

Ask Jeff 1.10.18  
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The prayer sheet of First Baptist Church of Opelika, and I'm going to spend a little more time tonight kind of on the front end explaining some things because it's been a while since we've been together, in particular this sheet. This is how we communicate with our body the prayer concerns of our church. So if you have family, friends, coworkers, acquaintances, neighbors, whoever that you want us praying for, please let us know and we will get them on this sheet as soon as possible.

You will notice two sections that are longer than usual, that is our congratulations and our sympathy section. That is because it has been a while since we've met on Wednesday night and we wanted you to see all of these. So not all these babies have been born and not all these deaths have occurred in the last week. Actually this is through the entire Christmas season but we wanted you to be aware of all these situations, in particular those who have lost family members. So if you have the opportunity, you can reach out to them not only in praying for them but in however the Lord leads you to do so.

As always, at the bottom you have those that are our prayer missionary partners as well as those serving in the military. I do want to make one notice under the missionary prayer partners on the very far righthand side, middle column, Chase and Kimmy Barbary who are serving in Haiti, they are actually on our campus tonight. They are here stateside. They're up with our AWANA ministry with the children and sharing with them. They were in here for dinner. So if you run across them, make it a point to encourage them as they make their way back to the country of Haiti to serve in the ministry.

So that being said, let's pray and we'll get started.

*Heavenly Father, tonight as we gather, Lord, we do see all the names on this list and we know that it's not just diagnoses and diseases but, Lord, in a season where every time we turn around we're hearing about somebody who has the flu or has an infection or has pneumonia, Lord, we know that these bodies are but temporal and but earthy and, Lord, we are grateful and thankful that you have come not just to save our soul but one day to regenerate our body and, Lord, tonight we celebrate that goodness and your grace and your mercy but we call upon you to be the healing hand that these individuals need, to be the comfort that these families desire. And Lord, for those that are serving on the mission field, not only the Barbary's who are here stateside with us but those who are still on the field, continue to encourage them, continue to empower them, continue to allow them at*

*some level to see the fruit of their labor so that they can keep pressing on toward the prize of which they are destined. Lord, we do pray for those serving in the military, oftentimes in harm's way, oftentimes in places we can't discuss. Lord, would you be their peace, would you be their comfort and, Lord, if possible would you bring them home as quickly and as safely as possible? Lord, tonight on this campus as we gather as children and students and musicians and college students and here as adults, Lord, we just pray that as your word is opened up, Lord, that your Spirit would speak into our lives and to our hearts and that you would transform us from the inside out. It is in the name of Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.*

Alright, this evening I want to welcome you to Wednesday nights at First Baptist. I know there are many of you that are here for the very first time, some of you I've had the opportunity to meet that are here visiting relatives from out of state. We want to welcome you here to First Baptist, Opelika. Now let me kind of share with you how things roll on Wednesday nights. Our Bible study is divided into two sections. The first half is a Q&A session, we call it Ask Jeff because you're asking questions and my name happens to be Jeff. The second half is a Bible study that we're at the time right now we're walking through the last book of the Bible known as the book of Revelation. I'll unpack a little bit more of that in a minute but I do want to share with you some exciting news as we walk into the future and let you know kind of where things are rolling and headed.

Many of you are aware that beginning on Sunday night the 21<sup>st</sup> of January which is just 10 days away, our Master Life Bible study will begin and though we have a few groups sprinkled throughout the week, most of our folks are doing it on Sunday night and on Wednesday night. On Sunday night if you include our teenagers, we're going to have upwards of 800 people on our campus going through this Bible study. So it's going to be a busy time, it's going to be an exciting time. There will be if you're not in Master Life on Sunday night, there is still going to be a Bible study, there's still going to be a time of fellowship that will meet in the chapel on Sunday nights at 6 o'clock during Master Life. So there is still an opportunity for anybody and everybody to be fed spiritually on Sunday nights. On Wednesday night, there are hundreds of our people who will be participating in the Master Life Bible study. If you are not in Master Life on Wednesday night, you're stuck with me. Sorry about that but we're going to be hanging out here still. So what we know as our Wednesday night adult Bible study is still going to continue even throughout Master Life. So I just wanted y'all to kind of be aware on Sunday nights if you're not participating in Master Life, there's still a Bible study that will take place in the chapel, and on Wednesday nights if you're not in Master Life, on Wednesday night there's still a Bible study that will meet here in the 316 Center.

So for Wednesday nights, as I mentioned, two ways, two sections here. First is Q&A, second is Bible study. On the Q&A, if you've never been a part of this before, this is my favorite thing that I get to be a part of because everything that happens is because of you. You have the opportunity to ask the questions, we have the opportunity to discuss them. You have the right to ask anything you want and the majority of you do so by going to our website [fbcopelika.com/askjeff](http://fbcopelika.com/askjeff). You put a question in there, it comes to a database that I'll go to in just a moment. It comes up absolutely randomly and we go for it. You're

anonymous when you do so. I have no idea who you are, okay? So you can ask any question. If you're embarrassed, if you're ashamed, if you're like, "You know, I'm just not a real public person. I'm kind of shy." That's the best route to go.

Now if you put your email address in when you submit the question, once I push the button that says "answered," it will actually send you a link to the video of which it was answered just in case you weren't with us in person the night that it came out of the database. Secondly and this is my favorite part of Wednesday night. You don't have to just submit questions online, you have the right to raise your hand. When you raise your hand, though, guess what happens? You lose all anonymity but you get to take the discussion anywhere you want. If you want to go further into the topic, if you want to raise your hand and say, "I'm tired of talking about that, I want to talk about this," guess what? We will talk about whatever you raise your hand about.

So if you've never been a part of it, it's real casual, it's a lot of fun, and at times it gets a little bit scary. So that being said, we will go to the database and we will see what you want to talk about tonight.

It says in Genesis 3:1, guess where we're going to be? Genesis 3. It says the serpent talked to Eve. At that time, did all the animals talk or did just the serpent because he was Satan?

That is actually a really good question. Alright, I want you to begin in Genesis 3. We're going to start in Genesis 3 and we're going to find ourselves in a variety of passages this evening. This is one of the great questions of the book of Genesis. If you're not familiar, most questions that people ask either come from Genesis or Revelation. I'm still waiting for that question from the book of Nahum. So if you're out there, you know, go for it.

But Genesis 3:1, it says, "Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" Just like the question proposed, that here is the serpent, here is whom we know as this entity communicating, verbalizing to Eve about the situation in the garden.

Now I want you to go to the book of Revelation. Go to Revelation 12. Now I promise you, we're not going to go to all 66 books of the Bible on this one question but it is very pertinent to the question that was asked. In Revelation 12, beginning in verse 7, it says, "And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven." Verse 9, "And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him." Now the reason that I went to that verse in Revelation 12 is notice whom Satan is identified, it says "that old serpent," alright? So when you get into Genesis 3 and it says it is the serpent that beguiled, it is the serpent that spoke to, I think one of the mistakes that we have is we make the word "serpent" and the word "snake" synonymous and, by the way, that is the picture we typically have when it comes

to this garden experience, and that is kind of accentuated later on because it says that the serpent will go upon his belly. However in the context of the serpent being on his belly, the picture is that the coming Messiah will crush his head and will always be below him.

Really to explain it, it's kind of the square and the rectangle. You know that a square is a rectangle, right, by definition, but a rectangle is not always a square? A snake is always a serpent but a serpent is not always a snake. And I think what the Bible has done for us is, yes, it says "and the serpent spoke," and traditionally there is this picture of a "snake" on its tail standing vertical, speaking with Eve, and then at the pronouncement of the judgment, this snake is now on its belly slithering around as we see out in the wild or unfortunately even in our backyards today. However, biblically speaking in Revelation 12, Satan himself is referred to "that old serpent," so I think what the Bible is telling us is in Genesis 3 when Eve is having this conversation, I think we need to look past or beyond the concept of a snake and we need to look to the fact that she is dealing with Satan himself.

That being said, turn to 2 Corinthians 11 and then we will have some fun and open it up for discussion. 2 Corinthians 11:14. I'll give you a little bit of time. It's not as easy to find as Genesis and Revelation. It's easy when it's the first or the last book of the Bible. But in 2 Corinthians 11:14, it says, "And no marvel," do not marvel, listen to what it says, "for Satan," who by the way in Revelation 12:9 is called "that old serpent," "for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works." Now the reason I wanted to tie that verse in, is here you've got this serpent in Genesis 3, but when you get to Revelation 12, the devil himself is called that specifically "old serpent," and then in 2 Corinthians 11:14, it says do not marvel, don't be bewildered that Satan himself, he transforms himself, he changes into, what? An angel of light.

Did you know that every time you see the picture of an angel all throughout scripture, they're pictured as a man. That's how they're pictured. I know I've said this before, I'll say it again, the concept of the angels in Hallmark as short, little, fat, bald guys with harps is not biblical. It may sell a lot of stuff but it's not biblical. The picture in the Bible of angels are they look like men. Now ladies, don't get upset. I'm sorry that none of them are pictured as women. Take it up with God, not me, I'm must the messenger, okay?

But think about this for just a moment. When there's Abram and Sarah and they're right outside of Sodom and Gomorrah when Lot, their pesky nephew, is doing all his shenanigans, you remember that there were three visitors, three angels of the Lord, and they called them and identified them as men, but we learn later that they were angels. We have Joshua meeting the Captain of the Lord one day in the Old Testament and is pictured as an angel. And so all throughout scripture the angelic beings are pictured somewhat like humanity.

Now let's take all those verses and put them back into Genesis 3. When it says that the serpent spoke with Eve, is it possible that what you have taking place in Genesis 3 is Satan himself transforming himself into an angel of light and therefore presenting his

case to her that God doesn't know what he's talking about and she needs to "bite the forbidden fruit"? Now that is a different "spin" on the traditional picture of the snake slithering in the garden, however using other biblical texts, it lines up and when you get to Revelation 12, when he, Satan, is called "that old serpent," I think it is a direct reference to who was doing what he was doing in Genesis 3, not just a representative of the animal kingdom that Satan himself was using.

Alright, now that I've thrown out that fun stuff, any thoughts, comments, tangents? Yes, sir. Front and center.

[unintelligible]

Yes. Correct. Oo, that's a good question. For those of you who could not hear because he was on the front row, the statement was made that oftentimes in scripture we see people's names changed based on the function or whatever they're doing. For example, Jacob's name is changed to Israel, Abram's name was changed to Abraham, Saul/Paul, Simon Peter/Peter, etc., Cephas to Peter, we got all that. Alright, the question was why all these names of Satan? Now Satan's original name was Lucifer. That's in Isaiah 14. Lucifer by definition means the lighted one. Oo, do you see the tangent to this discussion? It means the one who is full of light. It means the one who represents light. That's why when you get to Ezekiel 28, Lucifer is pictured as the one shining glory on Jesus Christ himself.

So he was Lucifer, the lighted one, then he falls and the names that are used, this is interesting, the names that are used, we have Satan which, by the way, just means one who is accuser. We have the devil, which the name means adversary. Then we have the old serpent. Then we have the red dragon. Then there's another passage in Job where he's referred to as a worm, okay? He's actually referred to as a worm. Now here's what I find interesting about this. You and I live in a world today where the leading secular thought of progression is known as that which evolves, that which becomes greater, becomes smarter, becomes a survival of the fittest. When's the last time the world had it right, guys? What if the world has it backwards? What if we're not evolving, what if we're de-evolving? Because if you think about it, in the garden of Eden things were going pretty well, not so much now. On the other side of Noah's flood we lived 969 years, now rarely a tenth of that. And so what if this whole idea that we're progressing is actually backwards? The reason I say that and I didn't put this necessarily in order, these are names that are given Satan and the devil. He is our accuser. He is our adversary. We see that all throughout scripture. When he's called the old serpent, when he's called the red dragon, when he's called the worm, isn't it interesting and I did not put it in order, forgive me, but if you were to put it in size or magnitude order, from a dragon to a serpent to a worm is a de-evolutionary process. That old worm. So kind of an interesting thought to get your eyebrows to raise there.

The reason I bring that up is I think what you're seeing in his titles is not just a reference to Genesis 3 as much as showing though he presents himself as one who is increasing in power, by the way, when you get to the book of Revelation, this person known as the antichrist, in actuality he is actually going the opposite direction. He is one who was

above the throne of God. He was one that was all light and guess where he ends up as? A worm in a place the Bible calls not just hell but the bottomless pit and the lake of fire. So doesn't it make sense that according to John 8, Jesus said the devil was the father of lies, doesn't it make sense that the Father of lies would propagate a lie that was opposite of the truth so that we would buy into his system which is exactly what he did in Genesis 3? He convinced Eve and Adam that it was actually going to be good for them. Was it good for them? No. He actually convinced them that they would have wisdom and be like the gods. Did that happen? No. He completely deceived them and said, "Guess what, it will be better if you listen to me." But what was it? It was worse. What a surprise it's going to be to so many people to find out that the lie that the enemy has been propagating is that we're getting bigger, better, faster, stronger when in actuality we may be headed the exact opposite direction. Just a thought but it's a very good question.

Anybody else on the serpent, Satan, Genesis 3? Yes, sir.

[unintelligible]

Did he actually have horns? Well, in all the cartoons he does. Alright, so that's a great question. Why do we have the picture that we have of Satan? By the way, there is a cartoon image that Satan is in a red suit with a tail and horns, correct? Is that not the stereotypical image? The reason that we have that image is this, the redness comes exactly from this description of the red dragon, okay? The tail actually comes from Revelation 12 where it says with his tail he slings out a third of the stars, okay? The idea of the horns comes from Daniel 8 where he is called the little horn, alright? It's a picture of a prophetic word about the antichrist. And then what you see in Daniel 8 and then fulfilled later in Revelation is you see not just the little horn but another horn that rises to power, the false prophet in Revelation 13. Now the reason that's important is that image of the devil that looks so cartoonish is actually a compilation of biblical descriptions all wrapped up into one.

Now let me be very clear. When the antichrist shows up one day, I don't think he's going to be in a red suit with a tail and horns because everybody would say, "Aha, I know who you are." What is his mode of operation? What did it say in 2 Corinthians 11? He transforms himself into an angel of light. So the devil's best tactics are not revealing his true nature but hiding behind a false identity therefore allowing himself to not be discovered unless those are discerning of what's actually happening which is why 1 John 4:1 says that we ought to test the spirits to see if they're really of God because the devil's best tactic, I'm going to say it and it sounds ugly, the devil's best tactic is with a preacher and a Bible. It is, and the reason I say that is, and I guess I can say it because I am one, if that makes sense, is because if I can convince you that God didn't really say what he said and didn't really mean what he meant, then through "the church and the Bible" I can get you not to believe. Does that make sense? That's one of his best tactics that he's got.

So any other questions, serpent, Genesis 3, all that kind of fun stuff? Whoa, yes, ma'am.

[unintelligible]

Okay, the question is did an artist or an illustrator, that is actually, forgive me for using the word but I'm going to do it with a little "e," that's an image that has evolved over time. And by the way, when I use the word "evolve," the word "evolution" with a little "e" doesn't bother me at all, it's "Evolution" with a big "E." Evolution with a big E or a capital E means that we're going across species, evolution with a little "e" means we're changing within a species, okay? And I know I'm not as scientifically minded as a lot of people in the room but that's a simple definition. When I say that it has evolved, what I'm saying by that is it has changed over time. It really became popular in what we know today as the Middle or the Dark Ages. You were dealing with a society of limited literacy and to illustrate the truths of scripture, pictures were drawn a lot of times, what we would call cartoons today, and that is where we got this idea, this picture of the devil in that image because they took all this imagery and put it into one entity, if that makes sense. So it began kind of in the early stages of what we know as the Christian era. It really became popular in the middle of the Dark Ages. During what we know as the Reformation, it was a huge image that was used because, understand, the Reformation, so many people who were coming to faith were not literate and they were learning to read the scripture but pictures were utilized and such and then, of course, over time it's been modified lots of different ways but it's been around for hundreds of years, that idea. But it's just taking biblical imagery and putting it all together into one.

Yes, ma'am.

[unintelligible]

He is. Yes.

[unintelligible]

Okay, great question and as we know, my friend over here, she doesn't just ask one question, she asks like five all in one. But she led with if we know that Satan is a liar, which he is, and if we know that he is the father of lies, which Jesus called him, then when he offered Jesus the kingdoms of the world, was he lying?

Let's go to Matthew 4 and look at it. Matthew 4 is known as the temptation of Jesus. By the way, there's also Luke 4 which is a parallel passage here. While you're searching for Matthew 4, one of the things I love about the gospel of Mark is that most likely Mark was a teenager when he witnessed the life and ministry of Jesus so he talks like a teenager. Mark just says he went into the wilderness, he came out all good. Matthew was an accountant. Luke was a doctor. They give us a little more detail.

But in Matthew 4, we have this famous temptation of 40 days in the "wilderness." Beginning in verse 8, we come to the third temptation as is mentioned in the gospel of Matthew. It says, "Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus

unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him."

Now the question is a very good question: was Satan lying when he postulated this opportunity or this temptation? What is interesting about all of the temptations presented to Jesus in Matthew 4, is all of them are a truth for a certain time but not for that time. You're looking at me like I've got 14 heads. Work with me for just a moment. By the way, I think the greatest lies are 90% true. You don't believe me, go back to Genesis. In Genesis 2:16 when the Lord says to Adam and Eve what the rules of the garden of Eden are, there are 10 words that are used. In Genesis 3:1 when Satan tempts them, he only uses nine of them. He leaves out one word. Do you know what the word is? "Freely." God told them you can eat of every tree of the garden freely. Satan said did God say you can eat of every tree of the garden? Do you notice the slyness there? It was a 90% truth which may be the most dangerous lies.

Alright, that being said, I know we read that one particular one but most of y'all are probably familiar, the very first temptation that's given to Jesus is that he would turn a rock into bread, correct? Now, yes, he hungered, yes, he'd been there for 40 days and 40 nights, but let's think more prophetically, let's think big picture here for just a second. What the devil is asking him to do is to supernaturally cause and/or create or to provide food in an environment where there is no food, correct? That is exactly what happened in the exodus experience with manna, and according to Revelation 12, guess what? It's going to happen again. In Revelation 12 beginning in verse 12 and 13, there is a passage, upcoming event, the people of God, a time period known as the great tribulation where they're running from the antichrist, they're out in the middle of the wilderness and God supernaturally feeds them again. Isn't that interesting that what Jesus one day will do in the future what he has done in the past, Satan was tempting him to do right there in the wilderness.

The second temptation is throw yourself off from the pinnacle of the temple and let the angels take care of you. By the way, this was a misquotation of Psalm 91 where it says that the angels will take care of thee in all thy ways. Isn't that interesting how he always conveniently leaves out a few words?

And the third temptation is here are all the kingdoms of the world, fall down and worship me and they're yours. Now the question is: was he lying? Based on the first two temptations which were an opportunity – hear me out – to do the right thing at the wrong time, is it possible that the third temptation was the opportunity to do the right thing at the wrong time?

Go to Revelation 11 and let me show you what I mean. For those of you that are here for the very first time, this is just how it rolls. Revelation 11. This is a natural, perfect, wonderful transition to our Revelation study in just a moment. This is the seventh trumpet judgment. The book of Revelation has the seven seals, seven trumpets, seven vials or seven bowls. I want you to notice what happened. Can we all just agree that what



we're about to read is some time in the future and was not a part of the present of Matthew 4, alright?

Revelation 11:15, "And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world," isn't that what was being offered, "are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever." There is a time, there is a day coming where the "physical kingdoms of the earth" will be declared the kingdoms of the Lord. Back up a few pages into Revelation 1 and I want to show you something I find very interesting that I think is related to the question. This is what we call the salutation, the introduction, the beginning of the book of Revelation. I'll begin in verse 4 just for context. It says, "John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne," verse 5, "And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth." Now I want you to think about that for just a moment. He's called the prince of the kings of the earth. When he comes back in chapter 19 out of the heavens, what is he called there? He's called the King of kings and Lord of lords. Do you know what a prince is? That's a king in waiting. All you've got to do is talk to Prince Charles right now. That poor guy, I don't think he's ever going to get a shot at it. I'll just be honest with you. What has he been waiting? Like 65 years, something like that? I mean, wow. But what is a prince? A prince is one who all that has to take place for them to be in power is that the current present king is no longer in power, is that correct? It just naturally takes place. 2 Corinthians 4:4 calls Satan the god of this world. In Job 41:34, Satan is referred to as the king of the children of pride. So when Satan comes to him and says all the kingdoms of the world, they're yours, I've got news for you: they were going to be his at his second coming. You see, that is when he wears a crown, first he had to bear a cross.

So the temptation of Jesus I don't think was a rhetoric of lies, though they were lies, as much as it was a rhetoric of half-told truths with the opportunity of, "Why don't we bypass this cross and get straight to the crown?" Because everything he was tempting him to do was everything that he's going to do one day but not until after he was raised from the dead for the salvation of our souls. I've got a, "That's good." Did y'all hear that? So that's good. Y'all have no idea how much that means to me.

Anybody, anything else on this one? I know it's kind of a crazy rabbit trail, so to speak. We're all good there? No. He said, "The devil's stupid." Noooo. Boy, the devil convinced somebody without sin to sin. He is smart. He knows you better than you do. He knows me better than me. And he knows, he knows the Bible better than you know the Bible. He does. That is why, I think, to your point, sir, I think in that second temptation when he leaves out four words and just as three when he leaves out one word, he is so smart that he's able to communicate what appears to be a truth but it is a wrapped up lie, to use your illustration, and to me that is the sign of intelligence. You know, the worst thing in the world is a smart criminal, right? Dumb criminals are easy. Y'all ever seen that show "America's Dumbest Criminals"? I love it. You know, when the guy, like, you know, basically takes a chain to steal, like, an ATM machine and he ties it to the bumper of his

truck. The bumper falls off and he drives off. I mean, that's pretty stupid, right, because he left the evidence, you know, just right there in front of him.

You don't see the devil ever work in those. In fact, when you get to 2 Thessalonians 2 and you get to Revelation 13 and we see an entity known as the antichrist, the embodiment of this character right here, it says that he works with signs and wonders. Is that not exactly what Jesus Christ did? He worked with signs and wonders. In fact, you see in Revelation 13 that he is healed from a deadly wound. Was not Jesus raised from a death? And so rather than something that is very obvious and obstructive, it's eerily similar. By the way, the term antichrist just means not Christ, and I believe, this is just me personally, I believe he will appear as a messiah figure, he will appear as the "good guy" because according to Daniel 9, he makes a covenant with the people of God, the Israelites there in Daniel 9, and for one week which in prophetic terminology is seven years, and it says that in the middle of that covenant, he basically flips on him. When you get to Revelation 11, it says that this antichrist figure goes into the temple of God and to make a "sacrifice" but it is an abomination of desolation. They actually allow him and say, "Oh, this is a good idea. We want you to go in here." But according to 2 Thessalonians 2, it says he goes into that temple and declares he is God. That is why in Matthew 24, Jesus made this statement, "When you see the abomination of desolation, run for the hills." You just thought it was bad, hell is about to break loose literally as you read through the end of the book of Revelation. It literally breaks loose.

Any questions on these before we just go and really hang out in Revelation? We're good? Yes, sir.

[unintelligible]

Yes, sir.

[unintelligible]

Okay, boy, that is the, let me date myself, that is the \$64,000 question, with inflation now it is the \$1.3 million question. The question that was asked is and it's an excellent observation, in the book of Job, you see the character known as Satan actually having an audience with the Lord himself and he's actually pictured as in the heavenlies with him. You know, they're not hanging out in the wilderness. In fact, it says on the day in which the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, that Satan came with them. So the picture, the background, the environment is the heavenlies and so you have him having access to.

In Revelation 12, and this is where the discussion comes in, the passage that we just read beginning in verse 7 where it talks about the red dragon, this old serpent, it says that he is removed from heaven. The big question is and I don't want to belabor this tonight, is Revelation 12 a past event or is it a future event, okay? If you make Revelation 12 a past event, that he was removed from heaven at this great war sometime in the past, hence his

fault, then how do you explain that after his fall he had access to the heavenlies? Does that make sense?

So where we have to discuss this is there is biblical evidence per the book of Job that at some level the enemy himself, Satan, has the opportunity, has the ability to gain an audience with the Lord himself. I don't know how frequently that occurs. I don't know how often it occurs. I don't know if it was an isolated incident in Job or it occurs on a regular basis, okay? But you get to the book of Zechariah 3 and there is Joshua the high priest presenting himself to the Lord and guess who shows up? Satan does and he accuses Joshua to the Lord.

Now the interesting thing about Zechariah 3 is we get the idea that's taking place on earth but it's pictured almost bigger than that. All that to say, I don't have a concrete answer but there is evidence after his initial fall that at least in the case of Job, which may be isolated but it may also be picturesque of more, that with the Lord's permission in rare occasions and instances he is allowed an audience with the Lord but his one purpose is to accuse of which you see the Lord's purpose because you're saying why would the Lord do that, the Lord's purpose was not for us to be defeated but to demonstrate to Satan our strength and trust in him because he said, "Have you considered my servant Job?" And Satan said, "Ah, man, he serves you for the wrong reasons." God says, "No, he doesn't. It's all going to be good." But that being said, when you get to the end of your Bible, particularly in Revelation 20, it says that Satan is bound in the bottomless pit for a thousand years. Whether he has had access only those two times or whether he has access 2,000 times, there is coming a day where he will no longer have any access at all.

Did that help at all? Not really, did I? I just didn't really answer your question, did I? What do you want answered and I'll try it.

[unintelligible]

I don't know what I want answered. Sir, okay, so are you wanting to ask the question does he have access right now?

[unintelligible]

I don't know. Is that fair? Now I say I don't know jokingly but when I say I don't know, I want you to know there's biblical evidence that he very well could but I never want to paint a picture that there's a revolving door in the heavenlies for the enemy. Does that make sense? We have an isolated incident with Job that could be a picture for more but we're not told conclusively. Sir?

[unintelligible]

Oh boy, here we go.

[unintelligible]

And that is?

[unintelligible]

Right. Yup.

[unintelligible]

Okay, perfect transition. Go to Revelation 9. This was actually the Bible study on the back of your sheet but we're going to get to this and go to the front of your sheet and transition here. In Revelation 9, beginning in verse 13, it's the sixth trumpet judgment. Once again, remember there's seven seals, seven trumpets, seven vials. These are future. It says,

13 And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, 14 Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates. 15 And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men. 16 And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand [that's 200 million]: and I heard the number of them. 17 And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone. 18 By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths. 19 For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt.

Do you see these entities that once these angels are loosened at what we know as the river Euphrates, this army? Now many people say, well, that is the armies of the East that's pictured in Revelation 16 that comes back over. Alright, that being said, back up a little bit into chapter 9 and I want you to notice what happens in the fifth trumpet, the one right before this. It says,

1 And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. 2 And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit. 3 And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. 4 And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, etc. etc.

Interesting that the fifth trumpet sounds and the bottomless pit or what we know as hell is opened. When the sixth trumpet sounds, these four angels are finally released and 200 million entities that have tails like serpents and who breathe fire are wreaking havoc on humanity. It gets pretty nasty, doesn't it?

Now a lot of people say, well, that's the armies that come in chapter 16. The difference is the armies that come in chapter 16 don't immediately follow hell being opened up and all of a sudden you've got locusts and all these other entities and creatures, so when I say when you get to the book of Revelation that hell breaks loose, that's not a metaphor, that's an actual description. Hell is breaking loose.

Alright, now we have to transition or we're never going to get to Revelation and my goal is to finish Revelation before one of my children graduates high school. Alright, so that being said, if you have not been with us, of course, we haven't been meeting for the last couple weeks because of all the holiday season, you have chapter 8 of Revelation on one side, you have chapter 9 on the other. We have already gone through what we know as the first half of that first outline of chapter 8. Chapter 8, verse 1, begins with a very unique statement in scripture, it says, "I saw in the heaven and there was silence for 30 minutes." And so this is at that famous seventh seal. It's the only time that silence in heaven is ever mentioned in scripture. Beginning after that, particularly when you get to verse 7, you have the trumpet judgments. Now remember, there are seven seal judgments and for those of you that are new at this, allow me just for... I know time is not on our side tonight but allow me to share with you kind of the two roads that people can run down.

Road #1 is that the seven judgments of the seals, the trumpets, and the vials, are all the same seven judgments all spoken of three different ways. That's road #1. Road #2 is that there are actually not seven judgments, there are seven seals and the seventh seal opens up the trumpets and the seventh trumpet opens up the vials. And so one road says it's actually only seven places of judgment mentioned or described three different ways, the other one says that the actual seventh judgment opens up 14 other judgments, alright? That being said, I tend to lean toward that second road, but if you're on the first road, that's okay, we can still be friends because we all agree it's pretty bad no matter how you slice it or dice it.

That being said, when the fifth or when the trumpets begin in verse 7, you have a very unique description of judgment because the first four judgments take place on the earth, and the second three judgments take place in the supernatural. Now they affect humanity and they affect the earth but they're very different. It's divided into four and to three. So four particularly through humanity, and then the last three are seen as very supernatural judgments.

Now you'll see on the first four judgments, the bottom of the first page of your outline, kind of walk through kind of these judgments and I want you to see an interesting parallel. You're going to see a parallel in Revelation 8 that you see in the book of Exodus with the Israelites coming out of Egypt which doesn't surprise us because when you get to

Revelation 11, one of the two witnesses is Moses who delivered the Israelites out of Egypt.

So four what I call distinct concepts about these judgments. Now this is different than what we saw in the four seals. The first one is this: there is the possibility that they might be simultaneous, the first four trumpets, and the reason I say that is in verse 13 when it says one woe is past, there are two more to come. The first four trumpets are described as a woe, kind of one of those, oh, this is a horrible event that is taking place, and with the one exception in verse 7... by the way, allow me, I apologize. Let me just go ahead and read beginning in verse 7. It says,

7 The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.

The reason I focus on that phrase, that's the only thing described where everything is burned up. Notice verse 8,

8 And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood;  
9 And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed.

All throughout these first four trumpets with the exception of the green grass, everything else is one-third, and when you get to verse 13, all of these four trumpets are called the first woe. So there is the possibility that unlike the seven seals which were particularly the first four were considered the four horsemen, remember, that rode one after the other? There is a possibility that these four judgments actually take place at the same time. Second, their size is constant. With the exception of the green grass, it's all in one-thirds. Third, the issue of what I call separation. These all take place distinctly on the earth and to the earth whereas the final three of the seven, number 5, 6 and 7, are in the supernatural, and what I call the same song, second verse. You know the old adage, same song, second verse, it could be better but it's probably going to be worse? And some of you may have heard me reference this in the past but I find it interesting, do you find it interesting that the book of Exodus which accounts for the Israelites coming out of Egypt, that there's actually a second account known as the book of Deuteronomy? The book of Deuteronomy means "the second telling," that's what it means. If you've ever read Exodus and you've ever read Deuteronomy, they're eerily similar but they're very different. Is it possible, is it possible that Exodus, yes, is a historical account of the Israelites coming out of Egypt, is it possible that the account in Deuteronomy looks a little different because it's not just describing the coming out of Egypt but it's also foretelling the future exile that takes place later in Revelation 12?

You see, one of the things I want you to hear and this is one of the things I want to stand on tonight: the New Testament tells you what to believe today but the Old Testament is telling you what's going to happen tomorrow. You see, the Old Testament isn't just about

yesterday, the Old Testament is about tomorrow, and I think, the joke about the devil being dumb, so to speak, I think one of the greatest tactics the devil's done to us is gotten Bible-believing Christians not to read the Old Testament because if we don't read the Old Testament, not only do we not know where we came from, we don't know where we're going. The Old Testament contains the majority of the prophecies about the second coming, not just the first coming, and what we see particularly here in Revelation 8 is a second Exodus type experience, very similar to what we saw in the book of Exodus.

So the first trumpet takes place, verse 6 and 7. There is hail, fire mingled, a third part of the trees and all the grass is burned up. Well, guess what? In Exodus 9, beginning in verse 22, there is hail and there is lightning that descends from above, and if you go back in chapter 9 of Exodus, verses 22 through 25, you read what I find personally, this is just Jeff speaking, I think it's probably one of the most unique of the 10 judgments of the plagues. Now I think the water into blood is incredible, I think the frogs are just creepy, the lice is disgusting and the boils look painful, but when you look at the one about the fire and the hail, here's what I find interesting about it, it says that these giant hailstones began to fall and they covered the earth. Now I'm not a climatologist, I'm not a meteorologist, however if you had giant massive hailstones falling in the wrath of God, I just have a funny feeling that it's going to be pretty thick as far as on the ground is concerned, correct? I mean, it says that it destroyed the green plants, I mean, it's bashing trees, it's nasty.

Then it says that after all the hailstones are on the ground, lightning begins to strike and according to Exodus, it says and fire ran across the ground. Well, what happens when lightning hits ice? It electrocutes you. So if you didn't get killed or if you didn't get hurt by the hailstones, guess what? You're getting electrocuted. Doesn't that sound pleasant? The reason I use that parallel is in Exodus 9, you have the story of hailstones, lightning and it's called fire on the ground. Here in the first trumpet, guess what happens? Hail and fire mingled with blood. Do you see the parallel language that's happening? Now is it different than? Yes, but again what is the one thing that history does? It repeats itself and we never pay attention to it. It's almost as if the Lord said, "Hey, yes, this happened coming out of Egypt but pay attention because it's going to happen again."

Alright, so the second trumpet. That's the first one, the second one, verses 8 and 9.

8 And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood;  
9 And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed.

When you get to Exodus 7, now I realize it's not in chronological order here, what is the first one of the plagues? Water was turned into blood? And here you have the judgment of God where it says that a third part of the waters were turned into blood. So once again you have this same situation where there's this eerie parallel.

The third trumpet, chapter 8, verses 10 and 11.

10 And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters; 11 And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.

Okay, trivia question of the night. What famous work of literature had Wormwood as a main character? "Screwtape Letters" by C. S. Lewis. Thank you very much. Wormwood was a character that was utilized as a demonic entity that was communicating for the purpose of destroying humanity. C. S. Lewis was brilliant by all stretch of the imagination. I think we'd all agree there. Notice the word "Wormwood" in your Bible. It's capitalized. It's an entity, a star. Remember back in Revelation 1:20, it says the seven stars in his hands were the seven angels? They were entities. Again, we have all this very clear but yet obtrusive language here. The picture you get here is this angelic being named Wormwood comes and a third part of the water has become wormwood which is a bitter entity that causes death, and the men died because of the waters, because they were made bitter.

Now for this one I want you to turn back to Exodus 11 for just a moment. We're going back to Exodus 11 to see the parallel because in Exodus 11, we have the plague of darkness. This is the ninth of the 10 plagues and I think that the third trumpet is an eerie picture of the ninth plague. The ninth plague beginning in verse 1 of chapter 11 of Exodus, it says, "And the LORD said unto Moses, Yet will I bring one plague more upon Pharaoh, and upon Egypt," I'm sorry, not darkness, I meant the death of the firstborn.

1 And the LORD said unto Moses, Yet will I bring one plague more upon Pharaoh, and upon Egypt; afterwards he will let you go hence: when he shall let you go, he shall surely thrust you out hence altogether. 2 Speak now in the ears of the people, and let every man borrow of his neighbour, and every woman of her neighbour, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold. 3 And the LORD gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians. Moreover the man Moses was very great in the land of Egypt, in the sight of Pharaoh's servants, and in the sight of the people. 4 And Moses said, Thus saith the LORD, About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt: 5 And all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, even unto the firstborn of the maidservant that is behind the mill; and all the firstborn of beasts. 6 And there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there was none like it, nor shall be like it any more. 7 But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, against man or beast: that ye may know how that the LORD doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel. 8 And all these thy servants shall come down unto me, and bow down themselves unto me, saying, Get thee out, and all the people that follow thee: and after that I will go out. And he went out from Pharaoh in a great anger.



Now this is the prophecy, this is the story of what we now or the Jewish people particularly celebrate as Passover, the fact that death is going to come. What is the terminology that we collectively and culturally use? We call it the death angel that comes? The representative of the Lord. If the blood of the lamb was not on the doorpost and the threshold, that death happened to the firstborn, isn't it interesting here in Revelation 8 when this trumpet sounds, you have a star, which according to chapter 1 is oftentimes referring to as an angel, who has a name that descends and causes death in the midst of the people. Once again, you just have this continued evidence that the events of Exodus are not just written facts in history but actual prophecy of future events that are coming one day.

Alright, back to what we know as the book of Revelation 8. We have the fourth trumpet. The fourth trumpet sounds in verse 12 and it says,

12 And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise. 13 And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!

Now in this one you have the sun, the moon, the stars. Back into Exodus 10, that is actually the ninth plague, the plague of darkness where you saw a darkening of the celestial bodies.

Now remember, there are seven trumpet judgments, four of them affect the things of the earth and the items of earth, the last three we're going to see in a moment are very supernatural. The plagues that took place in the book of Exodus all take place and not only as a historical fact but I believe as a prophetic element for the future, and you see this eerie parallel. By the way, as we continue through the book of Revelation, guess what? You're going to see the same thing happening over and over and over again, is the events that happened in this Exodus experience are not just picturing what happened in the past but showing what is going to happen in the future which is why what we know as the Passover meal is so significant. The Lord gave them instructions at Passover not to just celebrate coming out of Egypt but to picture the Messiah and to picture the second coming.

You know, one of the elements of the Passover meal is that the family that is gathered together and, by the way, the instructions are given in Exodus 12 on how to do the Passover meal, but one of the things they do is they set at the table, they set a place where no one is to sit and that is for Elijah because, guess what? Elijah according to Malachi 4 will come before the great day of the Lord. Guess what we find in Revelation 11? One of the two witnesses is called a man who shuts up heaven for 3 ½ years. Who did that in the Old Testament? Elijah did. Isn't that interesting how you've got all these parallels?

I've told this before and I'll say it again. One of the best ways to really understand the book of Revelation is to read the Old Testament. There are over 250 references in the book of Revelation to the Old Testament and what you're seeing a lot of in Revelation is, yes, a future event but it's kind of a twist or a spin on something that's already occurred and in the Old Testament we may have an entire chapter describing it where in Revelation we only have one verse, and it allows you to kind of put some color commentary on what's happening.

Alright, any thoughts, questions on chapter 8 of Revelation, the first four trumpet judgments while we have a break of chapters here? Everybody has got the four trumpets? That's easy? We're moving onward? Okay, great, flip the piece of paper over. We've got this. No problem because it's not going to go that fast in chapter 9.

As I mentioned, chapter 9 are the three trumpets, the last three trumpets, and these are supernatural. For the sake of time, we're not going to dig into all of them tonight but I just want to give kind of a running commentary of chapter 9. We're going to keep the outline for next week. We'll get into the specifics because I've taken all three of these and broken them down into similar categories for you. But beginning in chapter 9, verse 1,

1 And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit.

Interesting. We just saw in chapter 1, verse 20, a star oftentimes is reference to an angelic being. We just read in 2 Corinthians 11 tonight that Satan transforms himself into an angel of light. And in Matthew 25:41 when Jesus is pronouncing final judgment, he says those on my left hand go to the lake of fire prepared for the devil and his angels. Who is it that has the key to the bottomless pit? This star that we're going to find out in a minute has this name Abaddon or Apollyon. It says,

2 And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit.

So what we see is the environment of earth being darkened by not only the smoke of but the residents of the bottomless pit allowing themselves to come up. A little side note here. In Matthew 27, it says that about the sixth hour when Jesus was on the cross, this is about 12 noon, it became dark for three hours. Interesting parallel here because as we talked about in Matthew 4, when you see the temptation of the devil, when you see the activity of it, there is evidence that that event for three hours could have been, might have been a supernatural event much like what we see here.

It says in verse 3,

3 And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power.

I was not an English major but when you use the word "like" or "as," you're using a simile. It does not say that they were scorpions, they were as scorpions. That's important.

4 And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads. 5 And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as [there's the simile again] the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man. 6 And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them. 7 And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men. 8 And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions. 9 And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle. 10 And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power was to hurt men five months. 11 And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon. 12 One woe is past; and, behold, there come two woes more hereafter.

Now we have exactly one minute so I'm going to leave you on this one thought. The Apostle John has been given this vision in what we know as the end of the first century AD and there have been many people over the years, God-loving, Jesus-loving people, who say that what he saw was modern-day military paraphernalia that he did not know how to describe. He described it like the teeth of a lion, he described it as the tail of a scorpion because if he saw a helicopter or if he saw an airplane he wouldn't have known how to describe it. However these entities come out of the bottomless pit and the devil himself is called the king over them. Yes, they may appear to be like modern military equipment but I think we're limiting the passage if we limit to the natural instead of looking at the supernatural. These are supernatural means of destruction that the Lord says for five months go on a rampage and men seek death and cannot find it. How's that for a positive note to end?

Let's pray.

*Lord, as we do close your word tonight, thank you for the breadth of it, thank you for the challenge of it, thank you for the unsearchable riches of it. God, I pray somehow, someway even if we walk away tonight with more questions than we have answers, God, would you make us more desirous of your word, would you make us more hungry to know what your word says and, Lord, where there is confusion, would you bring clarity, where there are questions, would you bring answers? But more than anything, no matter what we study, no matter how many questions we have, would you always keep our eyes fixed on Jesus? It's in his name we pray. Amen.*

God bless. Go pick up your kids.