

Ask Jeff 10.17.18

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All right, ladies and gentlemen. Before we get to all of the necessary items on Wednesday night, let me a little PSA, public service announcement times about three here, several things to make you aware of. You may have noticed this last Sunday when you were on our campus that we had in the Messenger that we were going to have a special called business meeting tonight for the purpose of solidifying that which the committee has given us for those entities in the next coming calendar year. However, we did not know that Hurricane Michael was going to suspend last Wednesday night's activities. Prior to printing, we have to give at least one week's notice and we also have one name that has not been solidified yet. So that being said, we're not doing that until October 31. So we're giving you two week's notice. October 31, the names will be available this Sunday around the campus as well as next Wednesday, the following Sunday etc. So rather than just one week, we're going two weeks out so there's plenty of time for communication to take place.

Speaking of future Wednesday nights, next Wednesday night we are still having the meal, the dinner as we normally do, but at 6:30 we're actually going to have a special worship celebration in the worship center. Let me tell you about next week. Next Wednesday night at 6:30 we're going to have a special worship time that's somewhat slanted toward more of a contemporary sort, and next Sunday morning the 28th, we're going to have a hymn celebration. So next week, we're going to be equal opportunity offender, we're going to offend everybody at some point next week. So but we do want to encourage you next Wednesday night, we're going to be in the worship center at 6:30. Next Sunday both at the 8:30 and the 11 o'clock service, we're going to be doing a hymn festival in our services as well. So those are upcoming events on Wednesday.

Now I mentioned that on the 31st of October we're going to have a special called business meeting for a very specific purpose. That's great, but it just so happens that what we know as Ask Jeff will take place on a night that is commonly referred to as Halloween and so we're going to have a special edition of Ask Jeff that night. That's right, we're going to talk about all matters related to that day on the calendar and all of the verbiage and stuff behind it. So bring all of your spooky questions, witch questions, ghost questions, all those kind of things, we're going to be dealing with that on the 31st of October.

Last but not least as far as announcements and this is actually on your Circle of Concerns at the very bottom of the back page, then we will deal with our prayer list. For those of you who have not seen our video that we posted to social media, we do have two mission trips going down to Port St. Joe and Apalachicola in the next two weekends. Many of you have asked how can we help, what can we do? Number 1, thank you, thank you, thank you. Last Sunday alone, we gave in excess of \$13,000 toward disaster relief. We've had more come in this week. We total that up every Monday so we'll give you a running total as we continue. So thank you and continue, please.

Secondly, we've had folks say, well, I'm great to give money because that's going to provide water and food and clothes but what about some tangible items? Well, allow me to inform you, right around the corner from the church there's a business, Maria's Jewelers, they're going to be collecting diapers. So if you want to give diapers for those who are in need thereof, just to let you know, there is not a Walmart within 100 miles of the damage down there. That's a literal number, that's not pejorative. That's real. And so there's no access to some of those items. So that is one of the very tangible items that they are collecting around the corner within our community, so if you wanted to provide that, they said just drop them off in front, the front door, and they will take care of those matters.

The two mission trips, they're going to leave on Friday afternoon. Now one thing I do want you to know, there are going to be teams leaving in stages. For example, some folks don't work on Friday, they're going to leave earlier. Some don't get off until 5-5:30, they'll leave later. Everybody will arrive on the scene on Friday evening. You will arrive back probably about midnight on Sunday. You're going to work all throughout the day on Sunday. It's about 48 hours on the field. There is no running water. There is no electricity. There is no showering. It is a true blue camping trip. Now here's the good news, when everybody smells, nobody smells. So it's going to be a good trip.

This weekend, Cameron Bell, our associate college minister, is going to be leading the trip down there. Next weekend, Trace H., our college minister is going to be leading the trip. You may say why those two guys? They have over a 10 year relationship working with these churches and ministries down in the area. They know everybody on the ground so who better to lead these trips than those two guys? But we need to know if you want to go on the trip on the Thursday before the trip leaves. So if you're tonight going, "You know, I might want to go this weekend." We need to know by tomorrow afternoon. Now that's an unusual mission trip. All we need is 24 hours in advance. Usually it's months in advance and such, 24 hours. So if all of a sudden next week on Tuesday you decide, "You know, I want to go next weekend down there." Great, we'd love you to. If you'd go to the website fbcopelika.com, on the front page there is a sign-up. That sign-up, when you click that button it will take you to what is called a Google document. It's just an interactive almost like a Word document. You can sign-up for the date, the time and all there and everything will be registered, okay? The only cost is your own expenses when you're on the field. That's it. There's no cost in advance, so to speak.

So thank you for doing that in advance and one thing we didn't mention on the video, that even though this is a long ways away, many of you said, "Well, I want to be a part of the official disaster relief. I mean, I want to be a part of mudding out, I want to be a part of the chainsaw crew." It takes a certification to do those things. We've had a certification in the past. We are going to do another certification in January of 2019 right here in the 316 Center or in 137 just depending on the size of the crowd. And many of you say, "Well, I can't run a chainsaw, I can't do mud out but I really want to be one of the first responders when these events happen." We need people to do administrative duties as well. We need people to do filing and communication. Communication is so difficult when you're down on the field. We will need folks just to be making phone calls and such. But you still have to be certified disaster relief to be able to go with that first wave of teams.

So let me concludes with this one last thing before our prayer sheet. It's a good transition. The first night that our chainsaw team was in Alabama, they saw an individual come to the Lord when they were working on their house. So that's why we do what we do and so that's an exciting thing to know that. So if we want to get trees off roofs and we want to clear pathways but we do the physical work so that the Lord can do the spiritual work.

All right, so Circle of Concerns right here. This is your prayer sheet. For those of you that are guests or visitors with us, you do not have to be a member of First Baptist for us to pray for you, we just need to know what's going on and whether that be locally in a local medical center, at home and such, as you can see on the front page, a lot of our folks with a variety of situations, even those at the bottom of the front page who are out of town that we need to be praying for. On the back, you will see at the top there is a congratulations. In good First Baptist, Opelika fashion, we have had another baby born since we've last met. But then there's the sympathy section, many families among our fellowship have had losses in their family and we want to continue to pray for those even if those losses were folks that were out of town. We want to continue to pray for comfort in the midst of all that is taking place. Then toward the bottom, the missionary prayer partners and those that are serving in the military oftentimes don't receive the communication or don't have the luxuries of life that we're so used to on a regular basis.

I read an article today that if you take those that are what we typically would say overseas in a poverty-stricken community, what we would call Third World countries, it's not a term we use commonly today but you know what I'm referring to. The reason I said that, a lot of those serving on the missionary field as well as the military, the average income today for those in that environment is \$5.50 a day. That's the average income in the world for those that are in poverty-stricken areas. So many of these people who are serving on the mission field as well as in the military are serving in regions of dire poverty. You say, "Well, why do you bring that up?" Because oftentimes it's in areas of dire poverty where the gospel spreads the quickest and the fastest. So what may appear devastating to us may be a wonderful harvest for the gospel.

Let's pray.

Lord, as we gather tonight, just in light of that recent information, we are such a blessed people, Lord, we are able to give what we give to the Panhandle, Lord, for the folks that are already on the ground, for the dozens of people who have already signed up and are willing to go and give an entire weekend of their life without the luxuries of life to help not only people restore their homes but hopefully if possible to restore their souls. Lord, we are a blessed people and, Lord, we pray for those who are on the mission field not just in the Panhandle of Florida and Alabama but for those on the mission field on the other side of the oceans in places where we can't even necessarily talk about because it would risk their physical lives. We thank you for the men and women who are serving in the military, who are willing to put themselves in harm's way so that we can be here tonight, we can open our Bibles up and there's no fear of retribution of what may come to us. We thank you for their sacrifice and their willingness. Lord, we are grateful tonight that even though there is a host of people who are hurting, who are sick, who've experienced death in their family, that you have given us the hope through Jesus Christ that passes and goes beyond anything this world could ever promise. May the old hymn be true in our lives tonight that we would rather have Jesus than silver or gold, that we would rather be his than have riches untold. God, I pray we'd say that about our health, we'd say that about our resources. Lord, we pray for the caretakers who oftentimes spend countless hours up late at night just making sure that the comforts are there for their loved ones. And Lord, we pray for those who are on our campus whether it's student ministry, children's ministry, worship ministry, wherever it may be on this campus, God, we just pray that your Spirit would operate through your word and that when we leave in a few hours, we would be changed for your sake. Lord, guide us as we open your word. May it be all about you. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

All right, I don't normally if you're a first timer with us here tonight, we don't normally have that many announcements on Wednesday night, usually we just cut to the chase. However it's not everyday you gather that you've had a Category IV hurricane hit your state in the last week, and so we wanted you to be aware of all those events.

Here on Wednesday night, we typically take our Bible study and we divide it into two sections. The first half is just a simple Q & A, you have the opportunity to ask any question you want. The reason I love Wednesday night is it's all about you. We talk about what you want to talk about. We go where you want to go. The best way to submit a question is on the website fbcopelika.com/askjeff. When you submit a question there, it goes directly to a database that my phone is linked to. It goes into some type of mathematical algorithm so don't think, well, there's 200 questions in the database, if I submit one today it's going to be 200 questions later. It might pop up next week. Some of you may have said, well, I submitted one 2 ½ years ago when you first started doing this and we haven't talked about it yet. It may come up tonight. I apologize. There's just an algorithm there. That's the absolute best way to submit a question. When you do so, you are anonymous even if you give me your email address because your email address does not come to this database. When I push the "answered" button, it sends a link to you to the audio and the video of that night just in the event that you were not here when your question was asked from the floor.

Now that's a great part about Wednesday night. The best part is when you raise your hand because when you raise your hand, you may lose your anonymity but you can take it anywhere you want to. You have the ability to say, "I want to talk about this. I want to talk about that." And we'll go where you want to go. And then lastly, we will continue our study through the book of Revelation which I'm prayerfully hoping that we'll get through before Jesus comes back.

So that being said, we're going to go to what we know as the database, get this thing pulled up here and it says, here we go. Oh boy, here we go. Whoever submitted this, thank you in advance for monopolizing our time tonight. Question 1 and the last question, four simple words that would take a lifetime to answer: who are the Nephilim? Does anybody recognize that word, the Nephilim? Raise your hand if you know that word Nephilim? A few of y'all do, y'all know the word Nephilim. What are the Nephilim?

All right, now we've got to go several places in our Bible. We're going to begin in Genesis 6. Now as we're turning to Genesis 6, you're thinking what are Nephilim? These are the big uglies of the Bible. These are the individuals who show up on the scene during what we know as the Noahic flood who are called giants of renown, men of great might, and what we're going to see tonight is there is a reference to the Nephilim during what we know, or shall I say prior to the flood of Noah, and there's also a reference to the Nephilim on the other side of what we know as the flood of Noah and I want to share with you kind of the explanations of why that might be or might not be.

But when you get to Genesis 6, I'm going to begin in verse 1, a very familiar story. It says, "And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose. And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years. There were giants in the earth in those days." Do any of your Bibles says there were Nephilim in the earth in those days? There you go. So the word "Nephilim," the word "giants," those are the synonyms here. There were giants in the earth in those days. I want you to hear their description, "and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same," this is a reference back to the giants and the offspring, they "became mighty men which were of old, men of renown."

So a simple explanation of what we know as the Nephilim, the Nephilim were connected to the offspring that are taking place in Genesis 6 between the sons of God and the daughters of men. We understand just based on that synonym that's used, that they were massive individuals as far as their physical size was concerned. We also understand that by the end of verse 4, they were mighty men of old, men of renown, the idea that we get is that they were not dying in a normal lifespans expectation. These were entities, these were, if you'll allow me to use the word, these were creatures who were mighty in size, mighty in life stage and incredibly powerful entities. And so what you see taking place here are these Nephilim or these giants that according to Genesis 6:4 are the offspring of the sons of God and the daughters of men.

Now as you continue the story in verse 5 it says, "And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them." Verse 8, "But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD."

Now that's the first passage regarding what we know as the Nephilim or the giants. The second passage, go to the book of Numbers. The book of Numbers, the Baptist daily reading book. Book of Numbers 13. The book of Numbers 13, there is another account in scripture of Nephilim or giants in the earth. Let me give you a little context here. This is the story where the spies are sent to the Promised Land. Remember the Israelites, they've come out of Egypt, they've gone across what we know as the Red Sea, they're in the wilderness. The spies are sent forth and remember they talk about that the grapes were as big as melons, it was a land that flowed with milk and honey, but the people, remember the report about the people? They said, "We are like grasshoppers in their sight." They're massive people.

Well, in Numbers 13 beginning in verse, I'm going to say, I'm going to begin in verse 26. I know it's a long passage but just put up with me. We've got to give it some context here. "And they went and came to Moses, and to Aaron, and to all the congregation of the children of Israel, unto the wilderness of Paran, to Kadesh; and brought back word unto them, and unto all the congregation, and shewed them the fruit of the land. And they told him, and said, We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it. Nevertheless the people be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled, and very great: and moreover we saw the children of Anak there." I want you to hold onto that verse, that thought. Underline it. Circle it. It's going to be important in just a moment.

"The Amalekites dwell in the land of the south: and the Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites, dwell in the mountains: and the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and by the coast of Jordan. And Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it." Pause. Does anybody know how old Caleb is when this story takes place? He's in his 80s. He is 80+ years old and saying, "Let's go whip these boys." Just you know, a little devotional for those of you that are tired.

All right, verse 31, "But the men that went up with him said, We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we. And they brought up an evil report of the land which they had searched unto the children of Israel, saying, The land, through which we have gone to search it, is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and all the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature. And there we saw the giants," anybody read Nephilim there? We saw Nephilim, we saw giants, "the sons of Anak,

which come of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight."

Now here's where I want to show with you, shall I say, the differences. In Genesis 6 you have the sons of God and the daughters of men. Their offspring produce these giants, these Nephilim who are not dying. They're men of renown, men of great power physically as well as longevity. But when the flood comes, everybody but Noah, his wife, his three sons and their three wives, they're all deceased in the flood. So the Nephilim as we see it are eradicated. When you get to the book of Numbers, these men who are giants, do you notice they are specifically of what lineage? They're the descendants of Anak, the Amalekite. So we see here though they are called Nephilim or giants, it is one specific lineage of huge individuals.

Now allow me to make a cultural reference. You know that my boys and I watch a lot of football, in fact, I was sharing with somebody that the way we do it on Saturday, I can actually have five games going on at one time, all right? That's what we do. I figure that's just what guys should do, we should watch all the football that's humanly possible. But that being said, we're watching the game the other night and one of my boys said, "Dad, that guy's huge! Where did the guy get that big?" And I said, "Son, I know who you're speaking of. He is of Tongan descent." For those of you that don't know, those that are of a Tongan descent from the Pacific Rim, they have a heritage of being massive massive people, all right?

Now when I say that, you understand that is just the heritage of the Tongan people. The Samoans tend to be very large in size. My people, not so much. But that being said, when I'm referencing that, it is not in Numbers 13, you're not seeing a generalization of humanity as much as you are speaking of a very specific group.

Now let me take you even one step further. These are the Amalekites, these are the descendants of Anak. Can anybody take a theoretical guess on what famous descendant of these people you might be aware of? Goliath. Goliath was a descendant of the people that is mentioned in Numbers 13. Now remember, Goliath was not an only child. Remember that? Goliath had four brothers. Now do you understand why David picked up five stones? You know when David picked up those five stones, let me tell you the commentary there. If I had been the color commentator watching that game, I'd of said, "He's not only going after Goliath, he's going to whip all of his brothers too." He had a stone for each one of those boys. When you go into the book of 2 Samuel 21 and you read about Goliath and his four brothers, it said they had six fingers on each hand, six toes on each foot, and Goliath measured over 9 feet tall.

Now is that a giant? That's a giant, is it not? The difference is the Nephilim in Numbers 13 are not mentioned as men of renown or men that are not dying, they're just mentioned as huge physical specimens from a specific family unit. In Genesis 6, you have this event taking place that's almost culturally worldwide where the giants have overtaken the land and sin is running rampant.

Now before we open up the floor, go back to Genesis 6, I do want to share one theological caveat. In Genesis 6:8 if I ever write my book, "All the Buts of the Bible," this is going to be one of them, it says, "But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord." Did it say that Shem found grace? Did it say that Japheth found grace? Ham found grace? No, it says Noah did. One of the things that you and I are not privy to is when you go through the chronology of the characters in scripture, it is very hard to disseminate whether or not that Noah's children, how the procreation took place. In other words, you get the idea that eight of them got on the boat because in 1 Peter 3 it says there were eight saved by water, okay? What you don't figure is once you get off the boat, it's really difficult with Noah's family to really match the lineages and chronologies and such. What you and I do not have access to is we don't know the heritage or the lineage of Noah's daughters-in-law.

Now on the surface it appears that those in chapter 6 are very different than those in the book of Numbers but there is a theological thought, I just want to give it to you, there are some that believe that Noah's, shall we say, his daughters-in-law, one or more of his daughters-in-law may have been somehow affiliated or a part of this Nephilim, giant tradition and brought that on the other side. If that is the case, then it would have had to probably only have been one of them because they're mentioned of a very specific family. The difference is they're not described as not dying, they're only described as physically massive. And so you do see great differences in the story but you also see one possible thread that would go throughout the entire thing.

So that is the story of what we know as the Nephilim in the Bible and if you watch the History Channel or The Learning Channel, they're always talking about guys like this all the time. They're going off to the islands and such and finding all these huge things and there's talk of what we know as the Nephilim. After you get to Goliath and his family and the book of Numbers, there is not a reference to Nephilim again in scripture. So there are no more after that point.

Questions, comments, thoughts, concerns, issues, what abouts? We covered it? We're good? Oh, back row or second to back row. Yes, ma'am.

[unintelligible]

Oh, you had to go there. Okay, so when we talk about the sons of God, in Genesis 6 allow me to share with you and some of you may be very familiar with this, there are two streams of thought on who these characters are in Genesis 6. You have the sons of God and you have the daughters of men, and getting together, shall we say, is producing a catastrophic event, correct? Because it says this only happened when they got together. There is what I'm going to call the physical perspective and then I'm going to talk about the supernatural perspective.

The physical perspective is that the sons of God are the descendants of Seth. Remember at this point we only are aware of three named descendants of Adam and Eve. We have Cain, Abel and Seth. Well, Abel is no more thanks to Cain. So we have Cain and we have

Seth. By the time you get to chapter 6, in fact, chapter 5 even lists out the lineages of these two sons, and the physical thought is, well, the sons of God are the descendants of Seth because Seth is presented as being somewhat of a righteous individual that's following the ways of the Lord.

So those were the sons of God and that the daughters of men are the descendants of Cain because we see in chapter 4 specifically that Cain not so much the way of the Lord, and so the physical construction is that these ungodly girls got with these godly guys and thus produced what we just read about. It makes a lot of sense until you start peeling away the layers because that presumes that every girl was bad and every boy was good. I mean, think about that for just a moment. I didn't say that, I just want to be clear. It presumes that all of Seth's descendants were righteous and all of Cain's were unrighteous because they're all destroyed in the flood. It also presumes that a godly individual who has a child with an ungodly individual could potentially have a giant which you don't see anywhere else. Even after the flood, even though we mentioned the Nephilim, there's no reference of that anywhere, in fact, there's people who are "believers in the Lord" who have relationships they should never be in and you never see anything remotely close to that. Yet here it says wickedness is so bad, it's horrific.

But that's the physical explanation. You've got godly men, ungodly women who are told to separate getting together, God's upset. Does that make sense? The supernatural one is the phrase "sons of God." It's only used three other times in your Old Testament. It's mentioned in the book of Job 1, 2 and 38, and in all of those references it is referring to an angelic being. The supernatural explanation is that what you and I would call the fallen angels procreate with humanity, create a hybrid race, that God is so upset that he destroys. For those of you who think that's crazy, that is the storyline of X-Men. It is. The comic series that are going to the movie theaters, that is the storyline behind every movie that is popular nowadays which I find interesting.

But that being said, the natural refute to that is, "Yeah, well, the Bible says in Matthew 22:30-31 that one day as believers when we go to heaven, we'll be as the angels and we will not marry." What does marriage have to do with procreation? And every time you see an angel in the Bible, they're always referred to as a man. Well, there's one aspect that distinguishes a man and a woman. I understand, I understand you hear that and go, "Whoa, that's crazy!" It sounds crazy except that a majority of the Jewish Hebrew scholars actually subscribe to that view because what they say is what was happening was so bad that it was tainting the future lineage of the Messiah, because remember in Genesis 3, it said the Messiah will come from the seed of the woman, it had to be a pure human lineage even though we know Jesus was all God, all man, and that because there was this hybridness, that that is why the Lord was so upset and Noah found grace because he and his family had not been tainted by this mechanism.

Now let me add another thing. When you get to Matthew 24, Jesus says that as we get closer to the last days, this will hopefully be a transition in a moment to the book of Revelation, it will be as the days of Noah. And you find it interesting that he says they will be marrying. It's almost as if Jesus says, "This relationship issue that was happening

back then is going to be happening again in the future." Ungodly people and godly people have been getting together for thousands of years and Jesus specifically said whatever was happening back then, you could see a duplication thereof. Now I'm not trying to read between the lines there but when you look at that statement in Genesis 6, God gets really upset about what's happening here and there is a dramatic result of it, so much so God says afterwards, "I'm never going to flood the earth again." Next time he does it with fire.

Does that help with the sons of God at all? I didn't answer the question, I just gave you two possibilities and said go whichever road you want to go because I've learned whichever road I say, half the room's upset. So I just find it interesting that the phrase "sons of God" every other time it's referenced is an angelic being. For those of you who say, "But what about...?" Yes, in the New Testament through Jesus Christ we are called the children of God and we are called a son of God but it's a complete change.

Does that help at all? A little bit? Any other Nephilim, angels issues? Yes, sir.

[unintelligible]

Yes, sir.

[unintelligible]

Okay, so the question is in regards to the supernatural explanation, what about the passage in 1 Peter that refers to the fallen angels? All right, 1 Peter 3 is where you're going. 1 Peter 3:18. By the way, and I'm not here to solicit the movie industry, but go watch some of these comic-based movies that have come out and watch the movies in light of the supernatural explanation of Genesis 6 and it's amazing to see. It also is the stream of thought behind all of Greek and Roman mythology, the gods above with the humans below. Think about Hercules, all these guys.

All right, so 1 Peter 3:18, "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison," this is talking about the time period between his death and his resurrection, a whole other question but not for yours, "Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ: Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him." Per your question, sir, when it's speaking about this activity that took place between the death and resurrection of Jesus, there's a reference back to the days of Noah and while referencing the days of Noah, it mentions the fallen rebellious spirits of which when you go to 2 Peter 2 and Jude 1:6, it talks about the angels that fell and left their estate that are now imprisoned and such in the past.

So this opens up a whole can of, "Oh my, is it possible, could it be?" Again, I side with the question earlier, the only other time you see that phrase "sons of God" in the Old Testament is a reference to angelic beings and you don't get the idea that all of Seth's lineage was perfect and Cain's was all hideous. But nonetheless, only Noah and his children and his wife were saved.

Does that help at all on that one? Not really? It's okay, you can tell me it didn't help.

[unintelligible]

Yes, the 1 Peter 3 verse does give support to the supernatural explanation.

[unintelligible]

Okay, so his follow-up question is, he said, I'm of the understanding that not all fallen angels are bound in prison unto such time.

All right, here we go. Go to 2 Peter, a few pages to the right, 2 Peter 2:4. This is going to support your opinion, sir. 2 Peter 2:4, "For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly." Again there is this connection with fallen angels with the story of Noah in another passage.

A few pages to the right, go to the book of Jude. Go to Revelation and hang a hard left. Jude, verse 6, it says, "And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day." That's just a generic verse in reference to.

Did those help at all giving you those passages or not at all?

[unintelligible]

A little bit maybe? Huh?

[unintelligible]

Yes, sir.

[unintelligible]

Okay now I see where you're going. Okay, so the point he's going, I know he was soft spoken and you couldn't hear was, and allow me to give a little more verbiage to what you said, not every one of the fallen angels, if the supernatural explanation is true, would have been involved in this endeavor. So therefore it's only those that were involved in it that were subject to this judgment even though they're all judged by God. Yeah. You do

know there's like 500 page books written on this topic that don't even touch on exhausting it so I know we're not going to solve it tonight. But what I do want to encourage you to do not just on this issue, whether it's the Nephilim or the giants or the sons of God, notice what we did tonight. I'm going to give you a little example here. All we did was take what the scripture says here and compare it to what the scripture says here. Here it's worldwide. Here it's one family. Here this phrase is used. Every other place it's angels of God. Every, not every but a lot of passages that reference fallen angels also are in context of Noah. So all we're doing is taking what the Bible says here overlapping it with what it says here and saying, "Hm, there's some conjecture there that we can put together."

Now I don't know if we've solidified our answer but we've given some insight, so to speak. I would say that no matter which road you take with the sons of God, the daughters of men, can we all agree it turned out real bad? I mean, it all turned out real bad. I mean, it was horrible the way it turned out. So neither way is a good way, it just depends on how you look at it compared to other scriptures.

So any other ones on the Nephilim? We're good with these guys? They're big, they're bad and they're dead. It's kind of like the old question, you know, people ask what happened to the dinosaurs? They died. What happened to the Nephilim? They're dead.

All right, let's transition. Book of Revelation 13. It's the antichrist again or the beast as Revelation 13 says. Revelation 13:11-15. We're not going to deal with the famous mark of the beast tonight. I'm going to reserve it for its own. Next time we gather together, it will be the mark of the beast. The following time we gather together it's chapter 14 of the book of Revelation. That's a wonderful chapter of scripture to study and here's why, we're going to study the famous 144,000 people of which you may have had a recent opportunity to meet somebody who claims to be a part of them when they come door to door and talk to you. So it's a very culturally relevant passage, not just a book of Revelation passage.

So Revelation 13, beginning in verse 11, it says,

11 And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. 12 And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. 13 And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, 14 And deceiveth 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, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. 15 And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.

Now I want to go ahead and take you back to 2 Thessalonians 2 because we're going to reference this passage quite a bit tonight so let's kind of lay these out and then we'll go into our outline. 2 Thessalonians 2, one of the most critical passages in your Bible in regards to a character known as the antichrist. As you're finding 2 Thessalonians 2, let me remind you the book of Revelation calls him the beast, all right? Here in 2 Thessalonians 2 he's going to be called the man of sin, the son of perdition. The only place where the phrase or word "antichrist" is used is in the book of 1 John.

So 2 Thessalonians 2 beginning in verse 1, it says,

1 Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, 2 That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. 3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; 4 Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. 5 Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? 6 And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. 7 For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. 8 And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: 9 Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, 10 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. 11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: 12 That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

Now the reason I wanted to share both of those passages from the very beginning is that you kind of have to overlap them, in a sense, because in chapter 13 of Revelation we have this description of the antichrist as this incredible miracle worker, this one who is able to mesmerize the masses. Well, when you get to 2 Thessalonians 2, you see the same description.

So kind of as we walk through this, just kind of some bullet points here. The first one is this, I mention it's all about imitation. Now allow me to repeat something that I'm sure I've shared numerous times with you. Whom we know as the devil, the antichrist, the devil in flesh, has never had an original thought in his mind ever. All he knows to do is take what God has already done and pervert it or twist it. He is an imitation thereof. If you have ever been in an environment whether it be clothing, handbags whatever, where you're dealing with imitations, you're dealing with something that from a distance looks the same but when you get up close and you feel it and you touch it and you examine it, you realize it is a knock-off, it is not the real thing. Therefore what we're seeing in

Revelation 13 when the antichrist shows up, from a distance he looks like the Messiah, from a distance he looks like the answer to all the world's problems, but when you really get up close, you realize he literally is the devil in disguise.

Now he comes according to Revelation 13:11, it says he had like a lamb, and what I mean by that is the imitation thereof is, I truly believe just as John 1:29 says when John the Baptist said, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world," I believe that the antichrist based on what we just read in those two passages will be an imitation of or a representative or a claim to be God. We just read in 2 Thessalonians 2, he goes in the temple, he claims to be God. He works miracles, signs, wonders. He even calls down fire from heaven. Isn't that what God did in the book of Genesis? He called down fire from heaven. And so you see "like a lamb" but notice he speaks "as a dragon." So even though his presentation may be as pretending or imitating to be of God, he is a dragon, he is the devil in disguise.

Now it's all about idolatry. Notice verse 12 of Revelation 13. In verse 12, let me get back there real quick, it says, "And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast." So anytime anybody is worshiping anything other than the Lord himself, that is idolatry and so what we have here with this antichrist figure is an idolatrous relationship.

I put on your outline here the concept of worship. Think back to Daniel 3. Remember when Nebuchadnezzar erected this massive statue of himself and he said when you begin to hear the instruments, when all the banging starts, everybody must bow, everybody must worship, all right? It was an image to himself. What do we have here in Revelation 13? They must worship the beast and his image. Now remember back in Daniel, for Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, when they did not worship, what happened to them? They were put in the fire, right? What's about to happen in the next few verses? Those who would not do this, it says they're not able to trade, they're not able to buy, and as we'll see next time we gather, they will lose their life. So you see the same story being presented, this idolatrous, you will worship this false representation of the Lord himself.

I put on here on your outline the "idol shepherd." There's a prophecy back in the book of Zechariah 11. For the sake of time, we won't go back and read all of it but whom we know as the antichrist is called the idol shepherd, i-d-o-l. It's a great prophecy that's thousands of years old and the reason that's important is, again, it just reemphasizes this concept that whom we know as the antichrist would not only be an imitation of the real deal but he will be idolatrous and he will be forcing people to worship or to spend their energy directed toward him and him alone, yet he is the wrong one.

Third thing here, I put on there it's all about impressing. Now what he does, he is going to woo the world with his talents, abilities, gifts and the supernatural. It says here and I'm just going to go through the list that's on your outline and I've given the parallel passage to 2 Thessalonians 2 for you. He comes with all wonders. This miraculous, the thing that shocks and awes and mesmerizes people. It says he brings down fire from heaven. As I mentioned earlier, this is exactly what happens in Sodom and Gomorrah when the Lord

brings down fire from heaven. You get the idea that his tactic of eliminating his enemies, that the fire is an assistance to that. I put the parallel passage in 2 Thessalonians 2:9, he has all power and signs. You see the supernatural surrounding everything he does. It says that he deceives and I put 2 Thessalonians 2 and 3, he deceives so that he is perceived as God. And finally, he does miracles and lying wonders.

The reason this is so significant to our study, allow me to somewhat repeat here, is I'm of the belief that when the antichrist shows up, he's not going to have horns, a red suit and a tail. The world is going to see him as the answer to all their problems. It is possible that he will reveal cures that we've spent billions of dollars to invent, we haven't invented them yet. It is possible that he will have the ability to eliminate people that people have been trying to eliminate for thousands of years. He will have the ability to marvel humanity. He really does it. All you have to do to humanity, now I'm going to generalize here, this is not an American thing, this is a world global thing. If you promise somebody that they will get something from you, they will follow you, or if you threaten them, they will lose something if they do not follow you, they will follow you. We see it all the time. In fact, one of the things I have a friend of mine that works in a specific country in Africa all the time and he says one of the things over there is they withhold food from people until they vote for them, then they give them food. That's just a necessary item of life. That's not even the supernatural and the miraculous.

So humanity by the billions today, why did Jesus call us sheep? Because we are sheep. We're stinky and we're stupid. We are. It's true. If you don't believe me, why do companies pay millions of dollars for 30 seconds of air time during a commercial? Because they know that as soon as you get comfortable watching that ballgame and a commercial for chips comes on, you get hungry and you go eat chips. As soon as a commercial comes on for a new truck, all of a sudden yours is old and outdated and you want a new one. And those are just 30 second commercials, imagine what we see here with wonders, fire from heaven, deceivableness. And so just an incredible display of the supernatural.

Now kind of going to the latter part here. Now we're going to focus back into 2 Thessalonians 2, this description that we just read about the identity, all right? Now we're not going to call specific names here but there's been a lot of speculation throughout time. The two phrases that are used in 2 Thessalonians 2, number 1, the man of sin, all right? So this is the individual, this is sin incarnate. There's nothing righteous about this guy at all. The second phrase that is used and this allows us to chase the proverbial rabbit all the way down the road, he is called the son of perdition. The other time this phrase is used, remember we just did a study in Genesis about comparing one phrase to another. In John 17, the garden of Gethsemane, Jesus makes this statement in his prayer to the Father, he says, "All you have given me are saved except the son of perdition." Well, who was he referencing? Judas, all right? That's an interesting thought in and of itself. But that being said, those are the only phrases used in 2 Thessalonians 2 and can we all just agree tonight if you're being paralleled to Judas, that is not a compliment at all?

So he's the man of sin, he's the son of perdition. Then we've got kind of the end of him. In 2 Thessalonians it says that by the brightness of his coming the Lord will destroy him, he shall consume him. In Revelation 1:8, it says that when Jesus comes back, the entire world at one time will see him. But he is destroyed at his coming. Later on in the book of Revelation 19, we know that as what we know as Armageddon, that the antichrist and all of those who are following him are destroyed in that famous battle, that famous Second Coming event. And the brightness of his coming. It says in Revelation 19 that he comes, the clouds part, he comes out of the sky. I've just a sneaky suspicion that's going to kind of be noticeable. I don't think anybody is going to go, "Hey, honey, what's that?" I think that's going to be quite noticeable because when he comes out, it says that there's a two-edged sword coming out of his mouth, his eyes are a flame of fire, it says written on his legs are "King of kings, Lord of lords," and when he descends the blood goes to the bridle of the horse. I've just a sneaky suspicion this is going to be a pretty significant event. Please note my spiritual gift of sarcasm there.

So his end, though, this is what's important, the antichrist even though he deceives humanity, even though he says he is God, even though he takes the place of God, even though he tricks humanity, he still has an end. When Jesus Christ shows up, his reign of terror is over. It's over. I mean, he doesn't even stand a chance. You've heard the old phrase when it comes to football, the game was over when they kicked off? Same thing, the minute he comes out of the sky, the game is over.

I put on here the pause. Now this is where it gets a little interesting. In 2 Thessalonians 2, it tells us that as we approach this coming day, that we should not be deceived, that before this happens there shall be a falling away that takes place, there shall be an apostasy and there are two phrases that are used in 2 Thessalonians 2:7 that I want to highlight tonight. The first phrase is this, "until he be taken out of the way, he that letteth be taken out of the way. I'm of the belief that the only entity that has the power or the authority to hold back Satan is God himself. So this word, you know, this rapture event that's taking up of the church where it talks about in 1 Thessalonians 4 and 1 Corinthians 15, that we shall be caught up together in the air, I've got news for you, if the Holy Spirit is taken out of the way, we're going with him because we go where he goes. So I'm of the belief that that is the reference to. It says that this antichrist figure will not reign, will not reap destruction unto he who letteth is taken out of the way. I know there's a lot of different opinions about the timing of all that but the picture you get in 2 Thessalonians 2 is that it is the Holy Spirit that is the only thing keeping the antichrist from running amok and when he is removed, the antichrist goes for it. Well, if he's removed, we're removed because we're removed with him.

Then secondly it says "then" that, here's what's important about that. Satan and all of his minions have been around since the beginning, they're revealed. In other words, it comes to light. The plan, everything that's been construed by the evil one takes shape, takes form and is manifested in a physical material means and ways. But go back to Revelation 13, how is he revealed? Miracles, signs, wonders. Allow me add false promises, guarantees of security, whatever it may be. "Follow me, everything's okay." But in the middle point he twists, he flips the script and what we're going to discover next time we

gather is this famous mark of the beast, it doesn't turn out real well. In fact, those who have the mark of the beast when Jesus shows up, it says it literally explodes in their body. That will be an interesting study.

Last but not least, the comfort. Anytime we talk about the things of the book of Revelation, anytime we talk about the antichrist, anytime we talk about all this stuff, it always brings up questions of, "Am I going to have to go through this?" It always brings up questions about, "When is this going to happen because I'm not real interested in it." I get that. Two phrases that are used in 2 Thessalonians 2. The first one that "that day shall not come." In other words, the Lord's making it clear, "Don't worry about this until this takes place, the falling away first." So the Bible makes it very clear that as we get closer to this happening, until that falling away happens, until the Holy Spirit and his authority is removed from the environment, then we don't have to worry about it.

Now there's been a lot of what I call misidentifications of the antichrist throughout the years. We'll deal a little bit more with this next time with the famous 666 but I remember back in the '80s, do y'all remember when they thought that Gorbachev was the antichrist? Y'all remember why? Because he had that big red mark on his head. Do y'all remember some people thought Ronald Reagan was the antichrist? Did y'all know that? Because his name was Ronald Wilson Reagan, 666. We have misidentified the antichrist a million times, here's the problem, when he actually shows, everybody is going to fall for him because he comes with signs and lying wonders and deceivableness. But I think the comfort of all this, what we just read, that day is not going to happen until there's a falling away first and he who lets is removed out of the way.

So I am confident today that even if this one day revelation being revealed of the antichrist, even if he is alive and kicking today, he is not having the authority, the power and will not reign until what we just read takes place, and I will be safe in the comfort of the Lord and I don't have to worry about it. If that's not an encouragement to get saved, I don't know what is. We don't know when all this is going to happen. By the way, that falling away, do you know what the word for "falling away" is? Apostasy. A profession of faith without having any. Woo, that's kind of contemporary, isn't it? It has all the trappings of the real deal but it's not. So a falling away first.

All right, let's pray and we'll be dismissed.

Lord, as we depart from this place, thank you that your word says you'll never leave us, you'll never forsake us. And Lord, whether we study the Nephilim in Genesis 6 or whether we study the beast in Revelation 13 and everything in between, Lord, how good it is to know that as believers in Jesus Christ you take care of us, you provide for us. Lord, you are our shield, you are our protector. Lord, your word makes it very clear we can lift our eyes to the hills and we know where our hope comes from, it comes from you and you alone. May you empower us with your Holy Spirit to go into the highways and the byways. Help us, O God, not just to come to church, help us to go be the church wherever we are. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Next time we gather, mark of the beast. Get ready, 666.