

# The Reflector

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## INDIVIDUAL ACCOUNTABILITY!

In Ezekial 18 we read of how the Jews were complaining that they were being punished with the attack and captivity at the hands of Babylon. They said they were being punished because of the sins of their ancestors rather than their own sins. Ezekial says that was not the truth. He makes the following statement in verse 18 of this chapter: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him." It is very clear from this statement that the Bible teaches the principle of "individual accountability." This means that you and I are responsible for our own actions.

It is important for us to understand this principle because of the fact that on the day of judgment we will be judged on an individual basis. 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 5:10 says the following: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." If we make it to Heaven, it will be because of how we have lived our individual lives on this earth. If we end up being lost, it will also be because of how we as individuals have lived our lives. This means that God is a "fair God" because He leaves it up to you and me to determine whether or not we make it to Heaven. It would not want it any other way.

ANSWERS TO LAST MONTH'S BIBLE QUESTIONS:

The first king over the nation of Israel was God himself. He reigned over Israel from Heaven. The Jews rejected the reign of God because they wanted an earthly king so that they could be like all the other nations of the earth. Jesus was the next king to reign from Heaven. This He began to do when He returned to heaven after His resurrection. (1<sup>st</sup> Samuel 8:1-9/Daniel 7: 13-14/Acts 2:29-36)

The Lord's church was established on the Day of Pentecost, which fell upon Sunday. We read about the establishment of His church in Acts 2. (Leviticus 23:15-16/Acts 2:47)

QUESTIONS FOR THIS MONTH:

What two Old Testament prophets predicted that Jesus would be both a priest and a king at the same time? (Name the person in the Old Testament who was both a priest and king as well.)

What are the names of the first and last Christian martyrs in the New Testament?

PSALMS 23

*"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. (Provision) He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside still waters. He restoreth my soul: (Peace) he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. (Guidance) Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; (Assurance) thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. (Comfort) Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of my enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. (Blessings) Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." (Victory)*

Is it any wonder that Psalms 23 is a favorite section of scripture for many people? These words remind us all of the blessings and the victory that come when the Lord is truly our shepherd. Jesus is our **"good shepherd that gave his life for his sheep."** (John 10:11) That is why we as Christians should be optimistic; we have victory in Jesus Christ! (1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 15:58)

## IS THERE GOING TO BE A RAPTURE?

No doubt you have heard the term "Rapture." It is a term used to talk about an event that is supposed to take place at some point in time in the history of man. Jesus is supposed to come back "in the clouds to raise up the dead saints and change living saints and take them up into heaven for a period of 7 years." Many passages of scripture are used to teach this doctrine, all of which are obviously misused. For example 1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 4:13-18 is used to teach the doctrine of the Rapture. These passages however are talking about the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Christ at the end of the world. These passages do not allow for Jesus to come back to earth after 7 years which is what the doctrine of the rapture says is going to happen. These verses teach that the saved will be with the Lord forever "in the clouds and in the air." (Heaven)

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 15:50-54 are verses that also are used to teach the doctrine of the Rapture. However, once again these are verses that speak of the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Christ and not the rapture. During the 7 years that the saints are supposedly up in heaven, down on earth "the Great Tribulation" is supposedly taking place. During this period of tribulation people will be dying. But according to 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 15:50-54 says that "death is swallowed up in victory." And so these verses have been misused also. The fact is that death will be destroyed only when the final resurrection of mankind takes place and it will take place according to John 6:39,40, and 44 "at the last day." Furthermore John 5:28-29 teaches that all mankind will be raised up at the same time; not just the righteous as the doctrine of the Rapture teaches.

The Bible in no place teaches the doctrine of the Rapture. It is a false doctrine that offers a false hope and leads people away from the truth. The next time that Jesus Christ comes back it will be to bring this world to an end and to judge all of humanity. (Acts 17:30-31/2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 5:10) There will be no signs before His coming for the Bible says that Jesus will come "like a thief in the night." (2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 3:10/1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 5:1-4) Therefore it is imperative that we be ready at all times for His coming! We do this by living righteous lives each and every day! (2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 3:10-14) ARE YOU DOING THIS RIGHT NOW? (I hope so!)