

## Ask Jeff 10-11-2023

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Well, good evening. It's 6:30 Central Standard Time, and it is time to commence our large group adult Bible study here Wednesday nights at First Baptist Church of Opelika. But before we get to Bible study, there are two very important public service announcements that I must make. One of them is going to be a little difficult for our radio audience because they're listening at 10 a.m. on Sunday. They could technically be a part of it. The second one is applicable to each and every one of us. The first one, I'm sure most of you are aware of this, but per our Constitution, it needs me that I share this with you. This Sunday, we have the privilege as a church family to affirm an individual who we already know dearly and love. Will Spivey is our current college pastor. He's being recommended by our personnel committee, our search team, and our deacon body to take the role of our next generation pastor, which was formerly held by Dan Strickland, which is basically the individual who guides and administrates all of our age-graded ministries. Now, before I go to the next point, for those of you who have not heard me say this, our college ministry is not gonna actually have a vacancy for a while. Will's gonna wear both hats for a while. So our college ministry is gonna continue on with him, I guess, placing himself in both of those respective roles. But this Sunday, all four services, 8:30, 9:45, 11 o'clock in this room, 11 o'clock upstairs, we have the privilege as a church body to affirm this decision going forward.

Second thing I need to share with you is this Sunday night at 6 p.m. we're going to have a very special service where I'm going to address from scripture the current conflict that's happening in the Middle East, specifically what we know as the nation and the land of Israel. I know it's on each and every one of our hearts and our minds, and so we're going to address it Sunday night from what the Bible has to say about what is taking place there, not only in light of historical events that have led up to this, but prophetic events that may or may not come out of this. Now just to remind you, some of you who may not be able to be with us on Sunday evenings, those that are watching by way of television or online or even by way of the radio, we broadcast and we record everything we do. So if you're not able to be with us in person or maybe you have a conflict, it will be accessible. It will be archived for later dates. But this Sunday night at 6 o'clock, we are going to address that issue in a very thorough biblical manner.

Now, tonight it's time for some Bible study. If this is your first time with us here either in person or online or maybe by way of 97.7 FM our radio audience, every conversation,

every discussion, every issue we discuss tonight has the privilege of being originated by you. This is a Bible study that is driven by and originated by you. You say, well how do you do that? Well, In-house tonight on Wednesday nights, there are two main ways that you can be a part of our Bible study. The most frequently used is what we know as text messaging. Almost each and every one of you has a cell phone of some type. You can text message us, area code 334-231-2313. You submit your question, gets filtered through, it ends up on the screen in front of me. You can also submit a follow-up question, whether it's staying on topic, tangent two, completely different, whatever it may be, it will show up as well. Those of you here in person also have this privilege. You can raise your hand. When you raise your hand, you lose your anonymity. See, text messaging, we don't know who you are. We don't know where you are. You could be in the room, you could be next door, you could be on another continent. We have no idea. In-house, if you raise your hand, you get the floor, you lose your anonymity in this room. We know who you are, and that's fine, because we're all family. Just to let you know, your image nor will your voice be heard and/or seen on television, the internet, or the radio. So you're anonymous to the world at large, just not the world in here.

So that being said, we're about to open the floor to the questions that you desire and Chris has already tipped me off. He said, okay, Jeff. He said, we're living in unprecedented times. There's a whole lot of chatter going on out there about current events. And he said, so guess what? The first question is going to deal with what's happening out there because he said, I'm getting bombarded by it. All right. So I don't know how many of you have submitted questions about it, but I think he's done his best to consolidate, if that makes sense.

Which means, "Is the current war with Israel and Palestine fulfilling prophecy? Does the year 2028 signify the end of the generation that shall not come to pass before Christ returns?" This will be our only question tonight. No, I'm kidding about that. Let's actually address this series of questions. Let's do so somewhat in reverse. It ended with, are these events, if they are prophetic in nature, which they could or could not be, if they are, then how does this match with what Jesus said about being the last generation? So let's go to Matthew chapter 24 to begin our study. Matthew chapter 24, and then we're gonna make our way to Psalm chapter 90 in just a moment. Matthew chapter 24. Let me remind you as you're finding this chapter in scripture, Matthew chapter 24 and 25 are a section of scripture known as the Olivet Discourse. This is the most thorough, most lengthy, most precise information that we have from the mouth of Jesus Christ regarding end times events. Those of you that like big fancy words, eschatology. Let me set the scene and set the stage. Peter, James, John, and Andrew. Does that strike you odd? Usually it's Peter, James, and John, right? But Andrew comes along, these four guys, they pull Jesus aside on the Mount of Olives, which just so happens to overlook what we know as the Temple Mount there in Jerusalem, and they ask him two very strategic questions, "When shall these things be," which was in reference to the tearing down of the temple that Jesus spoke of, "and what shall be the sign of your coming?" Those two questions lead Jesus into chapters 24 and 25 of what we know as the book of Matthew.

Now, in chapter 24, beginning in verse 32, Jesus uses an illustrative material known as a parable. He says, "Now learn a parable of the fig tree. When his branch is yet tender and putteth forth the leaves, you know that summer is nigh. So likewise ye, when you 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; heaven and earth shall pass away but my words shall not pass away." Now a couple things we need to address and I guess foremost is two times Jesus says to all these things. Now you know what the word all means right? All. If you read the previous 31 verses, you're going to discover there's a whole lot of things that are happening, right? And so again, we're not going to go into each and every single one of those, but Jesus' reference to quote this generation that is the last in nature, it's not regarding one specific event. It's regarding a host of activities and a host of things that collectively encompass what we know as end time events in scripture.

So that's kind of the first thing. The other aspect is when he said the quote last generation. Now the question asked about the year 2028. We'll talk about why that could be or not be important in a minute. Go back to Psalm chapter 90. Right in the middle of your Bible, Psalm 90. The Lord gives us some very interesting insights regarding what we know as a generation. Now before we read this passage, this question tonight and the subject matter of what's happening in Israel is dealing with chronological generations. A chronological generation obviously is a time frame or a span of time obviously from one age grade group to another one, i.e. from their parents to their children to their grandparents or grandchildren, etc. That's a chronological generation. The Bible also speaks of what I call a philosophical generation. When Jesus looked out on the crowd and he said, "This is an adulterous generation," he wasn't just picking out one chronological group, he was picking out all of them. So the word generation can mean a way of thinking or a predisposition to thought and/or construct, but it can mean chronology. In this context, we're talking about dates, we're talking about numbers, we're talking about the ticking of the clock, okay?

That being said, in Psalm 90, verse 10, it says, "The days of our years are three score years and ten," or seventy, "and if by reason of strength they be four score years or eighty, yet it is their strength, labor, and sorrow, for it is soon cut off and we fly away." Now, in your Bible, when we speak about quote generations chronologically speaking, there's a lot of interesting options. One option for a generation is actually a hundred years. You say, where do we get the idea that a generation is a hundred years? We get it from Genesis 15, all right? All the way back in Abraham's day. Now if you go back to Genesis 15, you also discover people lived a whole lot longer back then than they do today so you can kind of understand the construct there. That's really the only mention of any generation being of that length, okay? Once you make your way past Abraham and get into what we might call normal life cycles, typically in your Bible, a generation is just what we read, 70 to 80 years, the expected, projected, and possible lifespan of a human being.

Now, even today in our culture, we understand that that's a pretty good broad range for what we can and/or should expect from life. Some of you are like way past 80. We call that living on grace, is what we call it, all right? I mean, you're there, right? But this is a

generally expected term. Now, I've met people who passed away in their 60s, and they know about this verse, and they're like, somehow God cheated me out of some years. I'm like, no, no, no, no, God didn't cheat you. It's an average, okay? 70, 80 years is considered a generation. There's also another number that's thrown out oftentimes with generation. It's the number 40. Okay, 30 to 40, typically 40, which is ranging more of the expected difference between one generation and their children's ages. Does that make sense?

So, but the most frequently used one is what you just read, 70 to 80 years. Okay, so the big question is what does that have to do with this question, right? Well, the reason that's important to this question is today, there's a great conflict happening in the land known as Israel. And before I go here, let me remind each and every one of us. When we deal with any issue regarding what we know as Israel, we're not talking politics. We're talking theology. Okay? Israel is a theological issue that politicians have hijacked for their own agendas and purposes. Okay? So be clear about that. Israel has been spoken of, talked about, and prophesied long before any of those guys and gals ever lived. Right? So this is a theological biblical construct.

Why 70 to 80 years? Why the year 2028? Because it was in 1948 that we know the modern nation state or entity known as Israel came into re-existence. You say, what do you mean re-existence? Do you know what we just read in Matthew 24? When the fig tree begins to bud. Do you remember what Jesus did on his way to Mount Calvary, actually a couple days beforehand? He walked by fig tree that didn't have any fruit. Remember what he did to it? He cursed it. And then on the Mount of Olives, he makes this incredible parable saying when you see the fig tree begin to bud. In 70 AD, what we know as the Israelite people, the Jewish people, experienced what we call the dispersion. The Romans, if you've ever seen the movie Masada, Masada is kind of the exclamation point on that experience. Roughly 40 years after the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Jewish people are expelled and basically disseminated throughout the world by way of the Roman Empire. They were a people without a permanent home until 1948. And by the way, just as a historical antidote, find any other group of people who have that story where you are dispersed from, eliminated from your home. Oh, and by the way, between the years of 19, roughly 37, 38 and 1945, 6.5 million of them are slaughtered and they still have the ability to regain sovereign... you know what that's called? The hand of God is what that's called, okay? Now, that being said, 1948. So if you do Psalm 90 verse 10, 70 to 80 years is a generation. 80 years from 1948, if I do my math, is 2028, correct? And so the thought is, okay, it's 2023 at the time of tonight's Bible study, we're within five years of this generational time frame that God said was 70 to 80 years. And so, per the question, is it possible that what we're seeing is directly related to the fact of what Jesus said, we are in the last generation.

Now, let's qualify that. Okay? Two things. Number one, he said all these things and he said it twice. Okay? One of those things is mentioned in verse 15. Jesus calls it the abomination of desolations. I can promise you that has not happened yet. Okay? There are other events that have not happened yet. There are a host of events that haven't happened yet. Okay? Or have happened already. So that's an issue. The second issue is

this, when we speak of what we know as Israel, okay, as an entity that is the origination of and the fulfillment of biblical prophecy, we have to kind of peel some layers apart. For example, 1948. Israel becomes a sovereign state recognized by the United Nations, great. Did you know they didn't have Jerusalem? And the question we have to ask ourselves, do you really have Israel if you don't have Jerusalem? That's the city of David. That's the place where the temple and where the worship took place, which really distinguished Israel from everybody and anybody else. It wasn't until 1967, in what we know as the Six Day War, that Jerusalem became a part of Israel. So if we wanna apply the 70 to 80 years from then, now we're projecting way out, correct? There are even some would say, well, okay, fine, you've got a sovereign state, you've got Jerusalem, but do you really have Israel if you don't have a temple? There's no temple. And so one of the things we have to ask and question ourselves is where does all this, where do all these aspects fit into the great prophetic puzzle? And my response to you is we don't know. Okay? We don't know exactly how all these things work with these generations. Was it a sovereign state? Was it Jerusalem? Is it when that quote third temple is going to be built? And so let me just remind each and every one of us, rather than saying, oh wow, I've got five years to get my life right before Jesus comes back, why don't we say, he might come back right now, I need to get it right now.

Okay, so again, yes wonderful to study. Yes, we are living... Here's the the Meyers-ism. Okay, hopefully I won't offend anybody in the room. All right Jesus when he spoke about end time events and all these things, Jesus used the illustration of birth pains. Okay, and those of you ladies who've been through that process, men, those of us that have at least I was in the room when it happened, I didn't experience any of it and I'm not gonna claim to okay, we know birth pains that when that begins, a baby's coming. I mean, once labor begins, it's happening, right? I would say that as of this moment, I may say something differently come Sunday night, because I don't know what's gonna develop between now and then. I would say right now what you and I are observing is Braxton Hicks. Some of you guys went, I don't even know who that is. Braxton Hicks is the name that we give when a woman who is pregnant experiences false labor. It feels like labor, it seems like labor, contractions take place, but the baby is not in the chute coming out. Sorry ladies, I said it that way. Please forgive me, all right? It's called Braxton Hicks. What you and I right now are seeing looks a whole lot like it, sounds a whole lot like it, but we don't know yet if we actually got a baby coming. Does that make sense? Now, things may develop as time goes on. And by the way, in events such as this, they change from day to day and hour to hour. They truly do. And so again, 2028 is critical for a 70 to 80 generation if what Jesus meant was them becoming a state again as a victory. If he didn't mean that, then it has nothing to do with it. Does that help out a little bit?

Any other questions, concerns? I know we're gonna talk about it Sunday night. Anybody, anything? Paul.

"What is the significance of the year 6000 of the Jewish calendar?" Now this is a really good question that ties directly into all of this, is what we know as the Jewish calendar does not look like ours, okay? Our calendar says it's the year 2023. If you've done any study of the Gregorian and/or Gentile calendar throughout the years, the chances that it's

actually 2023 is like zip and none, okay? We mess everything up, alright? That being said, the Jewish calendar goes back biblically speaking and they take the chronology of the biblical accounts of individuals, stories, events, etc. and they go back and they believe, and by the way, if there's anybody that I would believe, it would be them. Why? Because in the book of Romans chapter 3 it says if there's one advantage that the Jew has they've had the oracles or the word of God for generations, okay? That you go all the way back. They would claim that you and I today are living in the year 5784. Thank you very much. We're in 5784 right now. Now the reason that 6,000 years is important is because when you go to 2 Peter chapter 3, remember a day with the Lord is of a thousand years, a thousand years is of a day, you go back to the Genesis account in chapters 1 and 2, it says that there was a creative order that was initiated over six days and the seventh day was the day of rest, and the belief or the construct is that there will be 6,000 years of human experience, etc., and that that last thousand years will be the reign, the physical reign of the Messiah whom we know as Jesus Christ.

Now you say, well, why is that important? Because you and I are sitting there going, oh man, 2028, that could be it. Well, according to the Jewish calendar, we've still got 200 plus years. Now, I've got news for you. Jesus is coming back when he wants to come back, all right? Whether our calendars agree or don't agree. But it is fascinating if you were to ask me, if you were to really press me and say, okay, which one would you side with? Chronologically, I'm gonna side with the Jewish calendar, okay? But you cannot deny the words of Jesus that he said when the fig tree blooms, this is the last generation. What I don't know, and by the way, you don't know either, did that start in '48? Did it start in '67? Or is it yet to start as of yet? I don't know, okay? All that being said, I would say Jesus told the parable, the blooming of the fig tree, there is ample evidence that we might not know the day or the hour, but we are getting closer than we've ever been. And it is very evident around us. You and I are observing, we are witnessing in real time what preachers and commentators and studies of God's word hundreds of years ago could never have imagined seeing.

It says, "Why did Jesus make the fig tree wither?" Matthew 21, Mark 11. Again, the fig tree, I apologize for not addressing this earlier, in your Old Testament more often than not is used as illustrative material to represent Israel. Now think about this. Matthew chapter 21, Jesus is walking down the road. He goes to get a fig. There's no fruit. He curses the fig tree, correct? He says there'll be no fruit, right? If you take a broader picture that you kind of take a step back, Jesus has given some pretty good commentary on Judaism versus what's about to be biblical Christianity. Judaism has run its course. There's no longer a need for the temple. There's no longer need for sacrifice There's no longer need for these things because he's about to shed perfect blood for the sins of the world. And so that being said, the time has come. The fig tree, though, is emulative of Israel, the people of God. The fruit may be cursed, but the tree's gonna bloom. Does that make sense?

So that being said, when you go back to these passages, I think Jesus has given us a huge commentary on what's happening, because he's basically telling these individuals, you know, none of those disciples, none of them, could have ever imagined that when Jesus

breathed his last breath and they took his body off the cross, that that temple veil was gonna rip. They couldn't have ever imagined it. They couldn't have ever imagined all the events that took place during what we know as that Passion experience. And yet Jesus said, here we go. And the temple that used to be on a mount where you'd have to come thousands of miles or hundreds of miles to bring a sacrifice to was now gonna be our body that the Holy Spirit was gonna reside within. And so the fruit was cursed, but the tree is gonna bloom again.

So again, hopefully those constructs kind of work out together a little bit. Anybody else on this one? We're good? Everybody's good? All right, Sunday night, 6 o'clock, we'll flush it all out. Does that sound good? All right, we'll be good.

It says, "Besides Isaiah chapter 53, what other Old Testament scriptures would be useful to share the gospel with a Jew?" We're just kind of staying on theme tonight, aren't we? Here we go. Now for those of you not familiar with Isaiah chapter 53, Isaiah 53 is probably the most concise, most specific passage of text that we have in the Old Testament regarding the specifics not only of Jesus Christ and his identity but what he will perform and what he will do as far as his crucifixion and his allowing himself to be given for humanity sins, okay. That's the passage where it says he will be slain for us. He will bear our transgressions and our iniquities, etc. It is considered the Achilles' heel of Jewish theology. In other words, when you're talking about a, by the way, you know Jewish people as a whole do not believe the Messiah has come as of yet. But when you get to Isaiah 53, it really does picture what Jesus Christ has already done and so therefore the Achilles' heel. But that being said, lots of apologetic arguments that Jewish theologians would use or rabbis contrary to.

So here's the question. What other passage would quote you use? You ask me. My opinion on this text, obviously it's all good, is I would go to any and all the passages that mention prophetic statements specifically about who the Messiah would be. For example, in the Old Testament book or the minor prophet known as Micah. Okay, Micah makes it very clear that this Messiah will be born in Bethlehem. Okay, it's very clear. Nobody's gonna argue with it. Nobody's gonna dispute it. Guess where Jesus Christ was born? Bethlehem, there you go. All right, Psalm 22 says that this Messiah will have his hands and his feet pierced. Well, guess what happened to Jesus on Mount Calvary? He had his hands and feet pierced. And so again, this is one of those things you can search pretty readily and easily on the internet, just a list of Messianic prophecies in the Old Testament. My opinion is I would go to any and all these prophecies and talk about how Jesus Christ historically fulfilled them.

Now, I like to begin at the beginning. You say, what do you mean the beginning? The first prophecy about Jesus Christ is actually in Genesis chapter 3. Genesis chapter 3 verse 15. Adam and Eve have sinned. The Lord begins to express the consequences of quote their sin, and the thing that he says to the to the serpent is he says that the woman, okay, the seed of the woman, the seed of the woman will crush his head. That's what we call the first gospel or if you want to get fancy the proto-evangelum. All right, why is that important? I was not a biologist, nor did I ever claim to be one, but last time I checked,

the seed comes from the man. Seed from a woman means it's going to be a supernatural what you and I know from Isaiah chapter 7, a virgin birth. Well, guess what? You want the biblical proof that Jesus Christ was born of a virgin? I know the Bible says it. All you've got to do is go to John chapter 8. In John chapter 8, the Pharisees argued with Jesus because they claimed that he did not have a legitimate birth because no human male would claim him as his physical seed. Know what the Bible says about Joseph, his supposed father? And so even the enemies of Jesus recognized nobody knows who his earthly father is because he didn't have one. And so you go all the way back to Genesis and you have all these prophetic elements. So again, we could go through them all night. There's 48 of them. And Jesus Christ fulfilled each and every single one of them exactly as it was spoken.

So any other Old Testament prophecies of Jesus? Yes, ma'am.

[unintelligible]

Ooh, the Antichrist. That's a great question. Those of you could not hear her soft of spoken voice, when it comes to the Antichrist will he fulfill any of those as well? This is where it gets interesting because when you begin to look at who... All right, we're just gonna go ahead and do it. Go to Revelation. Here we go. Here we go. Okay, there we go. All right, it's been a while since we've been there. All right, Revelation chapter 13. Revelation chapter 13. I'm gonna begin in verse 13 and 14. This is kind of a...other than 2 Thessalonians 2, this is probably the most concise text we have regarding whom the Antichrist will be. Verse 13 and 14, it says, "And he doeth great wonders, so that he makes fire come down from heaven on earth in the sight of men. He deceives them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast, saying to them that dwell on the earth they should make an image of the beast which he had been wounded by the sword and did live." What you have there are several, not only statements, but innuendos. Number one, he's able to do incredible supernatural things if he can pull down fire from heaven, correct? Number two, it says he does wonders and miracles pretty divinely appearing. Three, deadly wound and he lives. Now, let me remind you, anti-Christ does not mean red suit horns and a tail. It means not the Christ. I personally believe the biblical evidence is the anti-Christ figure will present himself as a messiah figure, as a Christ figure. And so when you go back, it's a great question, you go back to the Old Testament scriptures, is it possible that whom we know as the Antichrist for lack of better terms, will present himself as the fulfillment of those prophecies? Well, one of the prophetic statements is that the Messiah, Jesus, of course, would be born in the tribe of Judah. Correct? Okay? Do you really believe, by the way, back in Daniel chapter 9, it says in verse 27 that the Israelites in the end times, they're going to sign a covenant, an agreement with the Antichrist. Okay? They're going to join with him in a covenant. That's a big deal. Do you really think that they would recognize somebody as a Messianic figure that did not come from the tribe of Judah? In other words, there's probably a good chance at least he's going to present it as if, if that makes sense. Secondly, wonders, miracles, signs. You go to 1 Corinthians chapter 1 verse 21. It says a Jew requires a sign. Well, what did we just read? Signs, wonders, miracles, okay? And so I do believe that whomever that individual is, there is going to be ample amount



of biblical prophetic possibilities that the Jewish people will be blinded to whom he actually is. Now, where do things go sideways? Well, according to 2 Thessalonians chapter 2, which is a fulfillment of Daniel 9, that temple isn't built now that one day will be, it says he walks into the temple and he declares himself as God. Okay? Well, who is and was Jesus Christ? He's God, right? The only difference is, there's a whole lot of other stuff going on in the background that's not of God, yet he claims to be God, because then there's death, destruction, etc.

Does that help a little bit? Yeah. Now, again, all 48, you get into questions. Does that mean that whoever this person is, nobody's going to really know who his father is? Now, by the way, I'm going to go there, not just because I feel a little frisky. Is that okay? Alright, one of the most popular movie/cultural aspects of the last 50 years. It's a phenomenon known as Star Wars. Y'all remember Star Wars? Alright, there we go. It's interesting this is how we get desensitized and this is how we don't necessarily see what's happening before us. The initial protagonist who became the antagonist was Anakin Skywalker. Remember that? And if you watch the series, you know what's interesting about him? In the movie, nobody knows who his dad was. Well, isn't that interesting? And you remember what Obi-Wan Kenobi called him? The chosen one. The chosen one who has powers that nobody else has, but nobody knows who his dad is. Do you see it lining up there? But guess what happens at the end of the third movie? And by the way, I'm spoiling it, but if you haven't seen it by now, this is your fault. Okay? What happens? Little Anakin Skywalker becomes Darth Vader. He revealed who he really was. Isn't that fascinating that one of the most popular movie series that's come out in the whole world in the last 50 years actually kind of walks down the path you just talked about, this horrific evil character who presents himself as the chosen answered one until they discover who he really is.

So again, I do think there's ample evidence. How specific will it be? I don't know. So, yes ma'am?

[unintelligible]

Satan is an imitator. Absolutely. Oh, absolutely. The question, if you couldn't hear it, Satan is a great imitator of the true things of God. Would he not present himself as a false representation? Oh, absolutely. Absolutely. I believe that whomever this Antichrist figure is one day, I believe he will be considered the messianic figure of the Jewish people and I believe the Islamic people are going to accept him as what they call the 12th Imam, which is a very messianic figure in their culture and their belief system as well, because if there is ever going to be a temple built on that piece of dirt in the future, somehow, somehow the Jewish people and the Muslims have got to agree on something and if they agree on who that person, and I'm gonna be honest, if you can broker a deal on the Temple Mount to make the Muslims and the Jews all happy and excited about it, you are supernatural, okay? So I think that all kind of works in the same play.

Anybody else. Oh Yes, ma'am, I'm sorry. The hand was right there. Yes.

[unintelligible]

Your grandson is 10. About? Sure. Right. I got it. Right. I get it. I don't think crossing your fingers is going to help. But the question is, and this is a real life question, 10 year old grandchild in your case, who comes from a Christian home, has not yet expressed faith in Jesus Christ, we see all these events happening around us, oh my, what do we do? Now the beautiful thing about that is, number one, the Bible doesn't use this phrase, but it speaks of what we often call the age of accountability. I mean, again, I'm not speaking directly of him, but it would go to all of our lives. Do they yet understand the difference between according to Deuteronomy 1, good and evil? Meaning, do they know what sin is, the ramifications of sin eternally, and what Jesus Christ did to satisfy our sins? Okay? That being said, when all these things just, again, there's a whole lot of end time events that I know we can get in the weeds on, at the end of the day, I don't know when, I don't know where, and I don't know how. Well, I kind of do know how, but I don't know when, necessarily where. At the end of the day, please understand, we serve and we believe in a God of grace, and of love, and of mercy, and therefore, just keep praying, keep sharing. And I've heard people say this to me and at some level, I think my wife and I did this about 20 years ago, well, 20 plus years ago, is, man, all this stuff's happening. Man, I don't want to bring a child in the world and risk that. Well, if that's how we lived, nobody'd bring anybody into the world. What if the Jewish calendar's right? If we've got another 200 plus years to go, then there's nothing to worry about timeframe for your grandson. But we don't know.

I'm going to share with you, it kind of relates to your grandson, one of my favorite stories. Some of you may have heard this that happened in my life. Years ago, many, many moons ago, when I was in college, I had the privilege of interacting with, in my opinion, it was not a name that any of you would know, in my world, it was somebody I dearly respected and loved that was a pastor and an evangelist. Spent most of his life in ministry in basically the Eastern European block, but he did spend some time in the US. I had the opportunity to go to dinner with him. He and I happened to be, I was a student, he was a graduate of the same institution. So we're sitting there at a restaurant, we're talking, and he asked me this question. It's a pretty important question. He said, "Jeff," he said, "if tonight, if God told you that he was coming back in one year from tonight, what would you do?" I said, "I got 365 days and it's over?" He said, "Yep, it's over. What would you do?" I said, "Man, I'd drop out, I'd go knock on every door in America and tell them Jesus is coming. Get ready." He said, "Wrong answer." I said, "What do you mean wrong answer?" He said, "If Jesus comes back a year from tonight, he expects you to be on the third floor of Moody Library studying to graduate." And what he taught me that night was, don't get so consumed with what might happen in the day's future that you forget our responsibilities of day's presence. Because guess what? Whatever God's called you to do, he expects you to be doing that when he comes back. Because we don't know when.

And so to your grandson, each and every day, pray, share, and don't read the headlines into the Bible because if you read the headlines into the Bible, we're all going home tomorrow. But we don't know. I mean, I want you all to think about this. And some of y'all were alive, obviously young, but alive. We're talking about prophecy, okay? And

even though Israel wasn't a state, can you imagine what Bible-believing Christians thought in 1942 when the Jews were getting slaughtered? Because you know one of the marks of the Antichrist is a hatred of and a disposal of the Jewish people. Can you imagine they were having conversations like this going, "Man, we may not have another year left." And they're reading these passages about the fig tree going, "I don't know what Jesus really meant there. It usually means Israel, but man, they're all getting killed. Could it be?" And so here's my simple answer. In tonight, but wake up tomorrow, do what God's called you to do, and if he gives you another day, do it again, whatever that is, you know. And be, guess what? If Jesus comes back next Wednesday night at 707 Central Standard Time, he expects us to be in this room. But we don't know. But I'm really looking forward to it if it happened. I just want y'all to know. I'm ready.

So anybody else on that one? We're good? Moving on. It says, oh boy, let's have fun. "With so many medicinal marijuana dispensaries popping up, what is the biblical response to the use of medicinal marijuana or CBD products?" I thought we were all friends. All right, so there's actually a biblical response to this question. In the book 1 Timothy toward the end chapter 5, whom we know as Timothy, remember was kind of a mentee of the Apostle Paul. He's a mentee and he's struggling. The Apostle Paul tells him to take wine for his stomach's sake. Now, he did not say take wine for the party's sake. Did y'all hear that? What he was communicating is there are medicinal properties in alcohol. You don't believe me, it's called Nyquil, right? In other words, what you and I cannot deny is there are entities, there are properties, there are chemical combinations on planet Earth and natural plants, herbs, etc., that have incredible medicinal properties but when we take those properties and we twist and we turn them, shall we say, for the purpose of checking out and/or numbing down, in this case, we've gone from using it as medicine to maybe recreation, for lack of better terms, okay?

Now, I'll give you a very good example. I'm not gonna ask for a show of hands, but I just would expect it would be a... If you, in this room, on the other side of the camera, listening to the radio, if you have ever had any kind of major surgery, okay, at some point now you may have an allergic reaction. I'll just tell my story. I had the blessing, oh the blessing, morphine whoo. That's good stuff, right? Oh, yeah and I'll tell you what, you can feel it go through. It goes all the way through. All right, now you say what does that have to do with the question? Now, there's a big difference in a morphine IV drip for post-surgery processes than being in a back alley putting it in your veins in a needle. You understand the difference? One of them is medicinal. The other one is recreation and/or rebellious and for other reasons other than your body's sake. Okay?

And so what you and I have this very difficult task of doing is where is that line? On this specific issue, oh boy, man, I mean we got opinions everywhere. I mean they're just all over the place. All I know is this, is that if you get a 30 day prescription of something that comes in a bottle and it is in pill form and you take it twice a day with water, that's medicine. If you're out on the back porch smoking, that's recreation. I'm being honest with you, right? Okay? And so the Bible talks about substance for medicinal purpose versus substance for other purpose and I think that's a tough, and sometimes it's a fuzzy line to draw and you can get in the weeds, no pun intended, real easy. Y'all liked that,

didn't you? And by the way, I've got to go there. Y'all know I'm a sports fan. The Ohio State Buckeyes. You either love them or hate them, right? Has anybody ever noticed that the logo on their helmet looks like a marijuana leaf? I mean, seriously, it really does. All right, I know it's supposed to be a Buckeye leaf, but every time I see it, I'm like, oh, goodness gracious, here we go.

But again, the Apostle Paul said take it for your stomach's sake. Medicinal. Now, here's where it gets interesting. Medicinal according to the doctor or medicinal according to scripture because the Bible also says have no appearance of evil. "Oh, I'm just doing it for medicine's sake." Oh, really? Have no appearance of evil. And so again, there's that healthy balance there that's tough to work out. But again, biblically speaking, there are a lot of entities on planet Earth that we use for medicinal, and by the way, I'm not a doctor, medical doctor. I know what morphine did for me and I love it, okay? But again, it has its right place, right time, right purpose. You twist it and you turn it, you get in a bad situation. So I think on this issue specifically, I think the biggest issue here is that this product originated in a recreation form and now it's being spoken of in a medicinal form where the other items started medicinal and became recreative. And that's, I think, where it gets tough to bounce. Please no follow ups. Can we just go to the next one? All right.

Here we go. Next one. "What is the word of faith movement? Is it a false teaching?" Oh, yes it is. What is the word of faith? The word of faith movement is basically a theological construct that says this, if you speak it, it shall be. You're speaking a word of faith. So for example, just a hypothetical, a word of faith would be something like this. I go to my house tonight okay, and I go out to the driveway. It's an empty driveway and you know what, "God I need a car." So I'm gonna put a big X in my driveway and I'm gonna speak a word that tomorrow morning there's gonna be a red Ferrari right here. You say that's crazy. No, that's the word of faith movement. "I'm sick," word of faith says speak healing. Now, does God heal? Yes, he does. But God doesn't heal because you spoke it. God doesn't give because you spoke it. Alright?

The word of faith movement, the problem with the word of faith movement, let me give you this illustration, it's the tail wagging the dog. Okay? When we pray, when we seek, by the way, I've prayed for healing. I know you have too, right? Okay? When you're in that hospital bed and the morphine's not working, you praying for healing. That's right, you pray for healing. If you don't have a car, you pray for one. If you can't pay your bills, you pray for finance, you do, right? But there's a difference in saying, "God, if it be possible, would you please provide? And you know what, God? I believe it. It has to be. Give it." That's what the word of faith movement is and it's technically considered what we would call the prosperity gospel.

And when it says, is it a false teaching? Yes, it's a false teaching because where do you find that anywhere in the New Testament? You don't. You don't find anybody in the New Testament doing what we call name it and claim it, blab it and grab it, whatever you want to call it, right? But that's what it is, right? And one of the biggest problems with what we call the word of faith movement is you can believe all you want for healing and God may not give it. Ask the guy in John chapter 9. Went 40 years being blind and the disciples

said, "Man, what did he do wrong?" You know what Jesus said? "Nothing. This man was born blind for the glory of God." You say, well, what do you mean? Well, guess what? Sometimes, as the Apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians chapter 12, he was buffeted with a thorn in the flesh. Sometimes God says, "You know what? You're going to walk down that road so that as you honor me on that road, it glorifies me to others." That road may be sickness. That road may be an absence of a red Ferrari, in my case. I'm just saying, here's the deal. I know sometimes I say stuff like this, and you're like, seriously Myers? One of the things you need to know about me is I have an aversion to error, an aversion to false information, and I cannot stand that which is not true. Hear me clearly. If the word of faith movement was true, I would believe it. I would be one, and I would do it. Right? Because ain't nobody can believe like I can. Oh man, I'll be out my driveway all night tonight. That's right. I'll even draw God a picture. I'll put it right here where it should be. But it's not biblical.

Even Jesus Christ, God in flesh, garden of Gethsemane, Matthew chapter 26. Remember he's about to bear the cup of our sins? You remember what he said, "If it be possible..." Those are the most powerful words in your prayer life, if it be possible. "God, if it be possible, bring healing. If it be possible, allow us to have transportation." If it be possible, allow us whatever it may be in your life. The word of faith movement switches it. The tail wags a dog and says, "I have faith. God, you have to do it." It's the genie in a bottle theology is what it is. "God, I'm going to rub the bottle and you have to give it to me." That's just not biblical. I'm sorry. It's just not.

Follow-up question says, "Do the people running or supporting this movement notice that it's wrong when there isn't a red Ferrari in their driveway?" Okay. At least you're paying attention. So here's the thing that's interesting about the word of faith movement. Okay. We're just gonna call it what it is. The people who propagate it are getting rich on the people whose prayers are not being answered. Okay? Tell you an absolute true story. Not that I would ever lie to you, but every now and then you just need a little encouragement, right? Decades ago, and by the way, he's back. He's in Florida and it's really bad. There is a word of faith movement guy. I'm gonna call him out by name because he is who he is. His name is Robert Tilton. Anybody remember Robert Tilton? Well, if you don't know who Robert Tilton is, he's still on TV, but it's like three in the morning on stations you don't watch. So here he is. Robert Tilton, he is an original word of faith movement guy back from the 1980s and the '90s. Then he went to prison for tax fraud. Funny how that works out. But nonetheless, so Robert Tilton, one of the things that he would propagate, and by the way all the word of faith people do this, is that if you will support their ministry, and if you will believe, and if you will give sacrificially, it shows your faith, and because God has seen your faith, he will provide what you're asking for.

I have a good friend of mine. He now currently lives in the state of North Carolina, but we grew up together out in Texas. This good friend of mine, you ever known somebody who's just too smart for their own good? He was just too smart for his own good and he was a lot of fun. The reason I say that is, as a young man, he saw what Robert Tilton was doing and he wrote Robert Tilton. I mean, this was before the days of email, right? Here's what Robert Tilton was famous for doing, okay? He basically wanted you to sow a seed

of a thousand dollars and God was gonna bless you tenfold. So my friend wrote Robert Tilton and said, "Sir, it sounds like you're in need of money. Why don't you give me a thousand dollars so God will give you \$10,000." Funny how it didn't work that way, did it? All my friend was asking is for you to live by the same rules you're asking us to live by, right?

What's interesting about the word of faith movement, the propagators of it have multiple red Ferraris in their driveways. The people who are giving to it are broke and sick and they prey upon them, is what they do. And they have found, I'll just call them out, I don't care if they're listening, they're con men and women, is what they are. They con people, they propagate their faith into their own prosperity. By the way, the reason we call it the prosperity movement, not because you get rich, it's because they get rich. is what it is. Alright? Just go look at their tax returns. It's public knowledge, by the way, and they're dripping in it for lack of better terms. But yes, the word of faith movement, yes, is a false faith.

Anybody else want to follow that one up? Here we go. If anybody would like to play a joke on the pastor, if I wake up tomorrow morning, there's a red Ferrari in my driveway. It's Pastor Appreciation Month. If it be possible. I'm joking. Okay, here we go. Nobody else on that one? Okay, we're good. Sorry. I really am joking. I promise. I'd rather it be a Porsche. No, I'm kidding. I'm kidding. I'm kidding. I'm kidding. I'm kidding. Sorry. Here we go. Let's get to Bible study.

You said the apostles had the ability to quote remit sins, that's John chapter 21 as opposed to forgiving them, that's John 21-23 we talked about last week. But you also said the apostles did not have any more of the Holy Spirit or more authority themselves than any other believer today. Does this mean that we all can remit other's sins? Now remember we talked about this distinction. Remit is the request to not be accounted for. Forgiveness is the ability to truly absolve. Okay? And in John 21-23, Jesus tells the apostles who have the Holy Spirit within them, he breathes on them, he says, whoever's sins you remit will be remitted, whoever's sins you don't will not. Alright? Go to Acts chapter 8 for just a moment. Acts chapter 8 and let me show you how this works in a non... actually, I apologize, Acts chapter 7. Acts chapter 7. This is the famous martyrdom of Stephen. Okay? Stephen's being martyred by a group of Jewish people, very upset that he is preaching Jesus as the Jewish Messiah, the true Messiah. I'm sure you know the story very well, beginning in verse 54, they get very upset with him, they began to slander him, and they ultimately stone him to death. Here's what's interesting. I'm going to begin in verse 58. "They cast him out of the city and they stoned him and the witnesses laid down their clothes at the young man's feet, whose name was Saul. They stoned Stephen, calling upon God, saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down and he cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." Now, is that remitting? Yes. Was Stephen an apostle? No.

Now notice whose clothes were at his feet? Saul. Guess what happens in two chapters? Saul gets saved and so I think you have evidence here that God moved in a mighty way with a non-apostle who essentially said, "God, don't lay this to their charge," and whom

we know as the greatest missionary to ever propagate the gospel of Jesus Christ was one that he was actually supervising it. He was, for lack of a better term, he was the supervisor of the stoning, right? Imagine, I mean you think the Lord's gonna take this well,? I don't. I mean, here is one of his own propagating the gospel being stoned. He says don't lay it to their charge and the man who was supervising it and who shows up in chapter 9? Jesus himself shows up and says, "You and I need to have a conversation." So I do think there's evidence that we have the capacity to remit, not to forgive, only Jesus can forgive, and it's not just an apostolic thing. So, that's pretty powerful, if you ask me.

Yes ma'am?

[unintelligible]

Yes. Yes. If we can remit sins, remitting, not forgiving, do we do so through intercession and prayer? Oh, absolutely. Okay? So, let me, real life, okay? And anybody who's ever had teenagers knows this, you pray a whole lot more for your teenagers than you did your little ones, right? It's amazing how with every day it increases your prayer life. But nonetheless, now I'm not saying it's happened in the Meyers house, I'm not saying this, but have you ever prayed this prayer for your own kids because I guarantee your parents prayed this for you, okay? "God, if it be possible, do not allow the consequences to be what I'm fearful they will be." I get a lot of nodding heads, right? Because you know what the synonym for teenager is? Idiot. Now for those of you that just are offended at that, you were a teenager too, and I'll call your parents and see what they have to say about things because my mom is up in the choir room right now and if you went to her and say, "Man we love Pastor Jeff. How was he when he was 16?" "He was an idiot," that's what she's gonna say. And you know what my mom prayed for me? "Please Lord, please. Please do not let this go the way I fear it would go." You know what you're doing? You're remitting. That's what you're doing. You're asking God to show mercy and favor and grace in a situation.

By the way, forget... the human race. Every single one of us deserves death. We do. The very fact that we haven't experienced it yet is the grace and the mercy of God. And so when we talk about remitting, please don't think that you're setting up a booth on the corner and having people drive by and confessing things to you. What we're talking about is people that we know in life that are walking down... Were these guys walking down the wrong path in Acts 7? Oh, absolutely. They were killing a believer in Jesus Christ for no reason other than speaking the truth. Okay?

Now, we see this a lot in the secular world. I'm sure you've seen this. I know some of you really have seen it because of your backgrounds and your professions. You ever seen anybody who, unfortunately, somebody in their family, their life has been taken, murder has happened, and you've seen them get on the stand and forgive the family? You've seen that, right? We use, they're really not forgiving them because they can't but they can remit. They can ask the judge to not lay the charge. They can choose, I mean, there's a lot of things there, right? But when they get on that stand and they look at that person and say, "I know what you did to my family member, I hate what happened, but I want you to

know I forgive you," we know what that means, human being to human being, okay? But ultimately, they have the ability to go to the Lord and say, "Lord, they committed this heinous crime, don't lay it to their charge." You have the ability biblically to do that. Okay? Here's the problem. There's not one of us who can remit every sin of every person in life. We're all guilty of some sin which without Jesus Christ condemns us to hell. So Stephen did not say, "Lord, don't weigh everything they've ever done." He said, "Do not lay this thing to their charge." It's pretty powerful if you think about it.

Anybody? Yes sir.

[unintelligible]

They're saying that God must love fools. Let me tell you how I heard that phrase. I heard that phrase as God takes care of children and fools and we're not getting younger. That's what I heard. The point is none of us would be where we are tonight if we did not have somebody who prayed for us. I'll call it straight. I don't mind saying it. I'm flesh and blood. If I didn't have a mama and a daddy and people that had prayed for me when I was a teenager, I would be dead. But they prayed and guess what? I pray for my kids and I pray for y'all and y'all pray for each other and again that all... You know, according to the book of Proverbs, we're fools. By the way, if you read through the book of Proverbs, look how many times the word fool shows up. It talks about it's a fool who doesn't listen to this. It's a fool that doesn't do that. And when you think the word fool, I'm joking around with the word idiot, what that really means is a fool is somebody who knows what they should do and they do not do it. Is that not the description of humanity? James 4:17, a man who knows to do the right thing and does not do it, to him it is considered sin. Sin isn't always what we do wrong, it can also be what we don't do right. We know the right thing to do and we don't do it. That's sin too. And by the way, the Bible says that person's a fool.

You know, I've had these conversations all throughout the years and please hear me. I really do, I joke a lot, but I really do have a very big sincere heart with people and I've told people, "If this is the decision that you choose to make, and you're going to objectively go contrary to the word of God, you're gonna go contrary to the wisdom of mature believers who've told you otherwise, according to the book of Proverbs, you're a fool." I'm not trying to be ugly. I'm just trying to be honest with them because that's what the Bible says. And so the joke that God takes care of fools, yes, is a pejorative carnal statement, but yes, it means roughly that.

We're wrapping up. We've got a minute left. Yeah, I thought I saw a hand. I didn't see a hand. Real quick is this is I saw something the other day that the English language is Hebrew backwards, that's God's language, or math is one to nine, any biblical reference to that? Here's your biblical reference: Hebrew is written what we would consider backwards but you realize if you're Jewish they think we write backwards. You ever thought about that one? Hebrew is actually read from right to left. Hebrew, it's backwards from how English is written, but a Hebrew word backwards is not an English word, if that makes any sense. And in Hebrew, one of the things that's a little bit different than



English is their numbers hold intrinsic values that our numbers do not. They have significance. That's why, and I know I'm kind of leading into probably next week, that's why when God says it's going to be 40 days or it's going to be seven days or it's going to be three days, there's more weight and significance to you and I say, "Hey, see you in three days," because in the Hebrew language, those numbers have intrinsic value beyond just our numbers that we use in our world.

Okay, time's up. Great night. Sunday night. Big night. If you can't be in person, online.

*Lord Jesus, as we depart from this place, God, thank you. 2 Corinthians chapter 11, God, thank you for the simplicity of salvation that is in Jesus Christ. God, there's so much out there. When we talk about Genesis, when we talk about Revelation, when we talk about all these issues and questions, Lord, we confess there's a whole lot out there that we just admit we're never going to truly grasp and understand, but God, there are none of us that cannot grasp the simplicity of our sin, the gravity of it, and the importance of Jesus Christ. Lord, may we never ever depart from that simplicity. It's in his name we pray. Amen.*

God bless you. If you brought kids, go get them. If you didn't, you don't have to worry about it.