes a great plain.
3. Father, angels, righteous come with Jesus.
4. Wicked dead raised and Satan

5. Righteous given bodies like that of Jesus.
6. All righteous caught up into clouds.
7. Living wicked slain by the Lord's presence.
8. Wicked already in their graves remain dead.
9. Jesus takes righteous to heaven.
10. Satan bound.

loosed.

5. Satan deceives all nations. They surround the holy city.
6. Wicked destroyed by fire.
7. New heavens and earth created.
8. God's people enjoy eternity with Jesus.

15. Can we know how soon Jesus will return for His saints?

"When ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors." Matthew 24:33. "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." Luke 21:28. "For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth." Romans 9:28. "For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them." 1 Thessalonians 5:3.



Answer: Jesus said when the signs of His coming are being fulfilled rapidly, as they are today, we should rejoice and know that His coming is near--even at the doors. And the apostle Paul said we can know the end is near when there is a great movement for peace in the world. Finally, the Bible says God will cut the work short (Romans 9:28). So without doubt, we are living on borrowed time. The Lord will arrive suddenly and unexpectedly--at an hour known to no one, but to God only (Matthew 24:36; Acts 1:7). Our only safety is to be ready.

16. I am definitely planning to live in the fantastic custom-built home that Jesus is preparing for me in heaven.

Answer:

Thought Questions

1. How long will the time period be from the day the holy city descends until the wicked are destroyed by fire from heaven? (Revelation 20:3)

The Bible says it will be a "little," or short, season (Revelation 20:3). Enough time will be required for Satan to persuade people to follow his plan and prepare weapons of war. The exact length of time is not revealed in Scripture.

2. What kind of bodies will people have in God's new kingdom? (Philippians 3:21)

The Bible says the redeemed will have bodies like that of Jesus (Philippians 3:21). Jesus had a real body of flesh and bones after His resurrection (Luke 24:36-43). The saved will not be ghosts. They will be real people, as were Adam and Eve.

3. Does the Bible say how the lost will react at Jesus' second coming? (Revelation 6:17)

Yes. The Bible says they will cry "to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" Revelation 6:16, 17. (See also verses 14 and 15.) The righteous, on the other hand, will say, "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation." Isaiah 25:9.

4. When the holy city descends, will the wicked be able to see the righteous people who are inside the city? (Revelation 21:18)

Quite likely they will. The Bible says the city will be the see-through type—clear as crystal (Revelation 21:11, 18). The righteous will be able to see the wicked (Psalms 37:34), and the wicked will be able to see the righteous (Luke 13:28). This could mean that some very sad encounters will take place at the city wall, with the saved part of a family inside and the lost part outside. The resulting heartache and trauma are too much for human language to describe.

5. The Bible says God will wipe away all tears from the eyes of His people and there will be no more death, sorrow, or pain. When will this happen? (Revelation 21:4)

From Revelation 21:1-4 and Isaiah 65:17, it appears that this will happen after sin and sinners are destroyed. During the final judgment and destruction by fire, God's people will have many reasons for deep sorrow. As they realize that relatives and friends are lost and that people they loved are being destroyed in the fire, anguish will doubtless bring tears and heartache to God's people. But after the fire goes out, the Lord will wipe away their tears. He will then create new heavens and a new earth for His people, which will bring them unspeakable joy and fulfillment. And sorrow, sadness, crying, and heartache will be forever gone.

6. How will the destruction of wicked angels and people affect God the Father and His Son? (Isaiah 28:21)

Doubtless they will be relieved and overjoyed that the ugly cancer of sin is gone forever and that the universe is secure. Surely they will also experience deep, wrenching sadness over the fact that so many of those they loved--and for whom Jesus died--chose to cling to sin and reject salvation. Satan himself was once their warm, personal friend, and many people in the fire were their dearly beloved children. It will be like the agony of seeing one of your own errant children executed. Sin has been a crushing load upon both Father and Son since its inception. The aim of the Father and Son has been to love people and gently draw them to salvation. Their feelings are expressed in Hosea 11:8, NASB: "How can I give you up, O Ephraim? How can I surrender you, O Israel? ... My heart is turned over within Me, all my compassions are kindled."*

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7. What kind of body does Jesus have? (Luke 24:39)

He has a body of flesh and bones. After His resurrection, Jesus appeared to His disciples (Luke 24:36-43) and demonstrated that He was not a spirit or ghost by stating that He was flesh and bones, having them feel His body, and by eating some fish and honey.

Jesus Ascends

He then walked with them to Bethany and, as He was conversing with them, ascended to heaven (Luke 24:49-51). The angel who appeared to the disciples as Jesus ascended explained that "this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." Acts 1:11.

This Same Jesus Will Return

The angel's emphasis was that *this same Jesus* (of flesh and bones) will come again. He will be real, not ghostly, and the risen and translated saints will have bodies like His (Philippians 3:21; 1 John 3:2). The saints' heavenly bodies will also be *incorruptible* and *immortal* (1 Corinthians 15:51-55).

God's Free Health Plan

Great medical care is priceless - but wouldn't it be great if we didn't need doctors anymore? Did you know there is a proven way to put a lot of doctors out of work? Take care of your body! Scientists have sounded the ominous warnings about cholesterol, tobacco, stress, obesity, and alcohol, so why press your luck? Hospitals and psychiatric institutions are packed with people who have ignored the warnings - do you really want to join them? God truly cares how you treat your body, and He's given you a free health plan, and a manual to go by... the Bible! For amazing facts about how you can have abundant health and longer life, look over this Study Guide - but be sure to read it all before jumping to conclusions!

1. Are health principles really a part of true Bible religion?

"Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth." 3 John 2.

Answer: Yes. In fact, the Bible rates health right near the top of the list in importance. Man's mind, spiritual nature, and body are all interrelated and interdependent. What affects one affects the other. If our bodies are misused, our minds and spiritual natures cannot become what God ordained they should.



2. Why did God give health rules to His people?

"And the Lord commanded us to do all these statutes ... for our good always, that he might preserve us alive." Deuteronomy 6:24. "And ye shall serve the Lord your God, and he shall bless thy bread, and thy water; and I will take sickness away from the midst of thee." Exodus 23:25.

Answer: God gave health rules because He knows what is best for the human body. Automobile manufacturers place an "operations manual" in the glove compartment of each new car because they know what is best for their product. God, who made our bodies, also has an "operations manual." It is called the Holy Bible. Ignoring God's "operations manual" results in disease, twisted thinking, and burned-out lives, just as abusing a car (against the manufacturer's counsel) results in serious car trouble. Following God's rules results in "saving health" (Psalms 67:2) and more abundant life (John 10:10). These great health laws are like a wall or fence to keep out the diseases of Satan. God tells us what these rules are so we can avoid the devil's traps.

3. Do God's health rules have anything to do with eating and drinking?

"Eat ye that which is good." Isaiah 55:2. "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." 1 Corinthians 10:31.

Answer: Yes, a Christian will even eat and drink differently--all to the glory of God--using only "that which is good." If God says a thing is not fit to eat, He must have a good reason. He is not a harsh dictator, but a loving Father. All His counsel is for our good always. The Bible promises: "No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." Psalms 84:11. So if God withholds a thing from us, it is because it is not good.



Note: No person can eat his way into heaven. Eating even the food of angels will not entitle people to paradise. Only acceptance of Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour can do that. Ignoring God's health laws, however, may cause a person to be lost, because it will ruin his judgment and cause him to sin.

4. What did God give people to eat when He created them and provided a perfect diet?

"And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed ... and every tree ... yielding seed." "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat." Genesis 1:29; 2:16.

Answer: The diet God gave people in the beginning was fruit, grains, and nuts. Vegetables were added a bit later (Genesis 3:18).

5. What items are specifically mentioned by God as being unclean and forbidden?

Answer: In Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14, God very clearly points out the following groups as being unclean. Read both chapters in full.



A. All animals which do not have a split hoof and chew the cud (Deuteronomy 14:6).

Pigs are unclean.



B. All fish and water creatures that do not have both fins and scales. Nearly all fish are clean (Deuteronomy 14:9).

Shellfish and catfish are unclean.



C. All birds of prey, carrion eaters, and fish eaters (Leviticus 11:13-20).

Birds of prey are unclean.



The ones which live all or part-time in water and do not have both fins and

scales are
unclean.

D. Most "creeping things" (or invertebrates) are also unclean (Leviticus 11:21-47).

***Note:** These chapters make it clear that most animals, birds, and water creatures people ordinarily eat are clean. There are, however, some very notable exceptions. According to God's rules, the following animals are unclean and are not to be eaten: hogs, squirrels, rabbits, catfish, eels, lobsters, clams, crabs, shrimp, oysters, frogs, and many others.*

6. But I like pork. Will God destroy me if I eat it?

"For, behold, the Lord will come with fire ... and by his sword will the Lord plead with all flesh: and the slain of the Lord shall be many. They that sanctify themselves, and purify themselves ... eating swine's flesh, and the abomination, and the mouse, shall be consumed together, saith the Lord." Isaiah 66:15-17.

Answer: This may be shocking, but it is true and must be told. The Bible positively states that all who eat "swine's flesh," the "mouse," and other unclean things that are an "abomination" will be destroyed with fire at the coming of the Lord. When God says to leave something alone and not eat it, we should by all means obey Him. After all, the mere eating of a piece of forbidden fruit by Adam and Eve, a sinless couple, brought sin and death to this world in the first place. Can anyone say it doesn't matter, when God so clearly shows it does? God says men will be destroyed because they "chose that in which I delighted not." Isaiah 66:4.

7. But didn't this law of clean and unclean animals originate at Sinai? Wasn't it for the Jews only, and didn't it end at the cross?

"And the Lord said unto Noah, ... Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee by sevens ... and of beasts that are not clean by two." Genesis 7:1, 2.

Answer: No indeed! The Bible has ample evidence that there were clean and unclean animals from the very dawn of Creation. Noah lived long before any Jews existed, but he knew of the clean and unclean, because he took into the ark the clean animals by "sevens" and the unclean by "twos." Revelation 18:2 refers to some birds as being unclean just before the second coming of Christ.

The death of Christ had no altering effect whatever on these health laws, since the Bible says that all who break them will be destroyed when Jesus returns (Isaiah 66:15-17). The Jew's stomach and digestive system in no way differs from that of a Gentile. These health laws are for all people for all time.



8. Does the Bible forbid the use of alcoholic beverages?

"Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise." Proverbs 20:1. "Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder." Proverbs 23:31, 32. "Neither fornicators ... nor drunkards ... shall inherit the kingdom of God." 1 Corinthians 6:9, 10.

Answer: Yes, the Bible clearly forbids the use of alcoholic beverages.

9. Does the Bible condemn the use of tobacco?

Answer: Yes, the Bible gives six reasons why the use of tobacco is displeasing to God:

A. The use of tobacco injures health and defiles the body. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." 1 Corinthians 3:16, 17.

B. Nicotine is an addictive substance that enslaves people.

Romans 6:16 says that we become servants to whomever (or whatever) we yield ourselves. Tobacco users are servants of nicotine. Jesus says, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." Matthew 4:10.

C. The tobacco habit is unclean. "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you." 2 Corinthians 6:17. It is really preposterous to think of Christ using tobacco in any form, isn't it?



The use of tobacco in any form is displeasing to God.

D. The use of tobacco wastes money. "Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread?" Isaiah 55:2. We are God's stewards of the money given us, and "it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful." 1 Corinthians 4:2.



E. The use of tobacco never draws anyone closer to Christ. "Abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." 1 Peter 2:11. Tobacco use is a fleshly lust.

F. The use of tobacco shortens life. Recent scientific findings confirm the fact that the use of tobacco often shortens the life span by as much as one-third. This breaks God's command against killing (Exodus 20:13). Even though it is slow murder, it is still murder. One of the best ways to postpone your funeral is to quit using tobacco.

10. What are some of the simple, yet very important, health laws found in the Bible?

Answer: Here are 11 Bible health rules:



Eating meals at regular hours is very important.

A. Eat your meals at regular intervals, and do not use animal fat or blood. "Eat in due season." Ecclesiastes 10:17. "It shall be a perpetual statute ... that ye eat neither fat nor blood." Leviticus 3:17.

***Note:** Recent scientific studies have confirmed the fact that most heart attacks result from a high cholesterol level in the blood--and that the use of "fats" is largely responsible for this high level. It looks like the Lord knows what He is talking about after all, doesn't it?*

B. Don't overeat. "Put a knife to thy throat, if thou be a man given to appetite." Proverbs 23:2. In Luke 21:34, Christ specifically warns against "surfeiting" (overeating) in the last days. Overeating is responsible for many degenerative diseases.

C. Don't harbor envy or hold grudges. These evils disrupt body processes. The Bible says that envy brings "rotteness of the bones." Proverbs 14:30. Christ even commands us to clear up grudges that others may hold against us (Matthew 5:23, 24).



Christ specifically warns His followers not to overeat.



A cheerful, happy disposition benefits health.

full trust in Him.

D. Maintain a cheerful, happy disposition. "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine." Proverbs 17:22. "As he thinketh in his heart, so is he." Proverbs 23:7. Many diseases from which people suffer are a result of mental depression. A cheerful, happy disposition imparts health and prolongs life.

E. Put full trust in the Lord. "The fear of the Lord tendeth to life: and he that hath it shall abide satisfied." Proverbs 19:23. Trust in the Lord strengthens health and life. "My son, attend to my words. ... For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh." Proverbs 4:20-22. So health comes from obedience to God's commands and from putting



Ample sleep is essential to good health.

F. Balance work and exercise with sleep and rest. "Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work." Exodus 20:9, 10. "The sleep of a labouring man is sweet." Ecclesiastes 5:12. "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread." Genesis 3:19. "It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late." Psalms 127:2. "For what hath man of all his labour, and of the vexation of his heart, wherein he hath laboured under the sun? ... his heart taketh not rest in the night. This is also vanity." Ecclesiastes 2:22, 23.



Cleanliness is crucial for health.

G. Keep your body clean. "Be ye clean." Isaiah 52:11.

H. Be temperate in all things. "Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things." 1 Corinthians 9:25. "Let your moderation be known unto all men." Philippians 4:5. A Christian will completely avoid all things that are harmful and will be moderate in the use of things that are good. Habits that injure health break the command "Thou shalt not kill." They kill by degrees. They are suicide on the installment plan.

I. Avoid all harmful stimulants. Here is a surprise for some. Medical science has confirmed the fact

that tea, coffee, and soft drinks that contain the addictive drug caffeine and other harmful ingredients are all positively damaging to the human body. None of these contain food value except through the sugar or cream added, and most of us already use too much sugar. Stimulants give a dangerous, artificial boost to the body and are like trying to carry a ton in a wheelbarrow. The popularity of these drinks is due not to flavor or advertising, but to the dose of caffeine they contain. Many Americans are sickly because of their addiction to coffee, tea, and caffeinated soft drinks. But the real tragedy is that men and women seeking peace and strength are using tea and coffee as cheap substitutes for prayer and Bible study. This delights the devil and wrecks human lives.



Caffeine harms the body.

J. Make mealtime a happy time. "Every man should eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all his labour, it is the gift of God." Ecclesiastes 3:13. Unhappy scenes at mealtime hinder digestion. Avoid them.



Helping people in need enhances your health.

K. Help those who are in need. "Loose the bands of wickedness, ... undo the heavy burdens, ... deal thy bread to the hungry, and ... bring the poor that are cast out to thy house ... when thou seest the naked, ... cover him ... and thine health shall spring forth speedily." Isaiah 58:6-8. This is too plain to misunderstand: when we help the poor and needy, we improve our own health.

11. What solemn reminder is given to those who ignore God's rules?

"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a



man soweth, that shall he also reap." Galatians 6:7.

Answer: The answer is too plain to miss. Those who break God's rules regarding the care of the body machine will reap broken bodies and burned-out lives, just as one who abuses his automobile will have serious car trouble. And those who continue to break God's laws of health will ultimately be destroyed by the Lord (1 Corinthians 3:16, 17). God's health laws are not arbitrary. They are natural, established laws of the universe, like the law of gravity. Ignoring these laws always brings certain disastrous results. The Bible says, "The curse causeless shall not come." Proverbs 26:2. Trouble comes when we ignore the laws of health. God, in mercy, tells us what these laws are so we may avoid the tragedies that result from breaking them.



12. What fearful, shocking truth about health involves our children and grandchildren?

"Thou shalt not eat it; that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee." Deuteronomy 12:25. "I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me." Exodus 20:5.

Answer:

God makes it very plain that children and grandchildren (to the fourth generation) pay for the folly of parents who ignore God's health rules. The children and grandchildren inherit weakened, sickly bodies when mother and father defy God's rules for their lives. Is this what you want for your dear children and grandchildren?



13. What more fearful, sobering fact does God's Word reveal?

"There shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth." Revelation 21:27. "But as for them whose heart walketh after the heart of their detestable things and their abominations, I will own heads, saith the Lord God." Ezekiel



A person may suffer because of his parents' or grandparents' bad health habits.

recompense their way upon their 11:21.

Answer: Nothing defiling or unclean will be permitted in God's kingdom. All filthy habits defile a person. Use of improper food defiles a person (Daniel 1:8). It is sobering, but true. Choosing their "own ways" and that in which God "delighted not" will cost people their eternal salvation (Isaiah 66:3, 4, 15-17).



14. What should every sincere Christian endeavor to do at once?

"Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit." 2 Corinthians 7:1. "Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he [Christ] is pure." 1 John 3:3. "If ye love me, keep my commandments." John 14:15.

Answer: Sincere Christians will bring their lives into harmony with God's rules at once, because they love Him. They know that His rules greatly add to their happiness and protect them from the devil's diseases (Acts 10:38). God's counsel and rules are always for our good, just as good parents' rules and counsel are best for their children. And once we know better, God holds us accountable. "To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." James 4:17.

15. But I'm worried because some of my evil habits have bound me so tightly. What can I do?

"As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God." John 1:12. "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Philippians 4:13.

Answer: Take all of these habits to Christ and lay them at His feet. He will joyfully give you a new heart and the power you need to break any evil habit and become a son or daughter of God (Ezekiel 11:18, 19). How thrilling and heartwarming it is to know that "with God all things are possible." Mark 10:27. And Jesus says, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." John 6:37. Jesus is ready to break the shackles that bind us. He longs to set us free, and will, if only we will permit it. Our worries, evil habits, nervous tensions, and fears will be gone when we do His bidding. He says, "These things have I spoken unto you ... that your joy might be full." John 15:11. The devil argues that freedom is found in disobedience, but this is a falsehood (John 8:44).



16. What thrilling promises are given about God's new kingdom?

"And the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick." Isaiah 33:24. "And there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain." Revelation 21:4. "They shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." Isaiah 40:31.

Answer: The citizens of God's new kingdom will obey His health laws, and there will be no sickness or disease. They will be blessed with eternal vigor and youth and will live with God in supreme joy and happiness throughout all eternity.

17. Since healthful living truly is a part of Bible religion, it is my plan to follow God's health rules.

Answer:

Thought Questions

1. 1 Timothy 4:4 says, "Every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused." Can you explain this? (1 Timothy 4:4)

This Scripture passage (verse 3) refers to meats "which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving" by His people. These meats, as we have already discovered, are the clean meats listed in Leviticus chapter 11 and Deuteronomy chapter 14. Verse 4 makes it clear that all creatures of God are good and not to be refused, provided they are among those created to "be received with thanksgiving" (the clean animals). Verse 5 tells why these animals (or foods) are acceptable: they are "sanctified" by God's Word, which says they are clean, and by a "prayer" of blessing, which is offered before the meal. Please note, however, that God will destroy people who try to "sanctify themselves" while eating unclean foods (Isaiah 66:17).

2. Matthew 15:11 says, "Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out." How do you explain this? (Matthew 15:11)

The subject in Matthew 15:1-20 is eating without first washing the hands (verse 2). The focus is not eating, but washing. The scribes taught that eating any food without a special ceremonial washing defiled the eater. Jesus said the ceremonial washings were meaningless. In verse 19, He listed certain evils--murders, adulteries, thefts, etc. Then He concluded, "These are the things which defile a man: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man." Verse 20.

3. But didn't Jesus cleanse all animals in Peter's vision, as recorded in Acts 10? (Acts 10:13)

No! In fact, the subject of this vision is not animals, but people. God gave Peter this vision to show him that the Gentiles were not unclean, as the Jews believed. God had instructed Cornelius, a Gentile, to send men to visit Peter. But Peter would have refused to see them if God had not given him this vision, because Jewish law forbade entertaining Gentiles (verse 28). But when the men finally did arrive, Peter welcomed them, explaining that ordinarily he would not have done so, but "God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean." Verse 28. In the next chapter (Acts 11), the church members criticized Peter for speaking with these Gentiles. So Peter told them the whole story of his vision and its meaning. And Acts 11:18 says, "When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life."

4. What did God make the hog for, if not to eat? (Isaiah 66:17)

He made it for the same purpose that He made the buzzard--as a scavenger to clean up garbage. And the hog serves this purpose admirably.

5. Romans 14:3, 14, 20 says: "Let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth." "There is nothing unclean of itself." "All things indeed are pure." Can you explain this? (Romans 14:3)

Verses 3 through 6 are a discussion of those who eat certain things versus those who do not. The passage does not say either is right, but rather counsels that neither pass judgment on the other. Instead, let God be the Judge (verses 4,10-12). Verses 14 and 20 refer to foods that were first offered to idols (and were thus ceremonially unclean)--not to the clean and unclean meats of Leviticus chapter 11. (Read 1 Corinthians 8:1, 4, 10, 13). The point of the discussion is that no food is "unclean" or "impure" just because it has first been offered to idols, because an idol is "nothing in the world." 1 Corinthians 8:4. But if a person's conscience bothers him for eating such food, he should leave it alone. Or even if it merely offends a brother, he should likewise abstain.

6. Are health laws and eating and drinking really important to me personally? If I love the Lord, isn't that enough? (Romans 12:1)

They are a matter of life versus death, because these laws involve obedience. "He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." Hebrews 5:9. "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." Matthew 7:21. Love to Christ is involved here because He says, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." John 14:15. When we truly love the Lord, we will gladly obey Him without dodging or making excuses. This is the supreme test.

Is Obedience, Legalism?

People might feel like they can get away with violating a traffic law or cheating on their taxes, but God and His laws work much differently. God sees everything we do, hears everything we say, and He really does care about how we behave. While the Lord offers forgiveness for our sins, there still are deadly consequences for breaking God's law. Amazingly, some Christians say any attempt to obey God's law amounts to legalism. Yet Jesus said if you really love God, you'll do what He asks. So is obedience legalism? Take time to read this Study Guide carefully... eternal consequences are at stake!



1. Does God really see and take note of me personally?

"Thou God seest me." Genesis 16:13.

"O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou

understandest my thought afar off. Thou ... art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether." Psalms 139:1-4. "But even the very hairs of your head are all

numbered." Luke 12:7.

Answer: Yes, God knows each one of us (every person on earth) better than we know ourselves. He takes a personal interest in every human being and carefully watches all that we do. Not one word, thought, or deed is hidden from Him.

2. Can I be saved in His kingdom without obeying His Word, as found in the Holy Bible?

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." Matthew 7:21. "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." Matthew 19:17. "He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." Hebrews 5:9.

Answer: No! Scripture is very clear on this point. Salvation and the kingdom of heaven are for those who obey the Lord's commands. God does not promise eternal life to those who merely make a profession of faith or are church members or are baptized, but rather to those who do His will, which is revealed in Scripture. Of course, this obedience is possible only through Christ (Acts 4:12).

3. Why does God require obedience? Why is it necessary?

"Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." Matthew 7:14. "But he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death." Proverbs 8:36. "And the Lord commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear the Lord our God, for our good always, that he might preserve us alive." Deuteronomy 6:24.



Answer: Because there is only one narrow path that leads to godlikeness, and thus to His kingdom. All roads do not lead to the same place. The Bible is the map and guidebook with full instructions, warnings, and information on how to safely reach that kingdom. To disregard any part of it leads away from God and His kingdom. The universe of God is a universe of law and order. Natural, moral, and spiritual laws are involved. Breaking any of these laws always has certain fixed results. If the Bible had not been given, people would sooner or later have discovered (by trial and error) that the great principles of the Bible exist and are true. These Bible principles are written in our nervous systems, glands, and minds. When ignored, they result in shattered nerves, disease, and unhappiness of every kind. So the words of the Bible are not merely



advice which we can accept or ignore without consequences. The Bible explains what these consequences are and explains how to avoid them. A person cannot live any way he wishes and become godlike any more than a

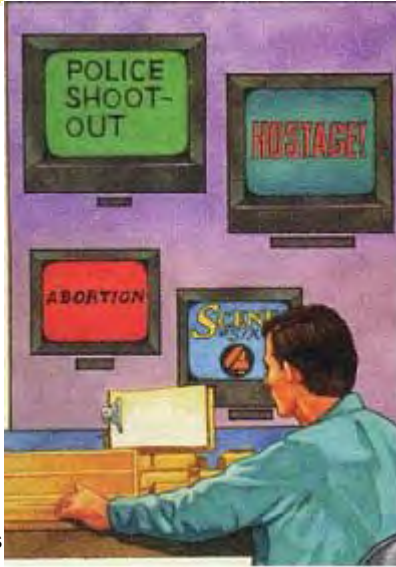


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4. Why does God permit not destroy sin and sinners

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trouble. This is why God asks all to Scripture. There is no other way to fitted for a place in His kingdom. And happiness.

disobedience to continue? Why now?

"Behold, the Lord cometh with ten execute judgment upon all, and to among them of all their ungodly committed, and of all their hard have spoken against him." Jude 14, every knee shall bow to me, and

Answer: God permits disobedience and sin to continue until all people everywhere are at last fully convinced of God's justice, love, and mercy. All will finally realize that God, by requiring obedience, is not trying to force His will upon us, but rather is trying to keep us from hurting and destroying ourselves. The sin problem is not settled until even the most cynical and hardened sinners are convinced of God's love and confess that He is just. It will take perhaps a major catastrophe or worse to convince some, but the horrible results of sinful living will finally convince all that God is just and right. Then, and only then, can sin and disobedience be safely brought to an end by the Lord.

5. Will God actually destroy the disobedient?

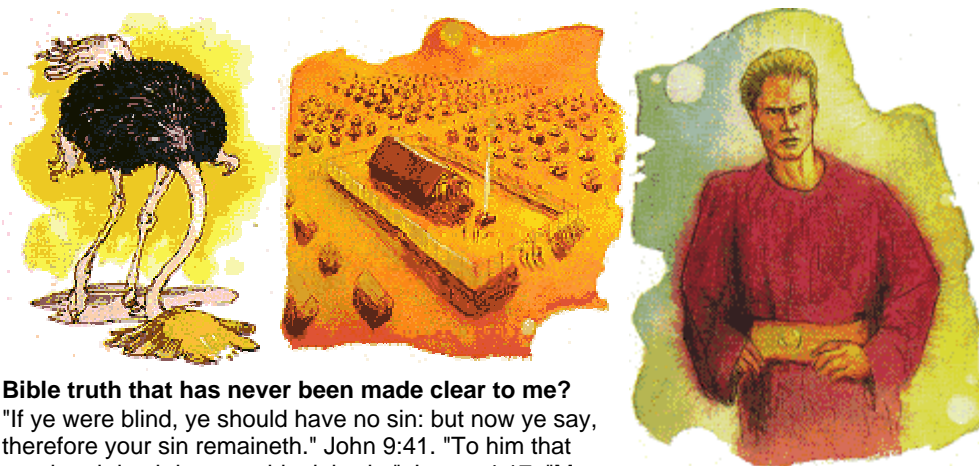
"God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment." 2 Peter 2:4. "All the wicked will he destroy." Psalms 145:20. "In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." 2 Thessalonians 1:8.

Answer: No question about it. The disobedient, including the devil and his angels who sinned, will be destroyed. This being true, surely it is high time to abandon all fuzziness regarding what is right or wrong. People had better stop letting their own foolish whims and egotistical notions guide them and pay attention to God's great book. And they had better do it now--there is not much time left!

6. I want to obey all of God's rules. How can I be certain I will not overlook one?

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find." Matthew 7:7. "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, ... rightly dividing the word of truth." 2 Timothy 2:15. "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God." John 7:17. "Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you." John 12:35. "As soon as they hear of me, they shall obey me." Psalms 18:44.

Answer: God leaves no room for doubt. He promises to keep me from error and lead me safely to all truth if



I: (1) pray earnestly for guidance, (2) sincerely study God's Word, and (3) follow truth as soon as I am shown.

7. Does God count me guilty for disobeying

We see; knoweth to do people are

Bible truth that has never been made clear to me?

"If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, therefore your sin remaineth." John 9:41. "To him that good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." James 4:17. "My destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee." Hosea 4:6. "Seek, and ye shall find." Matthew 7:7.

Answer: If I have had no opportunity to learn a certain Bible truth, God does not hold me accountable. But the Bible teaches that I am responsible to God for all the light (knowledge of right) I have and all I can have! Many people who refuse or neglect to study, seek, learn, and listen will be destroyed by God because they have "rejected knowledge." To play ostrich in these exceedingly crucial matters is fatal. It is my responsibility to hunt diligently for truth.

8. But God isn't particular about obedience on every point and in small details, is He?

"Surely none of the men that came up out of Egypt ... shall see the land ... because they have not wholly followed me: Save Caleb ... and Joshua ... for they have wholly followed the Lord." Numbers 32:11, 12. "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Matthew 4:4. "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." John 15:14.

Answer: Indeed, He is particular. God's people in Old Testament times learned this the hard way. Those who left Egypt for the promised land of Canaan were 603,550 in number. Of this group, only two (Caleb and Joshua) fully followed the Lord, and they alone entered Canaan. The other 603,548 died in the wilderness. Jesus says we are to live by "every word" of the Bible. There is not one word too many or one word too few. They are all important.

9. When I discover new truth, I wait until all obstacles are removed before embracing it. This is best, isn't it?

"Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you." John 12:35. "I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy commandments." Psalms 119:60. Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Matthew 6:33. "As soon as they hear of me, they shall obey me." Psalms 18:44.



Answer: No, once you are clear on a Bible truth, it is never best to wait. In fact, procrastination is the devil's most dangerous trap. It seems so harmless to wait, but the Bible teaches that unless a person acts immediately upon light, it quickly turns to darkness. Obstacles to obedience are not removed while we stand and wait; instead, they usually increase in size. Man says to God, "Open up the way, and I'll go forward." But God's way is just the opposite. He says, "You go forward, and I will open up the way."

10. But isn't full obedience an impossibility for a human being?



"With God all things are possible." Matthew 19:26. "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Philippians 4:13. "Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ." 2 Corinthians 2:14. "He that abideth in me, and I in him, ... bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing." John 15:5. "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land." Isaiah 1:19.

Answer: None of us can obey in our own power, but through Christ we can and must. Satan, in order to make God's requests appear unreasonable, invented the falsehood that obedience is impossible.

11. What will happen to a person who willfully and knowingly continues in disobedience?

"If we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." Hebrews 10:26, 27. "Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth." John 12:35.

Answer:

The Bible leaves no room for doubt. The answer is sobering and shocking, but true. When a person knowingly rejects light and continues in disobedience, the light eventually goes out, and he is left in total darkness. A person who rejects truth receives a "strong delusion" to believe that falsehood is truth (2 Thessalonians 2:11). When this happens, he is lost from that moment.

12. I thought love was more important than obedience. Isn't it?

"Jesus answered ... If a man love me, he will keep my words. ... He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings." John 14:23, 24. "This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous." 1 John 5:3.

Answer: No, not at all! In fact, the Bible teaches that true love to God cannot exist without obedience. Nor can a person be truly obedient without love. No child will fully obey his parents unless he loves them, nor will he love his parents if he does not obey. True love and obedience are like Siamese twins. When separated, they die.

13. But I always thought that true freedom in Christ released me from obedience. Doesn't it?

"If ye continue in my word, ... ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."
 "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin."
 John 8:31, 32, 34. "But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness." Romans 6:17, 18. "So shall I keep thy law continually for ever and ever. And I will walk at liberty: for I seek thy precepts."
 Psalms 119:44, 45.





Answer:
No. True freedom comes only from obedience. It means freedom "from sin" (Romans 6:18), or disobedience, which is breaking God's law (1

John 3:4). The citizens who obey the law

have freedom. The disobedient are caught and lose their freedom.

Freedom without obedience is like the false freedom of the drifting balloon or the driverless car. It leads to confusion and anarchy. True Christian freedom means freedom from disobedience. Disobedience always hurts a person and leads into the cruel slavery of the devil.

14. When I believe God requires a certain thing, should I obey even though I do not understand why He requires it?

"Obey, I beseech thee, the voice of the Lord ... so it shall be well unto thee, and thy soul shall live." Jeremiah 38:20. "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool." Proverbs 28:26. "It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man." Psalms 118:8. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." Isaiah 55:9. "How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord?" Romans 11:33, 34. "I will lead them in paths that they have not known." Isaiah 42:16. "Thou wilt shew me the path of life." Psalms 16:11.

Answer: Most assuredly! We must give God credit for being wise enough to require some things of us we may not understand. Good children obey their parents even when the reasons for their commands are not clear. Simple faith and trust in God will cause us to believe that He knows what is best for us and will never lead us in any wrong path. It is folly for us, in our ignorance, to question God's leadership, even when we may not fully understand all His reasons.

15. Who is really behind all disobedience, and why?

"He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning." "In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God." 1 John 3:8, 10. Satan ... deceiveth the whole world." Revelation 12:9.

Answer: The devil is responsible. He knows that all disobedience is sin and that sin brings unhappiness, tragedy, alienation from God, and eventual destruction. With bitter hatred he tries desperately to lead every person into disobedience. You are involved. You must face the facts and make a decision. Disobey and be lost, or accept Christ and obey and be saved. Your decision regarding obedience is a decision regarding Christ. You cannot separate Him from truth, because He says, "I am ... the truth." John 14:6. "Choose you this day whom ye will serve." Joshua 24:15.

16. What glorious promise regarding a super-miracle does the Bible give God's children?

"He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Philippians 1:6.

Answer: Praise God! He promises that just as He worked a miracle to bring us the new birth, He will also continue to work needed miracles in our lives (as we gladly follow Him) until we are safe in His kingdom.

17. It brings me joy to know that Jesus not only provides the new birth to those who accept and follow Him, but He also continues to work needed miracles in their lives until they are safe in His kingdom. I want to begin lovingly obeying and following Jesus fully at once.

Answer:

Thought Questions

1. Will any be lost who truly think they are saved? (Matthew 7:21)

Yes! Matthew 7:21-23 makes it clear that many who prophesy, cast out devils, and do many wonderful works in Christ's name will be lost but will think they are saved. Christ said they are lost because they did not do "the will of my Father which is in heaven." Verse 21. Those who refuse to obey God will end up believing a lie (2 Thessalonians 2:11, 12) and thus think they are saved when instead they are lost.

2. Since there is only one right way, what will happen to sincere people who truly think they are right when they are wrong? (John 10:27)

Jesus says that He will call them to His true way, and His true sheep will hear and follow (John 10:16, 27).

3. Aren't sincerity and zeal enough? (John 4:23)

No! We must also be right. The apostle Paul was sincere and zealous when he persecuted the Christians before his conversion, but he was also wrong (Acts 22:3, 4; 26:9-11).

4. Isn't it a scientific impossibility that God can see everyone at the same time? (Romans 1:22)

So was Noah's Flood (it had never before rained--Genesis 2:5, 6), but it happened anyway. Conjuring up "scientific" reasons for disobedience is the favorite pastime of the class mentioned in Romans 1:22, who "professing themselves to be wise, they became fools."

5. What will happen to people who haven't received light? (John 1:9)

The Bible says that all have received some light. "That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." John 1:9. Each person will be judged according to how he follows available light. Even the heathen have some light and follow the law, according to Romans 2:14, 15.

6. I have asked God to give me a sign if He wants me to obey. This is safe, isn't it? (Matthew 12:39)

No! It is not. Jesus said, "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign." Matthew 12:39. All teachings should be checked by the Bible, and if in harmony with God's Word, should be accepted and followed (Isaiah 8:20; 2 Timothy 2:15). People who won't accept the plain teachings of the Bible would not be convinced by a sign either. As Jesus said, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." Luke 16:31.

7. Hebrews 10:26, 27 seems to indicate that if a person willfully commits just one sin after he knows better, he is lost. Is this correct? (Hebrews 10:26)

No! Anyone can confess such a sin and be forgiven. The Bible is speaking here not of one single act or sin but of a presumptuous continuation in sin and a refusal to surrender to Christ after one knows better. Such action grieves away the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 4:30) and hardens a person's heart until one is "past feeling" (Ephesians 4:19) and lost. The Bible says, "Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression." Psalms 19:13.

8. Doesn't a person have to be educated to understand the Bible? (Isaiah 29:12)

No! Even the simple can understand it if surrendered to the Lord (Psalms 19:7; 119:130; Matthew 11:25).