

## Questions Asked By Mid-Schoolers – Part 16

Michael R. Daily, April 2019

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These questions were submitted anonymously by a group of 30 mid-schoolers who regularly attend church & AWANAs.

### Were there other believers in the God of the Bible around the world during Biblical times?

Yes. In fact, the purpose of God working through a tiny, inconsequential nation (Israel) was to show the other nations of the world that there was only one true God and He was it (**Deuteronomy 7:6-8**). At the time of Abraham all the nations of the world were “pantheistic” – they believed in multiple gods. Every nation had many gods – a god of war, a god of the harvest, a god of the Sun, etc. Although people talk about them “worshipping” these gods they really didn’t – not the way we worship God today. Instead, people invented rituals and sacrifices whose purpose was to manipulate their gods into doing things they wanted – a good harvest, victory in battle, etc. If you were going out to battle with another nation you would go to your god of war and ask him to give you victory. You would give him a sacrifice to show that you were serious and had done your part and now the god should do their part. It wasn’t about what their gods wanted. It was about what they wanted from their gods. God chose to reveal Himself to the nations of the world through His relationship with Israel, the tiniest of nations. The message God had for the world was this - There are not hundreds of gods, there is only one God and I Am Him (**Isaiah 45:20-22**). And let me explain how this God thing works - I tell you what to do! Israel’s God was very different from all the other gods. He told them what to do. And some of the things He told them to do were not things you would think up yourself (**Joshua 6:1-21**). Another example of how different the God of Israel was is when God released Israel from being enslaved by Egypt, and in the process destroyed the economic and military power of the greatest nation on Earth at the time. How could a bunch of slaves just walk away and leave the most powerful nation on Earth in ruins? It was obvious to the other nations that something unusual was going on – the God of Israel was the one, real god! He told you what to do. He took miraculous actions on your behalf. Your job was to worship and obey Him. So, that was God’s strategy. Is there any evidence that God’s strategy worked? Let’s look at 3 people from other nations to see what they have to say. The first are the Philistines – Israel’s greatest enemy.

#### I Samuel 4:6-8 (Philistines’ confession)

**When the Philistines heard the noise of the shout, they said, "What does the noise of this great shout in the camp of the Hebrews mean?" Then they understood that the ark of the LORD had come into the camp. <sup>7</sup>The Philistines were afraid, for they said, "God has come into the camp." And they said, "Woe to us! For nothing like this has happened before. <sup>8</sup>"Woe to us! Who shall deliver us from the hand of these mighty gods? These are the gods who smote the Egyptians with all kinds of plagues in the wilderness.**

The Philistines still did not quite understand the “one God” idea but they knew that the God of Israel was unlike any other God and was to be feared more than the mightiest army. The next example is of a Canaanite prostitute named Rahab.

#### Joshua 2:8-11 (Rahab’s confession)

**Now before they lay down, she came up to them on the roof, <sup>9</sup>and said to the men, "I know that the LORD has given you the land, and that the terror of you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land have melted away before you. <sup>10</sup>"For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea before you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed. <sup>11</sup>"When we heard it, our hearts melted and no courage remained in any man any longer because of you; for the LORD your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath.**

Rahab understood that the God of Israel was the ruler of all of heaven and Earth and, therefore, He was the only real God and to oppose Him meant destruction. The last example is from the emperor of the world during the Babylonian Empire.

#### Daniel 3:28-29 (Nebuchadnezzar’s confession)

**Nebuchadnezzar responded and said, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, who has sent His angel and delivered His servants who put their trust in Him, violating the king's command, and yielded up their bodies so as not to serve or worship any god except their own God. <sup>29</sup>"Therefore I make a decree that any people, nation or tongue that speaks anything offensive against the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego shall be torn limb from limb and their houses reduced to a rubbish heap, inasmuch as there is no other god who is able to deliver in this way."**

Nebuchadnezzar still did not understand the concepts of compassion and grace but he understood that there was one God and this God did miraculous things. This God tells His followers what to do and His commands are to be feared more than the commands of any human king. So, God’s strategy was effective. People around the world heard of His actions on behalf of Israel and believed in Him. For a more detailed study on this topic please see, “What Is The Difference Between The Old And New Testaments” at: <http://gciweb.org/2011/04/youth-bible-study-materials-michael-r-daily/> (**Deuteronomy 7:6-8, Isaiah 45:20-22, Joshua 6:1-21, I Samuel 4:6-8, Joshua 2:8-11, Daniel 3:28-29**)

### Does God judge us based on our actions or motives or a little bit of both?

God judges our actions (**Ecclesiastes 12:13-14, Romans 2:22-24, Ecclesiastes 12:13-14, John 14:15-23**), our motives (**I Corinthians 4:1-5, Philippians 1:15-17, Prov 16:2, II Chronicles 16:9, I Samuel 16:7, Prov 4:23, Prov 21:2, Matthew 6:1-6, Matthew 5:27-28**), and our intentions (**Hebrews 4:12, Prov 21:27, I Chronicles 28:9, Luke 1:49-51**).

**Action:** *the accomplishment of a thing.*  
**Motive:** *a desire operating on the will and causing it to act.*  
**Intention:** *what one has in mind to do or bring about.*

All three areas are important to God (**Jeremiah 17:10, Revelation 2:23, Mark 12:28-30**) and, although they are different from each other, they are also related. The weakest of the three is intentions. Intentions are the thoughts we have in our minds concerning what we believe and what we think would be good to act on. For example, I may become convinced in my mind that it would be good for my health to lose weight. I am in agreement with the idea and would like to see it happen. Does that mean I will lose weight? No. It just means that my mind is favorable to the idea, nothing more. So God judges our intentions. Do we agree with Him in our minds about what His Word says is true or are we in disagreement and rebellion against what He has said (**Romans 2:5**)? The biggest challenge against having proper intentions is that, even as Christians, we suffer from the remnants of depravity which distorts our understanding of what is truly right and wrong. Jeremiah 17:9 sums up the problem: **Jeremiah 17:9 - The heart is more deceitful than all else And is desperately sick; Who can understand it?** Because of the remnants of depravity, our hearts are able to convince us that some good things are bad and some bad things are good (deceit). The antidote to this is to study the Bible and believe and agree that what God says is true rather than what our hearts naturally tell us, even if it does not “feel” right. In other words, following your heart is a bad idea, better to believe and obey God’s Word instead.

Because our hearts are so good at deceiving us, we need to test ourselves by measuring our actions (**James 1:22-25**). Its easy to be deceived into thinking we are doing great in the Christian life until someone starts asking us how many days last week we actually read the Bible, how many people this year have we said these words to out loud, “Would you like to pray right now and receive Christ as your savior and lord”? When we write down the numbers we begin to realize we are not actually doing as well as we thought we were. This is why the Book of James puts so much emphasis on action (**James 2:14-26**). Measuring our actions is the best way to ensure our hearts are not deceiving us.

For intentions to result in action they have to become motives. A motive is a strong desire that always results in action being taken. Its more than just agreeing in our minds about something. It is having a compulsion to find a way to implement it in action. Motives cause people to change how they spend their time, money, and emotional energy in order to accomplish something of high priority. When an intention becomes a true motive, people may take actions like buying a chronological bible and reading it every day, setting aside time on Saturday mornings to make up for any days they missed that week. Or they might spend five minutes a day for sixty days memorizing the Bridge Illustration so that they can be prepared to effectively share the gospel at any moment for the rest of their lives (**I Peter 3:15**). Actual motives always result in action being taken or avoided. Someone may have an intention to obey God in a certain area of life but when you watch their actions – where they spend their time, money, and emotional energy – they just are not doing it. This means their intention has not yet become a motive for their behavior. Their motives are on something else. So, God judges our motives as well as our intentions.

God also judges our actions. Some actions are always wrong and are to be avoided. Some actions are good but they can be done out of either a good motive or a bad motive. Again, our deceitful hearts can cause us to do something that God says is good but we end up doing it primarily due to a bad motive. The ideal situation is when we do everything God tells us to do and we do it with pure motives. How do we get there? The best approach is to understand what God wants us to do and then work on implementing it regardless of our initial motive. Then, as we continue doing the right actions, we work on improving our motives. Its easier to steer a boat that is moving than one that is not. In the same way, get moving on doing the right things first, then improve your motives as you go. Also, as you continue in obedience, God will bring circumstances into your life to test and purify your motives. Here are a few examples:

- 1) If no one knows about your giving, serving, sacrificing. Will you quit or continue? Why?
- 2) If there is no payoff for obeying God. Will you quit or continue? Why?
- 3) If God moves you to a lower status position either in ministry or life will you continue to obey Him?
- 4) If no one thanks you for your service and perhaps even criticizes you will you continue to obey God?
- 5) If you have to suffer for continuing to do what God wants you to do will you continue or quit?
- 6) If there is absolutely no upside (from a human perspective) for continuing to obey God, will you?

**(Ecclesiastes 12:13-14, Romans 2:22-24, Ecclesiastes 12:13-14, John 14:15-23, I Corinthians 4:1-5, Phil 1:15-17, Proverbs 16:2, II Chronicles 16:9, I Samuel 16:7, Proverbs 4:23, Proverbs 21:2, Matthew 6:1-6, Matthew 5:27-28, Hebrews 4:12, Proverbs 21:27, I Chronicles 28:9, Luke 1:49-51, Jeremiah 17:10, Revelation 2:23, Mark 12:28-30, Romans 2:5, Jeremiah 17:9, James 1:22-25, James 2:14-26, I Peter 3:15)**

### **If God isn't fair, how does that contradict the idea that He is just?**

Actually, God is both fair and just. The first thing to understand is that God is a being of infinite understanding (**Psalm 147:5**) but we are not. The word "infinite" means: *inconceivably great or extensive; subject to no limitation; extending beyond or being greater than any preassigned finite value no matter how large*. Since God's understanding is infinite and ours is not, there will be things that are fair and just from God's viewpoint that we are not able to fully understand and, from our limited perspective, may seem unfair to us (but they are not). What we do know is that God is the one who defines what is good and Jesus said that no one is good except God alone (**Psalm 118:1, Mark 10:18**). We also know that because of the remnants of depravity, our natural reasoning, impulses, and desires tend to be hostile to God (**Ecclesiastes 11:9**). In other words, certain bad things seem good to us (**Jeremiah 17:9, Proverbs 14:12**)!

Are Christians affected by depravity? Yes. Although Christ has released us from some of the effects of depravity we still are stained by it and it will affect us until the day we die. Even after we become Christians we carry the remnants of depravity in our minds, will, and emotions. One of the biggest challenges we have as Christians in dealing with our depravity is that our "guidance system" has been corrupted. In the early days of the F-117 Stealth Fighter program some of these airplanes were crashing for no apparent reason. These planes would fly at night, taking off and landing at early dawn or dusk. During parts of the flight, the pilot could see the silhouette of a mountain as they were flying. In some cases, the pilot would become disoriented and believe that the sloped side of the mountain was the horizon. As a result, they would tilt their plane thinking that they were now flying level with the ground. But in reality, they were tilted to one side and their plane would slide toward the ground and crash. Even though alarms were going off in the cockpit, the pilot was deceived by his own senses. He was convinced he was flying level and that the alarms were wrong! And it cost him his life. In the same way, depravity has corrupted our guidance system for judging good and evil. As a result, we can't rely on our intuitive sense of what is right and wrong when it comes to spiritual things. Instead we will have to believe God's word and obey Him by faith, not by sight (**II Corinthians 5:7**). The antidote for overcoming the effects of depravity on our ability to discern right from wrong is to thoroughly and consistently study the Bible and put its commands into action. In this way our senses can be trained to discern what is truly good and truly evil (**Hebrews 5:12-14**).

We also have to remember that God holds a unique position as the creator. God, as the designer of humans, builds them to fulfill His purposes. As a young engineer, I used to design engineered components for various applications. How odd it would have been if one of my components started complaining about how I designed them or questioned me as to why they were designed to be different from another component that I had also designed. As the designer, I have different purposes for the two components that they don't know about. For example, I may design a component for a commercial airplane's "black box" that has to be designed to be so robust it can operate through and survive the most severe airplane accident. Another component I may design to fail quickly and predictably in an accident, such as in a car's airbag system. As the designer I have no interest at all in the opinions of the components about why I designed them the way I did. My purposes are so far beyond the comprehension of the components' they couldn't understand even if I tried to explain it to them. When an engineer designs a new component, he may design it however he wishes in order to suit his desire and purposes. In the same way, God designed certain people to achieve His purposes. This may seem unfair or unjust to us due to our limited understanding, but it's not. In fact, if God was completely fair He would not have sent His Son to suffer and pay for sins He had not committed. If God was completely fair, every human would spend eternity in the Lake of Fire!

### **Romans 9:14-23**

**What shall we say then? There is no injustice with God, is there? May it never be! 15 For He says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion." 16 So then it does not depend on the man who wills or the man who runs, but on God who has mercy. 17 For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "For this very purpose I raised you up, to demonstrate My power in you, and that My name might be proclaimed throughout the whole earth." 18 So then He has mercy on whom He desires, and He hardens whom He desires. 19 You will say to me then, "Why does He still find fault? For who resists His will?" 20 On the contrary, who are you, O man, who answers back to God? The thing molded will not say to the molder, "Why did you make me like this," will it? 21 Or does not the potter have a right over the clay, to make from the same lump one vessel for honorable use and another for common use? 22 What if God, although willing to demonstrate His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction? 23 And He did so to make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He prepared beforehand for glory,**

(Ps 147:5, Ps 118:1, Mark 10:18, Eccl 11:9, Jeremiah 17:9, Prov 14:12, II Cor 5:7, Heb 5:12-14, Rom 9:14-23)

### **If Jesus wants us to serve everyone and that includes our enemies, does that mean we should "serve" satan?**

No. The command to serve others is directed at people, not angels. In fact, Jesus directly answered your question during His temptation in the wilderness in **Matthew 4:8-10** - **Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory;** <sup>9</sup> **and he said to Him, "All these things I will give You, if You fall down and worship me."** <sup>10</sup> **Then Jesus said to him, "Go, Satan! For it is written, 'YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND SERVE HIM ONLY.'"**

**In Matthew it says that Judas returned the money he betrayed Jesus with and then hung himself. But Luke says that he bought a field with the money and then his intestines spilled out. Why does it say two different things?**

In various places in the Bible the same event is reported by multiple people. A common characteristic of eyewitness accounts is that different witnesses report the details of the event from their own point of view. As a result, each person's report mentions those things that that witness thought were important but leaves out details that that particular witness either did not see or decided was not important enough to report. So, the way to interpret these passages is to view them as complementary rather than contradictory. In other words, since all of the Bible is God's Word and is perfect, all of the accounts contain true information. Therefore, we understand that the actual event was made up of the information from all the accounts. In the case of Judas' death we have two accounts. In one account Judas hanged himself. In the other account he fell headlong and all his intestines gushed out. So, both must be true.

**Acts 1:16-19**

**Brethren, the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit foretold by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus. <sup>17</sup> For he was counted among us and received his share in this ministry. <sup>18</sup> (Now this man acquired a field with the price of his wickedness, and falling headlong, he burst open in the middle and all his intestines gushed out. <sup>19</sup> And it became known to all who were living in Jerusalem; so that in their own language that field was called Hakeldama, that is, Field of Blood.)**

**Matthew 27:3-10**

**Then when Judas, who had betrayed Him, saw that He had been condemned, he felt remorse and returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, <sup>4</sup> saying, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." But they said, "What is that to us? See to that yourself!" <sup>5</sup> And he threw the pieces of silver into the temple sanctuary and departed; and he went away and hanged himself. <sup>6</sup> The chief priests took the pieces of silver and said, "It is not lawful to put them into the temple treasury, since it is the price of blood." <sup>7</sup> And they conferred together and with the money bought the Potter's Field as a burial place for strangers. <sup>8</sup> For this reason that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day. <sup>9</sup> Then that which was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled: "AND THEY TOOK THE THIRTY PIECES OF SILVER, THE PRICE OF THE ONE WHOSE PRICE HAD BEEN SET BY THE SONS OF ISRAEL; <sup>10</sup> AND THEY GAVE THEM FOR THE POTTER'S FIELD, AS THE LORD DIRECTED ME."**

Is there a scenario where this could happen? Of course! If a person hangs themselves with no one else around they die and their body hangs there and starts the decomposition process. The corpse starts to rot and generate decomposition gases which cause the body to bloat. Eventually the neck will rot through and the corpse will fall to the ground and burst open quite easily. This makes much more sense than a living person falling and all his intestines gushing out. That would be a difficult, if not impossible, thing to do! It may seem odd that Luke would focus so much on the after-death decomposition process but you have to remember that Luke was a medical doctor (**Colossians 4:14**) and probably found those details to be much more interesting to him personally than the hanging itself. It is also possible that the body fell because someone cut the rope trying to remove the body but the decomposition process would still have caused the body to burst open when it hit the ground. Its also possible that the tree branch eventually broke a week or two after the hanging and the body, when eventually found, was found burst open on the ground. According to Dr. Arpad A. Vass, a Senior Staff Scientist at Oak Ridge National Laboratory and Adjunct Associate Professor at the University of Tennessee in Forensic Anthropology, human decomposition begins around four minutes after a person dies and follows four stages: autolysis, bloat, active decay, and skeletonization. Stage One: Autolysis or self-digestion, begins immediately after death. As soon as blood circulation and respiration stop, the body has no way of getting oxygen or removing wastes. Excess carbon dioxide causes an acidic environment, causing membranes in cells to rupture. The membranes release enzymes that begin eating the cells from the inside out. Rigor mortis causes muscle stiffening. Small blisters filled with nutrient-rich fluid begin appearing on internal organs and the skin's surface. The body will appear to have a sheen due to ruptured blisters, and the skin's top layer will begin to loosen. Stage Two: Enzymes leaked from the first stage begin producing many gases that cause bloating. Due to the gases, the human body can double in size. In addition, insect activity can be present. The microorganisms and bacteria produce extremely unpleasant odors. These odors often alert others that a person has died, and can linger long after a body has been removed. Stage Three: Fluids released through orifices indicate the beginning of active decay. Organs, muscles, and skin become liquefied. When all of the body's soft tissue decomposes, hair, bones, cartilage, and other byproducts of decay remain. The cadaver loses the most mass during this stage. Stage Four: Because the skeleton has a decomposition rate based on the loss of organic (collagen) and inorganic components, there is no set timeframe when skeletonization occurs.

The next issue is the name of the field. It is referred to as both the Potter's Field and also as the Field of Blood. So, both must be true. The original name of the field was the Potter's Field because it was an excellent source of clay for people who made pottery to sell. Because it was later bought with money given to Judas to send Jesus to a bloody death on the cross, it was referred to as the Field of Blood after it was purchased. So, the field had each of these names at different times under different owners. Similar to how the owner of a ranch might name it the "Circle T Ranch" but after he sells it to someone else the new owner may change the name to the "Lone Star Ranch".

The next issue is that of who was it who made the purchase of the field? One account says Judas purchased the field and the other account says the Chief Priests made the purchase. Once again we start from the assumption that both must be true. One possibility is that Judas was promised the 30 pieces of silver well before Jesus arrest (**Mark 14:11**). Between the time of this agreement and actually betraying Jesus, Judas may have made arrangements to purchase the land even though the money had not been paid yet. When Judas turned the money back over to the priests they did not want anything to do with it so they completed the payment on the transaction that Judas had started thereby purchasing the field in the name of Judas as the owner. A second option is that after Judas' death the priests, who again did not want any association with this money, purchased the field but did not want to be listed as the owners. In this situation the money belonged to Judas, the priests were not willing to take the money back, and therefore the land purchase was done in the name of Judas. This is similar to how we speak of people in authority doing something that they did not personally do but instead they authorized and paid someone else to do it in their name. For example **John 19:1** says, "Pilate then took Jesus and scourged Him" but in reality Pilate did not whip Jesus himself. We say Pilate whipped Jesus but in reality Pilate ordered some Roman soldiers to do it for him. A final issue is mentioned in Matthew 27:9 where the price and purchase of this field was stated to be fulfillment of a prophecy by Jeremiah. However, the Old Testament prophecy Matthew refers to is actually in Zechariah 11:12-13.

### **Zechariah 11:12-13**

**I said to them, "If it is good in your sight, give me my wages; but if not, never mind!" So they weighed out thirty shekels of silver as my wages.<sup>13</sup> Then the LORD said to me, "Throw it to the potter, that magnificent price at which I was valued by them." So I took the thirty shekels of silver and threw them to the potter in the house of the LORD.**

Matthew appears to make an error when he says that the prophecy was "spoken through Jeremiah" yet when we look for the prophecy we find it in the book of Zechariah, not Jeremiah. Below are comments from Bible scholars on this matter.

Dr. Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., President and Old Testament Professor, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary:

*"Matthew probably attributed the text to Jeremiah because Jeremiah, in many Hebrew manuscripts, headed up the collection of the prophets and his name was used to designate all in the collection. Our book titles with those chapter and verse divisions are a fairly recent innovation. Also Matthew may have attributed this quotation to Jeremiah because this text was paired with Jeremiah 18:1-4; 32:6-9. Thus he used the name of the better known and more prominent prophet. In fact, not one of the four other places where the New Testament quotes from Zechariah does it mention his name (Matthew 21:4-5; Matthew 26:31; John 12:12-14; John 19:37)." - Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., **Hard Sayings of the Old Testament**, InterVarsity Press, 1988, p. 242.*

Dr. Gleason L. Archer, Jr., Old Testament Professor, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School:

*"Matthew is therefore combining and summarizing elements of prophetic symbolism both from Zechariah and from Jeremiah. But since Jeremiah is the more prominent of the two prophets, he mentions Jeremiah's name by preference to the minor prophet. A similar procedure is followed by Mark 2:1-3, which attributes only to Isaiah a combined quotation from Malachi 3:1 and Isaiah 40:3. In that case also, only the more famous of the two prophets is mentioned by name. Since that was the normal literary practice of the first century A.D., when the Gospels were written, the authors can scarcely be faulted for not following the modern practice of precise identification and footnoting (which could never have become feasible until after the transition had been made from the scroll to the codex and the invention of the printing press)." - Gleason L. Archer, Jr., **Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties**, Zondervan Publishing House, 1982, p. 345.*

Dr. William Arndt, Lutheran Scholar:

*"Jeremiah is a far more prominent Prophet than Zechariah, and hence it is not surprising that a prophecy which can be traced to both of them is called a prophecy of Jeremiah, even though the greater part of it is taken from Zechariah. The other explanation is that there is good evidence for the assumption that the Jews, in their arrangement of the books of the Prophets, placed that of Jeremiah first. Now, we find that in all ages people have often designated a collection of writings by the name of the first one, which in such cases usually is one of importance."*

**- William Arndt, *Does the Bible Contradict Itself?*, Concordia Publishing House, 1976, pp. 52-53.**

Dr. E.J. Young, Old Testament Professor, Westminster Seminary:

*"It may be that the name Jeremiah was in this instance singled out inasmuch as his work was commonly regarded as standing at the head of the prophetic books. In mentioning Jeremiah, therefore, Matthew may have in mind the entire prophetic section of the Old Testament. A similar parallel is found in Luke 24:44 where Christ designates the third part of the Old Testament canon by the term Psalms. As a matter of fact, the book of Psalms was only the first book of this division, but evidently the Lord thought it sufficient to name only the first book as a suitable identification of the entire third section. Possibly this is the procedure which Matthew also is following. If so, he is simply doing what the Lord Himself, on another occasion, saw fit to do." - E. J. Young, **Thy Word Is Truth**, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1957, p. 173.*

**(Acts 1:16-19, Matthew 27:3-10, Colossians 4:14, Mark 14:11, John 19:1, Zechariah 11:12-13)**

### **Did the theory of spontaneous generation come to be because Adam was created from dust?**

No. Spontaneous generation is the belief that life can come into existence by itself, without the involvement of a creative, intelligent being. As a result, belief in spontaneous generation, in one form or another, is a result of not believing in the existence of God the creator. The Greek philosopher Aristotle (384 to 322 BC) promoted a version of spontaneous generation that became popular for over 2,000 years. This was the idea that certain insects such as fleas could come into existence from non-living, inanimate matter such as dust or that maggots could pop into existence from dead flesh. This belief was disproved by Louis Pasteur and John Tyndall using controlled scientific experiments in the mid-1800s. Pasteur invented the swan-necked flask to create an environment known not to grow microorganisms. After sterilizing a nutrient broth in these flasks, he removed the swan necks of the controls. Microorganisms grew only in the controls, refuting spontaneous generation. Even though this particular form of spontaneous generation has been experimentally disproven, the atheist still clings to the basic concept in other forms. For example, the atheist believes that there was a time when nothing existed at all. Then, one day, the nothing exploded into the beginnings of today's universe! Another example is that atheists believe that before there was any life in the universe there were just chemicals and various forms of non-living matter. Then, one day, some simple cells popped into existence! Unfortunately, the beginning of the universe and the beginning of life are outside the capabilities of observational science since there is no repeatable experiment that can be performed to support or refute them. As a result, atheists will continue to believe in some form of spontaneous generation because of their faith that there is no God! **(Romans 1:18-32)**

### **How can you know the difference between mental illnesses and demon possession?**

You can't. Mental illnesses are diagnosed by a trained physician such as a psychiatrist, not by laymen. Also, the Bible provides no guidance on how we are to tell the difference between demon possession and mental illness which means that God has chosen not to equip Christians to do this **(Matthew 4:24)**. Since there is no special guidance to handle this situation, it means that just by doing the things God commands us to normally do, the demon possession problem gets taken care of. For example, if you share the gospel with someone who is demon possessed and they become a Christian, the demons will leave the person because the Holy Spirit comes to live in that person. And if you pray for that person, God can remove the demons from them **(Matthew 17:14-21)**. Keep in mind that demons are just angels that follow Satan and they are limited in what they can do by God Himself. Hollywood (a street in California that is also a symbol of the movie industry) has made the word "demon" seem frightening but the truth is that demons are terrified of Christians who are not ignorant of their schemes **(II Corinthians 2:11)** because if you start praying against them they are in big trouble **(Romans 16:20, Luke 10:17-20)**! If you ever get the feeling a demon is bothering you just start praying and ask God to help you and the demon will take off running **(James 4:7)**! The way people become possessed is by opening themselves up to demonic influence by rebelling against God and seeking occult experiences **(Leviticus 19:31)**. In other words the person essentially invites the demons in, even though they may not realize they are doing it. It's important to understand that a Christian cannot be demon possessed since the spirit of God already resides in them **(Eph 1:13-14, II Corinthians 1:22, I John 4:4)**. So, only non-Christians can be demon possessed. And for this to happen, the person would have to engage in some activity seeking supernatural knowledge other than the Bible. Some examples are: ghost hunting, seeking alien or UFO experiences, séances, tarot cards, Ouija boards, horoscopes, palm readings, astrology, seeking knowledge of near-death experiences or testimony from those claiming to have visited heaven or hell, messages from appearances of Jesus or other religious figures, etc **(Deuteronomy 4:19, Deuteronomy 18:9-14)**. There is also one other way a person can become open to demon possession. That is if they are the child or grandchild of someone who is deeply immersed in one of the things in the list above **(Exodus 34:6-7)**.

**(Matthew 4:24, Matthew 17:14-21, II Corinthians 2:11, Romans 16:20, Luke 10:17-20, James 4:7, Leviticus 19:31, Ephesians 1:13-14, II Corinthians 1:22, I John 4:4, Deuteronomy 4:19, Deuteronomy 18:9-14, Exodus 34:6-7).**

### **Did Jesus know He was God as a baby?**

No. Jesus has been God from eternity past and He always will be into eternity future, but when He came to Earth He emptied and humbled Himself and took the form of a man **(Philippians 2:5-8)**. In other words, He temporarily limited Himself. We know that as an adult He was fully aware of who He was and He had memories from eternity past before His human birth **(John 8:58, John 17:5)**. We also know that at the age of twelve He had a partial understanding of who He was because of the incident of staying behind in the temple as his parents left town **(Luke 2:42-52)**. The reason we know His knowledge of Himself at age twelve was partial is because after the event Luke records in verse 52, **"And Jesus kept increasing in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men"**. If He had complete knowledge at that point He would not have needed to continue to increase in wisdom. So, the process appears to be one where Jesus acquired more and more knowledge of Himself as he grew up. As a baby He had no knowledge and by the age of twelve He had a pretty good idea who He was but His knowledge was not yet complete. By the time He was an adult He had full knowledge of who He was. Notice that Luke 2:52 does not describe this as growth by learning. It just says His wisdom continued to increase. The revelation of His identity as God was not something that was learned in the human sense of learning. It was revealed to Him by God the Father slowly on a pre-determined timetable. **(Philippians 2:5-8, John 8:58, John 17:5, Luke 2:42-52)**

**QUIET TIMES ALONE WITH GOD**

***JEREMIAH 15:16***

**THEME: *Were there other believers in the God of the Bible around the world during Biblical times?***

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Deuteronomy 7:6-8***

**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Isaiah 45:20-22***

**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Joshua 6:1-21***

**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

**QUIET TIMES ALONE WITH GOD**

**JEREMIAH 15:16**

**THEME: *Were there other believers in the God of the Bible around the world during Biblical times?***

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *I Samuel 4:6-8***

**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Joshua 2:8-11***

**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Daniel 3:28-29***

**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

**QUIET TIMES ALONE WITH GOD**

***JEREMIAH 15:16***

**THEME: *Does God judge us on our actions or motives or a little of both?***

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Ecclesiastes 12:13-14, Romans 2:22-24***

**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *John 14:15-23***

**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *1 Corinthians 4:1-5***

**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

**QUIET TIMES ALONE WITH GOD**

**JEREMIAH 15:16**

**THEME: *Does God judge us on our actions or motives or a little of both?***

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Philippians 1:15-17, Proverbs 16:2***

**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *II Chronicles 16:9, I Samuel 16:7, Proverbs 4:23, Proverbs 21:2***

**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Matthew 6:1-6***

**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

**QUIET TIMES ALONE WITH GOD**

***JEREMIAH 15:16***

**THEME: *Does God judge us on our actions or motives or a little of both?***

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Matthew 5:27-28***

**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Hebrews 4:12, Proverbs 21:27***

**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *1 Chronicles 28:9, Luke 1:49-51***

**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

**QUIET TIMES ALONE WITH GOD**

***JEREMIAH 15:16***

**THEME: *Does God judge us on our actions or motives or a little of both?***

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Jeremiah 17:10, Revelation 2:23***

**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Mark 12:28-30***

**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Romans 2:5, Jeremiah 17:9***

**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

**QUIET TIMES ALONE WITH GOD**

***JEREMIAH 15:16***

**THEME: *Does God judge us on our actions or motives or a little of both?***

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *James 1:22-25***

**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *James 2:14-26***

**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *1 Peter 3:15***

**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

**QUIET TIMES ALONE WITH GOD**

**JEREMIAH 15:16**

**THEME: *If God isn't fair how does that contradict the idea that He is just?***

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Psalm 147:5, Psalm 118:1, Mark 10:18***

**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Ecclesiastes 11:9***

**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Jeremiah 17:9, Proverbs 14:12***

**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

**QUIET TIMES ALONE WITH GOD**

***JEREMIAH 15:16***

**THEME: *If God isn't fair how does that contradict the idea that He is just?***

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *II Corinthians 5:7***

**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Hebrews 5:12-14***

**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Romans 9:14-23***

**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

**QUIET TIMES ALONE WITH GOD**

***JEREMIAH 15:16***

**THEME: *In Matthew Judas returned money/hung himself in Luke he bought field/intestines spilled. Why?***

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Acts 1:16-19***

**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Matthew 27:3-10***

**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Colossians 4:14***

**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

**QUIET TIMES ALONE WITH GOD**

***JEREMIAH 15:16***

**THEME: *In Matthew Judas returned money/hung himself in Luke he bought field/intestines spilled. Why?***

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Mark 14:11***

**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *John 19:1***

**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Zechariah 11:12-13***

**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

**QUIET TIMES ALONE WITH GOD**

**JEREMIAH 15:16**

**THEME: *Spontaneous Gen. / How can you know the difference between mental illness/demon possession?***

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Romans 1:18-32***

**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Matthew 4:24, Matthew 17:14-21***

**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *II Corinthians 2:11, Romans 16:20***

**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

**QUIET TIMES ALONE WITH GOD**

***JEREMIAH 15:16***

**THEME: *How can you know the difference between mental illness/demon possession?***

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Luke 10:17-20, James 4:7***

**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Leviticus 19:31***

**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Ephesians 1:13-14, II Corinthians 1:22***

**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

**QUIET TIMES ALONE WITH GOD**

***JEREMIAH 15:16***

**THEME: *How can you know the difference between mental illness/demon possession?***

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *I John 4:4***

**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Deuteronomy 4:19, Deuteronomy 18:9-14***

**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Exodus 34:6-7***

**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

**QUIET TIMES ALONE WITH GOD**

*JEREMIAH 15:16*

**THEME:** *Did Jesus know He was God as a baby?*

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION:** *Philippians 2:5-8*

**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION:** *John 8:58, John 17:5*

**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION:** *Luke 2:42-52*

**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**