

## Online Prophecy Conference – Part 2

*Online Prophecy Conference*

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Jeff Meyers. Well, good evening and welcome to Prophecy Conference 2.0. It is my privilege on behalf of my good friend, Dr. David Goza, to welcome two congregations on one screen, First Baptist Church of Opelika here in Alabama and Jefferson Baptist Church there in Baton Rouge. We are several hundred miles apart but we're a couple of inches apart on the screen, so to speak, but a couple of weeks ago we gathered and we discussed the book of Daniel, the book of Revelation, and many different issues and, shall we say, signs of the times related to biblical prophecy. Well, David and I elaborated on this topic such that the time for questions somewhat ran out and many of you submitted questions then and so we wanted to have Prophecy Conference 2.0 so we can answer your questions, and so tonight we have several questions that you submitted from two weeks ago as well as in between and we want to encourage you to go ahead and submit them in real time. If you submit your questions tonight, we're gonna do our absolute best to get to all of these questions. We have two hours set aside to answer whatever questions you have in regards to biblical prophecy, the book of Daniel, the book of Revelation, or anything in between.

So I'm gonna throw a proverbial softball to my buddy David down in Baton Rouge. We're gonna kick it off tonight with one of our questions left over from last week and it is simply this: do you believe that the character known as the Antichrist, particularly from the book of Daniel 11, will be "a homosexual"? Softball question for you, brother. Go for it.

Dr. David Goza. Alright, Jeff, it's good to be with you again, brother, and so glad we get to do this and I think it's important and significant to talk about biblical prophecy and, as the Scripture says, we always need to watch and to be ready and that's what this is about. We are trying to prepare the church to watch and to be ready for the coming of Christ. And regard to the Antichrist, I think I addressed that somewhat as I gave an introduction to Daniel last week or a couple of weeks ago in Daniel 11. There are some characteristics given of the Antichrist and one of those does seem to indicate that he may be a homosexual. That's whenever the Scripture says that he will not regard the desire for women, and there's, you know, there's various interpretations of that. It may simply just mean that he gives no time for women or he doesn't have a strong desire for women just in a natural sense, but it's such an unusual phrase and used for such an evil man, and during such a time as in which we live and these times that we live in where

homosexuality is so prevalent and so much around us all the time, it just seems to make sense and it's very possible that that may be the right interpretation of that passage. It's purely speculation but I would say that the text does indicate that he will be a homosexual but it's not anything that I think we need to be overly dogmatic on.

Jeff. So in other words, if we discover or when that time comes that he's revealed that we discover this is an attribute of him, it wouldn't surprise you at all is what you're basically saying based on what the text says?

David. No, absolutely. Absolutely. I don't think it would surprise any of us in this day and age in which we live in.

Jeff. Alright, I'm gonna throw you another one down in Baton Rouge. We spoke at great length last couple of weeks ago about the Great Tribulation spoken of in Matthew 24, obviously alluded to greatly in the book of Daniel and elaborated in the book of Revelation, and we also spoke at length about the fact that the Apostle John is pictured in chapter 4 of Revelation of being caught up into the heavens and very much a picture of that rapture event prior to that tribulation event. One of the questions that was submitted a couple of weeks ago, David, I'm gonna throw it your way is that for those of us who are "raptured" or who are with the presence of the Lord, do you believe based on Scripture that we'll be able to see the events of the tribulation from our heavenly perspective?

David. So, yeah, Jeff and I believe in a pretribulational rapture, we believe that the rapture will occur prior to the Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week that we talked about, prior to that seven year period. I think last time we met, we went over some of the reasons why. I think that was the question that, Jeff, you answered on why we believe in a pretribulational rapture. So if the question is that after we're raptured and we're up in heaven, will we be able to see the things that are going down on the earth? Again, the Scripture is silent on this issue. You know, Hebrews 11 in the Hall of Faith does speak of the cloud of witnesses that are among us and then it goes into all those, you know, half, those dozen or so men and women of faith from the Old Testament and describes them as a cloud of witnesses, and I don't think that that necessarily means that they are witnessing what we are doing but their faith is a witness to us of how we should live. We should emulate what they do and follow what they do. All I can answer because this is, the answer to this question is gonna require speculation because the Scripture does not specifically tell us that we'll be able to see what's going on on the earth, my thought on that would be that it would be very difficult for any of us to watch the pain and suffering that's gonna be going on on the earth at that time. I don't believe that God allows his people in heaven to look into this world filled with sin and darkness and injustice and all the evil that we know takes place all the time, I don't think he's gonna give us a view of those things because God doesn't allow sin up into heaven.

So my thought, my speculation on that would be is that there's no reason for God to allow us to see the sins that are taking place and the wrath that is being poured out, the death and the destruction that's gonna be taking place. I don't believe that we'll be seeing that at

all. I think we'll see it on the descent whenever we return with Christ and land on the Mount of Olives, that we'll see the aftermath of it but I don't believe it will be a part of it.

Jeff. Yeah, and just to kind of piggyback on that idea, obviously the Apostle John is a picture of the church coming out of chapter 3 and the church of Laodicea being caught up in chapter 4 to view the events of what we know as Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week or the Great Tribulation time period, but because he pictures the church and he sees the death and destruction and all that is taking place, it doesn't mean that he actually is a mirror image of what we will be experiencing. And so, David, I appreciate what you said. I think the death and destruction, the pouring out of the seven seals, it is not that which we have any empirical evidence at all that we will be viewing while it happens, the Apostle John was given a very specific vision to give to us and even though he may picture us in chapter 4 as being raptured before Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week, I think you're exactly spot-on. I don't think there is any empirical evidence that we will be "watching on the edge of heaven" as the seals are being opened up and death and destruction and wormwood and such is taking place.

So I appreciate again as you said, and by the way one of the reasons that we're on the screen together is we do have so many perspectives and biblical views in regards to these matters that are so much alike because we just take the Bible for what it says and we don't try to make it say what we wish it would say. And I don't want to speak on your behalf, David, but I think one of the troubles with those who either, A interpret, or B preach or teach on prophetic issues, is a lot of them come from a specific position and then they try to make the Bible forcefully say what they want it to versus just allowing it to say what it does, and I want our audience to hear one of the things that I so appreciate about David as an individual but even in the very first moments of this conference tonight, part 2, is that he has said that there is no implicit Scripture regarding that but we can, we have indications thereof, and I think that's important as we begin tonight. Some of these questions may not have cut-and-dry, black-and-white answers from Scripture we may have indications of, and so there's no need to be dogmatic where we can't be but at the same time understand it alludes to it but we cannot put it "in concrete." Is that fair to say, David, when it comes to some of these matters?

David. Yeah, I think you're right-on on that. And Jeff, now I have access to these questions now so I can ask you some questions as well, alright? So are you ready?

Jeff. Oh, man, I was hoping just to throw them all your way tonight and just be the moderator.

David. No. It's your turn, brother. Alright, here's one somebody has asked can you describe the first and second resurrection and which people are in each one?

Jeff. Ah, that's a wonderful question. In fact, I'm gonna go ahead and turn to Revelation 20 because that is, I guess, one of the most clearcut passages that we have in Scripture in regards to this matter. Now as we turn to Revelation 20 with me, let me remind you one of the most critical passages in all of the Bible, I would say it's important to Revelation, is

chapter 9 is to the book of Daniel because it is here in seven verses that six times it says that Jesus Christ will reign on the earth for a thousand years. It speaks of whom we know as Satan being bound in the bottomless pit for the thousand years and that Jesus Christ reigns on his throne much like Psalm 110:1 prophesied thousands of years ago. When we get into this passage describing the thousand year reign of Jesus Christ, though, it alludes to those who he is reigning over, those who, I hate to use the term but are his subjects on his millennial kingdom.

Now that being said, in Revelation 20 it speaks about the fact of those that were beheaded for their faith. That's going back to chapter 6, the martyrs that are seen under the altar and in verse 4 it says those, "beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." Now verse 5, "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection." I think one of the best ways to answer the question about the first resurrection is to deal with the second resurrection. What is the second resurrection? That's what takes place at the end of this chapter in verse 11 through 15 where we oftentimes refer to it as the Great White Throne Judgment, and there it says that all of the dead, all those both small and great, those who ruled and those who were reigned over, they present themselves, they stand before the Lord. And it says that there were two books that were opened, there's the book of life and there are the books of works. I think it's interesting that those books of works is shown in the plural and it says that everybody that is judged according to the books of works were eventually cast into what we call the Lake of Fire that the Bible describes as the second death. And I think the reason that's important is that when Jesus Christ comes to reign on the earth, this rapture event that David and I have spoken of so extensively has taken place, those who are dead in Christ, those who are alive in Christ have met the Lord in the air, Revelation 6 talks about these martyrs even during the tribulational period that had believed and rejected the mark of the beast, that under the altar they are stating, "How long, O God, until you avenge our death?" When you get to chapter 19, it speaks about the army of God, the believers in Jesus Christ returning with him to reign with him on the earth. Twice in the book of Revelation it says that on the earth we'll be kings and priests with him.

Why is that significant? Because it says for those thousand years that those who reigned with him, those who believed in him, they did not receive the mark of the beast, they rejected the mark of the beast, many of them beheaded for their faith, that this was the first resurrection, and I think what we see and hopefully we see it very clearly, is at the moment that Jesus Christ begins his thousand year reign, all of those who either perish or, shall we say, were transitioned in that rapture event having faith in the Lord Jesus Christ are reigning with him. And at the end of the thousand years, obviously Satan is loosed, there's another battle that takes place and God judges him and those [unintelligible]. The second resurrection would be those who are cast ultimately into the Lake of Fire.

One of the things that I find interesting is when you get to Revelation 20:11-15, that final Great White Throne Judgment, you get the idea or you get the picture that those who were believers in Jesus Christ who came with him at his return and who were faithful

during that millennial period, they are standing behind him. Their names are written in the book of life, it is those that were brought out of the sea and out of hell that are judged according to their works that are then summoned to the second death and what we know as the Lake of Fire.

So oftentimes people look at that passage and think, "Okay, there's two resurrections. Is that, you know, one group here and another group there?" I believe that Revelation 20 speaks that the first resurrection is a collective statement of all of those from time beginning who have believed and are here and part of the family and the body of Christ who are reigning with him on the earth. The second resurrection, I think based on what we see at the end of Revelation 20, is that the resurrection of the dead which will be according to Ephesians 2, dead in their sins and trespasses, who are going through that final judgment and summoned to what the Bible calls the second death. So here's the great news for everyone of us and obviously we believe in a very particular layout of Scripture according to end time events in regards to the rapture, the tribulation and such, but I think we have very clear evidence that even those who have already perished, having believed many years ago or even in recent days, and those of us who are alive who are looking according to Titus 2 for the blessed hope and the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, that we are collectively a part of that first resurrection, and here's the great news, those who are part of that first resurrection, we get to reign with him for those thousand years, not just experience the blessedness of everlasting life in the new heaven, the new earth and the new Jerusalem. Those, I believe, that are subject to the "second resurrection" are those who are condemned to the Lake of Fire.

So everyone of us would desire to be a part of the first resurrection and the only way to do that according to Jesus Christ was through him. He is the way, the truth and the life as clearly stated in John 14:6. So I just want to make it clear that I believe those who are dead in Christ, those who are alive in Christ whenever that rapture event takes place will be a part of that first resurrection to reign with him which is even a more wonderful opportunity in addition to being in his presence.

David, hopefully that satisfied on that one. But I'm gonna throw another one at you from the book of Revelation. Is that okay?

David. Alright.

Jeff. I know Daniel is your specialty but we've had someone on our live feed saying could you please explain wormwood and I don't think they're referring to the "The Screwtape Letters" and C. S. Lewis' character. I just got a funny feeling. I think they're talking about Revelation.

David. Yeah, the wormwood demon was, that was a classic in literature, for sure, and that's a wonderful book if you haven't read it.

Wormwood is in Revelation, there are several mentions of it throughout the Scripture and I'm looking for...actually it's in Revelation, yeah, it's in Revelation 8 the word is

mentioned, wormwood as being thrown down onto the earth. Verse 11 says, "The name of the star is Wormwood. A third of the waters became wormwood and many men died from the water because it was made bitter." Now it's an interesting word and I'm not gonna pretend to be an expert on it. I do know and I've seen that word used, though, in ancient writings outside of the Bible. I've seen ancient historians refer to wormwood which I thought was pretty interesting because I know it's a biblical word and I had never seen it referenced outside but as I've read more and more ancient history, I believe it was Herodotus who mentions wormwood in the context of one country that he had visited and he was giving a description of the people and some of the different interesting parts of their culture, and he mentioned this herb that he called wormwood and I did some more research on that and wormwood was actually a common phrase in the ancient world and it referred to some kind of plant, some kind of herb, and it would have a powerful effect on people depending on how they would mix it, depending on how they would use it. So what plant that corresponds with today I don't even know. I need to research that out more, but I do know it was bitter, they used it for illnesses, for sickness, they used it for different magical type incantations and things along those lines. It had multiple uses and so the way it's used here in the Scripture, though, you know, that people in the ancient world, they would have known exactly what plant wormwood referred to and they knew that it had a bitter quality to it. And so whenever this word is used here, the name of the star is wormwood, why that star is named wormwood is probably because of the result of what is gonna happen whenever it falls to the earth, a third of the waters become wormwood, they become bitter, many men die from the water, it poisoned the water, it had a very strong effect on them because it was made bitter.

So I think that's that's probably the extent of how we can answer that question what is wormwood. Wormwood symbolizes, it represents a bitter judgment that God's gonna pour out on the earth. It's gonna effect the waters, the drinking water, and when people drink it it's gonna make some of them sick and it's gonna make some of them die. And so it's called wormwood to symbolize that effect.

Jeff. Alright, David, can I expand on that for a moment. I'm gonna expand.

David. Yeah, please do.

Jeff. I'm gonna ask a question that's actually not on the list. Is that fair, is that okay? I'm gonna do it anyway because we're good friends and I can do that to you. But the wormwood question that was just alluded, it's found there as you said in Revelation 8, it's a part of the fourth trumpet judgment and we see that in the book of Revelation we have the seven seals, the seven trumpets, the seven vials. Do you subscribe to the fact that there are really seven major judgments in the book of Revelation and those are three different explanations of them, or do you subscribe that the seventh seal opens up the trumpets and the seventh trumpet opens up the vials? What is your perspective on that, I'm just curious?

David. I've gotta be honest and just say that I'm open to both interpretations. My personal conviction on it is that one leads to another. That's the one I'm most comfortable with.

Jeff. That's the one I'm most comfortable with as well, but I just thought I'd put you on the spot.

David. Right. Right, well, you're putting me on the spot and I'm just giving you an honest answer. I could go either way with it. Personally I don't have a strong conviction about it. If I'm gonna say this is what I believe and this is how I would teach it and preach it from a sermon series, I would say I would go successfully that one leads to another, that it's three different judgments that are gonna come.

Jeff. Now my motive for asking you the question was obviously the fourth trumpet would then necessarily correlate with the fourth seal and there's no reference in the fourth seal to a third of the waters turning bitter which I would think would lead to a different judgment.

David. So you're saying that's an argument for it being....

Jeff. Absolutely. Absolutely. That's why I asked the question just because...

David. That's a good point.

Jeff. ...there's a lot of them that overlap and I think that's one of the important particularly when it comes to the study of the book of Revelation, you see these series of seven judgments, some of them overlap and it's easy to say, "Oh, well, the fifth one here looks like the fifth one there." But the wormwood judgment of the fourth trumpet doesn't have anything to do with the fourth vial or the fourth seal. One of the reasons I just kinda threw that question at you is I think it gives evidence to that there's a succession particularly in the fact that remember when the seventh seal opens up in chapter 8, it says there was silence in heaven for 30 minutes. That never happens anywhere else with any of the other ones.

So alright, I'm gonna give you a shot to go for me. How's that? Here we go.

David. Alright, maybe this is a question, there's a couple of questions on the mark of the beast and maybe we can just kind of team up and both take turns giving different views on this. Here's the question: is the mark of the beast called, I'm gonna read both of the questions, okay, and then we'll go through them.

Jeff. Sounds good.

David. Is the mark of the beast called the mark of the beast because it was first tested on the beast, in quotes. In other words, the microchip being tested on animals? Alright, and then the second question is should we refuse the mark of the beast? If so, then how do we live? Alright, so why don't you take, why don't you take the first part, I'll take the second part.

Jeff. Alright, sounds good. Well, the reason that it's called the mark of the beast even though obviously it alludes to this possibility of a microchip in animals and the beast in the field, so to speak, is because of what it says in Revelation 13. So I'm gonna go to Revelation 13 and I'm gonna begin in verse 16 and read through verse 18, and this is speaking of the beast or the Antichrist and I think that's important to the question. You know, this character who comes on the scene who is this tyrant of tyrants, this one who according to 2 Thessalonians 2 is so, shall we say, narcissistic that he goes into the temple of God and declares himself to be God, the one who breaks the covenant with the people of God according to Daniel 9 that David taught so well a couple of weeks ago. It says that he is the beast in Revelation. He's never called the Antichrist in the book of Revelation. That term is actually used in the book of 1 John and in 2 John but we know that the beast, the Antichrist, are basically synonyms for the same character and so when it says here that he, the mark of the beast, it is the Antichrist.

It says in verse 16, "And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six." And I think the reason that we refer to it as this famous mark of the beast is because it is his mark and it says that whoever has his mark that is upon him, in him, his forehead or his right hand.

And so therefore and this question also alludes to the microchip and I know David did an extensive job and a wonderful job of explaining the rise of technology when we gathered two weeks ago and this aspect of what we have access to, and I want to be clear and, David, I don't want to put words in your mouth, you have the opportunity of rebuttal here in just a moment, I don't think David in any way, shape or form indicated that he believed that the microchip was going to be the mark of the beast. I think what David was trying to explain and what I would allude to as well is we now have the technology readily available that could be very easily utilized as the mark of the beast, could be easily utilized to track our whereabouts or to determine where we're going. In fact, I read today in an article that in China in light of the coronavirus or the Covid-19 pandemic, that they're actually experimenting and exploring an app on the phone that is tracking your whereabouts and who you've come into contact with that has tested positive versus negative, and that your phone will actually have an indicator and, by the way, this hasn't been put into place yet but they're considering doing so, and this article was written today that it would either show red, yellow or green and green means that you have not been in contact with anybody who's tested positive, you're good to go anywhere in a public setting. Yellow is that you have come into somewhat of a distant contact with somebody who has tested positive, therefore you should exercise caution. And red means that you have encountered somebody who tested positive and therefore you need to shelter at home and/or being quarantined.

Now the question alluded to a microchip, it didn't allude to an app and yet if you ask me, that app is incredibly invasive when it comes to my life and your life because it's tracking



where I am, who I've been around and where I can and cannot go. I think what's important about this famous mark of the beast is that we don't know exactly what it will be but whether it is an app or whether it is a microchip as alluded to, or the ID2020 that David spoke of a couple weeks ago, I think the important thing is twofold. 1. Because of the technological revolution, we now have easy access to technology that would allow total control of humanity by a single figure where he could know our complete whereabouts, and as it says here, you cannot buy and/or you cannot sell. In other words, the way of doing commerce or even as we see possibly with Covid-19 and what's happening in China, our whereabouts, they know where we've been and therefore we're not allowed to go into a place to buy food because our phone shows up red versus green etc. And so I think number 1, the technology is readily available to make something of this magnitude beyond plausible today and it may, in fact, be some type of microchip. I'm not discounting that, I'm just saying that as we go forward there's a lot of different means it could be. I think the second thing that is critical as far as a general understanding is that this mark of the beast is his mark because it shows one's allegiance to his agenda and coming under his authority and being in submission to him. Notice what I read earlier in Revelation 20 in regards to the first resurrection, who were those that were part of the resurrection? Not just those that we would consider being a part of the rapture event, those dead in Christ and alive in Christ, but those that were beheaded because they did not take the mark of the beast. And so, yes, it is very invasive and yet I would say very stealthy in the means in which the Antichrist will utilize it, but mark of the beast not because microchips or other things have been utilized in the animal kingdom but because the beast is what the book of Revelation refers to as the Antichrist, it is his mark, it is his name, it is his number because it shows one's allegiance to his agenda and that which he is, shall we say, putting forth into all the world, and really he's ultimately the tyrant of tyrants.

And I know this kinda goes off the question but related to the question and it says that his number is 666 and David will testify throughout the years, particularly on a study of prophecy, there have been a lot of people that have claimed that a certain individual was the Antichrist because the letters of his name were maybe in three sections of 6, thus 666, or even, of course, he's more the historian than I am, there are figures in days past that if you took their name in the Latin, you know, letters and such you could get the number 666. I find it interesting that the number of 666 only shows up two other places in the Bible outside of Revelation 13. One of them is found in the book of Chronicles in reference to the number of gold pieces in Solomon's chest of 666, but the interesting one to me is found in the book of Ezra 2:13 where here the Israelites who have been in captivity for 70 years in Babylon, they're returning to rebuild that Solomon's temple that was destroyed, we would later know it historically as Herod's temple because of that great remodeling event that took place under his reign in Rome, but that second temple built in the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC, there is a list in Ezra 2 of all the families and all the names and all the numbers of the folks who returned out of Babylon to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple, the walls, the altar etc. And there in verse 13 there is a man by the name of Adonikam who his name in Hebrew means "the man of rebellion," and I find that intriguing because everybody wants to figure out 666, was that Ronald Wilson Reagan? I know some of you are thinking, "Reagan? Why? What would Reagan have to do with

this?" That was actually propagated in the 1980s that he was actually the Antichrist because his name had three 6s when spelled out. But this Antichrist figure as David mentioned earlier, is evil personified and here we have an individual who not only is willing to claim he is God, he's willing to track all of humanity and there's one guy in the Bible who has 666 descendants with him and his name means "man of rebellion." Well, in 2 Thessalonians 2, he's called "the man of sin," he's called "the son of perdition." He is a man of rebellion.

So there's been a lot of speculation in regards to this famous mark of the beast, how will it be implemented, the means. I remember back in the 1970s people thought it was the barcode because the lines in a bar code were in three sections of six lines and such. And so therefore I don't think and maybe David may disagree, I don't think we need to speculate so much that it's ID2020 or a microchip or even an app on a phone as much as it is the technology that we now readily have access to that could, shall I say, force all of humanity to show their allegiance to a single character who is evil personified, that if you're not willing to have whatever this is in your forehead or your right hand, you can't do business, you can't go anywhere, and what is really eerie to me is even years ago when I started studying prophecy, okay, you can't buy, you can't sell, well, I can go to the woods and fend for myself. Well, what we're seeing now with Covid-19 is now we have technology on our cellphones, much less some type of microchip, you can go to the woods all you want but they know exactly what tree you're sitting under.

And so I don't think just the means of being able to buy and sell even show us even remotely the expanse of what this mark of the beast will do, everything we say, do, and maybe even every motion we make could be tracked. Why? Because what is his goal? His goal as the Antichrist is to reign the world in the stead of Jesus Christ and so he wants total control, total subjection and total submission.

Now David, I know I went a little long there but I find that mark of the beast very interesting, particularly when you get into the 666. I'll let you take the second part of that question.

David. That was a very good answer. You know, I would think when I read that question, I think part of the, that last part of the question whenever it said, whoever asked this question said is this referencing, you know, the testing on actual beasts, it might be referring to some of the things that we know that are going on in the world today where they are microchipping dogs and cats and this is a very popular thing and these businesses that are microchipping these animals so that when owners lose an animal they can easily find out where they are, these companies are exploding. I mean, they're worth a lot of money and so this technology has just been increasing exponentially over the last decade or so and it's become very pervasive.

So the question that I think that might, this person is alluding to is, you know, could that possibly be a sign of the end times, that what we're seeing they're doing to animals that is just a foreshadowing of what's about to happen to humans. Now I might take a little bit different view than you on this, Jeff, because I think it very possibly could be a

foreshadowing of what's going to be taking place. We're seeing that technology is actually being implemented and, yeah, given it's on the animal kingdom right now, but it's not a big leap to imagine that somebody could make the case. In fact, I read an article this past week where Netanyahu, the Prime Minister of Israel, was talking about the need of using microchip technology to mark the children in Israel and how that fits into this. I was really surprised whenever I read that and heard his quotes on that because it's such a dangerous thing in light of what we know about biblical prophecy.

So I believe, I do agree with what you're saying that this represents the technology that could be used by the Antichrist. We can't 100% say that ID2020 is going to be the fulfillment of this biblical prophecy because we don't know where we are exactly in God's timetable, but the fact that the technology exists along with all those other prophecies we talked about a couple of weeks ago, does seem to indicate that we are living in the end times and so it only makes sense that this would be that technology that could be used by the Antichrist, but I might go a little bit further and I would probably say that I do believe that microchipping technology, this nanotechnology that they have to put little-bitty microscopic, you can't even see it with your eye microchips into a person's hand or forehead for the purpose of scanning them, that that is the technology. I believe that is the technology that the Antichrist will use and I believe what we're seeing now with Covid-19 is just giving us a glimpse into how it's gonna work. We can imagine now what it's gonna feel like. I do not believe the church will be in the world when the Antichrist comes and starts implementing the mark of the beast. I believe we're gonna be removed but we are given a glimpse now of how powerful the government really is because we could actually imagine a scenario where if you've tested positive for Covid-19 and they want to mark you as having been positive for that, that that would ban you from being able to go to the grocery store, that would ban you being able to go to different public places, and so it's just a scary thought of how powerful the government and how intrusive the government can be in our lives.

The second part of that question was is should we refuse the mark of the beast? If so, how would we live? And the answer to that question is pretty simple, if you refuse the mark of the beast, first of all, that means that you would have missed the rapture. According to 2 Thessalonians 2, for those who miss the rapture who have rejected Christ before the rapture. I subscribe to the view that those people who reject Christ before the rapture, that they will not have an opportunity to accept Christ after the rapture and that's in 2 Thessalonians 2 because the Scripture says God will send them a strong delusion that they will believe the lie. The lie of who? The lie of the Antichrist. And so people are going to believe the lies of the Antichrist as a judgment from God. God will judge them while they live and they will be the ones receiving the mark of the beast. But the Scripture does indicate that there are going to be multitudes who are going to be saved during the tribulation period. I believe that's gonna be people who did not outright reject Christ before the rapture and God knows everybody's heart and he's gonna make those distinctions and there will be multitudes that will come to know Christ, Israel will come to know Christ and they will be called upon the refuse or to accept the mark of the beast. And the Scripture makes it very clear that those who receive the mark of the beast, in fact, in Revelation 14:10 it says, verse 9 says, "If anyone worships the beast and his

image and receives the mark in his forehead or on his hand, he himself shall also drink the wine of the wrath of God." So in other words, if you compromise, if you take the mark of the beast because, listen, you won't be able to buy and sell, you won't be able to go to the grocery store and buy food, you won't be able to have a job if you do not receive this mark you will be considered an enemy of the state and all of your neighbors will be against you.

So if you take that principled stand and say, "I will not receive this mark of the beast," therefore the question was then how do we live? They won't live. They will become tribulation saints. It's what we call those who are martyred during the tribulation period. Now putting that in our context and I'll wrap up with this, Jeff, putting that in our context, first of all, I do not believe that we're gonna be called on to make the choice to receive the mark of the beast because I believe the church will be removed. Having said that, I don't know about you, Jeff, but if the government did come to me and say, "We are requiring you to receive this mark just so that we know if you have been, if you've been," what's the word I'm looking for? "If you've been, you know, given the medicine that you need to keep you from getting Covid-19, for example, if you've been, received the immunizations." If they wanted to mark me with anything, just to be honest, I'm not trying to be an extremist but I would probably, you know, in fact I would say no. I'm not gonna receive a mark on my forehead or on my hand from any government agency, that's for sure.

Alright, Jeff, are you read?

Jeff. Yeah, real quick though. This alludes to two questions because, you see, one of the beauties of it just being you and I on the screen is we can have questions that aren't even given to us, you know, in real time by the audience, so to speak. So you made mention about your head or your hand, I think that's what's critical and, by the way, I do agree with you, I think the microchip technology is a fascinating means for what we're speaking of, the mark of the beast is, you know, you say, by the way, I don't want a microchip in me for any reason whatsoever. Can I just be clear about that? But the thing that really makes me nervous is if they say the head or the right hand. To me that, because it talks about that being the location in Revelation.

So here's the question we all have or you have the little girl, I didn't get a little girl, you have a little girl, but we have three boys that are all teenagers, your youngest is a teenager, right? He's a teenager, correct?

David. My youngest boy is gonna be 12.

Jeff. Ah, well, he's acting like a teenager, right? So that counts.

David. [unintelligible]

Jeff. So between the two of us we have six young men that are on the doorstep of college, okay? Let's make this real practical: what if in the days ahead, particularly with the

technology the way it's going, what if their respective universities make their student ID an insertible chip in their body, what do you say to your son?

David. Right, I would say no.

Jeff. I'm on the same page, I just want to know that you and I will be homeschooling our boys together when it comes to college there. But I just thought because I think sometimes we talk about the mark of the beast, buying and selling and we think groceries and I think you're actually right but I think, you know, now what you allude to with Covid-19, you might have people saying, "Well, unless you take this microchip, you can't return to the office anymore because we can't track where you've been." And I find that frightening. "Or you can't go to school here because we can't verify that when you were on spring break you weren't exposed to something." You know, to me, I find that frightening. Of course, the Bible also speaks about the right hand and the forehead which obviously are places where our body temperature changes in extremes and very quickly which obviously if we were exposed to any type of pandemic, it would show up very quickly in that location.

So now I'm gonna push your buttons. Is that okay, Dave? You mind if I push your buttons for a moment?

David. Go for it.

Jeff. Okay, for those of you that don't know our background, David and I first got to know each other when we were at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. We actually took at the Master's level, we took an eschatology course together. Eschatology is one of those big words that means a study of end times. And David and I began to form a friendship because I think we were the only two in the room that were not only premillennial but pretribulational when it comes to the way the Bible lays out things. And I'm gonna ask this question that was just submitted online because I know it's gonna push your button and I'm gonna sit back and enjoy listening to you answer it. Are you ready? Here it is: what is amillennialism and what do people who believe in it think about the rapture? Have fun, brother. Have fun.

David. Well, I don't know that I need to speak that long on it. You know, listen, amillennialism, they do not believe in a literal millennial reign of Christ, right? And that is the, you know, the most common view of the academic world today and Jeff and I were definitely in the minority back in our seminary days. Our professor was an amillennialist and I can't remember his name, Jeff. Can you remember his name? Yeah, Kirkpatrick, that's right. He was a good man and good teacher but he was an amillennialist and he made it very clear that anybody that's a pretribulational, dispensationalist and believes, you know, believes anything that Hal Lindsey or anybody else like that believes, that they are not being academic, they have not done their studies, and he was very adamant about that and Jeff will remember that kind of definitely pushed my buttons a little bit.

So I came into seminary very much believing in the rapture. I was influenced by Hal Lindsey and "The Late Great Planet Earth" that he wrote in the 1970s that had a huge impact on the church, and Hal Lindsey very clearly laid out the importance of Israel becoming a nation and also laid out the signs of the times that we are to look for as the church and so that inspired me, that was part of my calling to the ministry was to preach to the church of Jesus Christ and to warn the church of Jesus Christ and anybody else who would listen that the Lord's coming back. He's coming back soon and we're seeing the signs that the Bible spoke of, and so a pretribulational rapture was very important to me.

Now it's not a test of faith. It doesn't matter if you believe in a pretribulational rapture or not, or if you're an amillennialist or a premillennialist or a historical premillennialist, it doesn't matter where you stand on that and it's a secondary issue in terms of our salvation, but I have found that there is a linkage between what one views about the millennial view, you know, the kingdom of Christ and what one believes about the rapture, and to me there's a linkage between that and, how do I say this because there might be people listening that I don't want to offend but I believe there's a linkage between that and evangelism. There's a linkage between that and a passion for God's word. There's plenty of historical premillennialists that I know that are very passionate about God's word and they love God's word and they're very evangelistic so I'm not saying that all, but if when you take the church as a whole, the more we move away from the thought that Christ could come back at any time, I believe the deader we're becoming.

So it's very important that we maintain a biblical view of the end times and not only that but to do what Jesus tells us to do, to watch and to be ready and he's specifically talking about us watching and being ready for his coming. He says that he will come at an hour that we're not ready for. He could come in the morning, in the afternoon, in the evening, and the reason we're not gonna be watching or the world won't be watching is because they're not looking for it. They're not looking for the coming of Christ and so the exhortation is very clear to the church and to the preachers of God's church is that we are to be leading our churches to be ready for the coming of Christ, to live as that needs to be a lifestyle.

Now my conviction is that amillennialism does not fulfill that exhortation from the Scripture, for Christians to live always on the edge of our seat, always looking for and looking up for the coming of our redemption and to me that is a big loss in the church today and we need to regain that. Many amillennialists downplay the role of Revelation. They do not believe that Revelation is applicable to today, that it was fulfilled back in Nero's time, they call it apocalyptic literature therefore it's not to be taken literal. We believe, Jeff and I believe that Revelation is a prophecy. That means that it must come to pass literally and in history, but amillennialists believe that it's in a genre of literature called apocalyptic literature therefore they devalue the worth of Revelation. That's a very dangerous thing to do especially given the promises and the warnings within the book of Revelation itself when John wrote, "Cursed are those who take away from this book." And so you've got to be very careful with the book of Revelation because it's the only book that comes with this incredible promise, also this incredible curse. Those who take

away and diminish the message of the book of Revelation are in danger of being cursed by the Lord. Those who add to it, on the other hand, and this is where Jeff and I need to be very careful, those who add to the book of Revelation, when we add our opinions about Revelation and they go too far and we're actually adding to the Scripture something that's not actually there, that's very dangerous as well. It brings us under the same curse.

So as a premillennialist, as one who believes in a pretribulational rapture, when I approach what amillennialists call apocalyptic literature, I approach it as a prophecy, that it was something that was literally to be fulfilled, that God has laid out the end from the beginning for us and all we have to do is have faith and see it with our eyes of faith and God's word will be very clear to us.

So that answers the question the best that I can answer it, Jeff. If you want to add to it, why don't you go for it.

Jeff. Well, the only I guess piece I would add is obviously the word "amillennial" means "no millennium." You know, as you said apocalyptic literature, the thousand year reign of Christ cannot be taken literally because they don't take any of the prophetic words of the book of Revelation as a literal prophecy. That being said, you know, in Revelation 20 where we get the phrase "millennium," that thousand year reign, it's mentioned six times in seven verses that he'll reign for a thousand years. I don't know how you can look at that portion of Scripture and go, "Ah, it's just figurative. It can't really be a thousand years." He said it six times in seven verses and yet the same God who wrote the Scriptures said in the mouth of two or three witnesses. We have six witnesses in seven verses so, again, to your point David, the Bible is laid very particularly and specifically for a reason and we don't have the opportunity to say, "Well, I don't think it really means what it says."

But you're right on the same hand that we've got to be dangerous about taking away as well as adding to and I think that's where those of you that are being a part of this study not only two weeks ago but tonight, this is where it's important where sometimes you'll hear David and I on the issues, whether it's the mark of the beast or this subject matter or that, we'll kind of get close to the line but we don't step over the line because we come on the backside of a lot of people throughout the years who have been wrong and they've made too specific of a statement in regards to allowing the Scripture just to say what it says. So David and I will testify there's been times where we've gone over that line, so to speak, and we've had to repent of that and say, "God, we took it too far. We brought our own opinions into it."

But amillennialism to me is very dangerous. As David said, I think it takes away from the literalness of Scripture, the hope of prophecy, and I know David's kind of the expert when it comes to the book of Daniel but so many prophecies in regards particularly to the birth of Christ happened exactly as Daniel said. When we go amillennial, we're saying, "Well, the prophecies of the Second Coming of Christ, they're just figurative. They're not really there." So how can we take the First Coming literally but not the Second Coming?

So I appreciate that he and I were the only two in the class who held those positions and 20+ years later, David, here we are still again. Do you remember the statistic you gave two weeks ago that came out about the number of pastors who are no longer subscribing to a pretribulation, premillennial view? Do you remember those statistics that you gave? It was small.

David. Yeah, it's in the 30% now, whereas 10 years ago it was 60% among evangelical pastors. So it's changed that much.

Now before I ask you another question, let me make another comment on that just as far as having a literal thousand year reign of Christ on earth. You know, you remember that passage in 2 Peter 3:8 and Peter said, "But beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day." And just a point about that verse, you know, it's interesting when you read through the writings of the early church fathers, they referenced this verse multiple times, different, early church fathers referenced this verse and they take it literally. They used that as a prophecy and my point in saying this is because it argues against the amillennial view. Now the early church fathers did not teach on the rapture. None of them mention a rapture of the church, a secret taking away. I believe that we can make a case that there is a reference to the rapture in the Shepherd of Hermas, an early second century document, but we'll save that for another time. My point about this verse is the early church fathers argued a thousand years is as a day, a day is as a thousand years and they also stated that they believed that the Antichrist would come at the end of the 6,000<sup>th</sup> year from the time of Adam, alright? This was a common, this was the view in the early church, the second and third generation church leaders, they believed that Adam and Eve were literal people, that was created about 4,000 years before their time. They took a literal view of the genealogies and they traced it back. Adam and Eve were born about 4,000 years before the time of Christ. They believed that this prophecy was literal. A thousand years is as a day, a day is a thousand years. God created the earth in six days. What did he do on the seventh day? He rested. A day is like a thousand years, 6,000 years of human history, the seventh he rests. The seventh is the millennial reign of Christ on earth.

That was the prevailing view of the early church fathers in the second and third century. Some of those men actually knew the apostles. They would have asked these question to them personally and we have their writings and they testify they believe the Antichrist would appear 2,000 years after the time of Christ just before the millennial reign, just before the Second Coming which I find very interesting because when you also look at the genealogy of Matthew 1 and I probably shouldn't get into that right now but...

Jeff. Oh, go for it. We've got time.

David. I don't know. Maybe I shouldn't get into this right now but it just gets into the generations because Jesus said that the generation that sees these things will not pass away until they've all been fulfilled, referring to the signs of the times, and using that genealogy, we learn how long a generation is, we learn where we are on the generational scale. Maybe we can do this another time, but when you do the math on those



generations, we can make a strong case that we are the last generation before that 6,000<sup>th</sup> year since the creation of Adam and Eve comes to pass.

So with that, we'll pause right there.

Jeff. Are you alluding to Prophecy Conference 3.0 because you said maybe...

David. There you go. That's right.

Jeff. Well, heck, let me go on that. So when someone comes to you and says, "Okay, great, I see how the Scriptures say that, the early church fathers," and by the way, I'm right in line with you, how would you answer someone who says, "Well, how do you reconcile, okay, 6,000 total years of history, it's been 2,000 years since the empty tomb, we're in the year 2020 now, how do you reconcile the, I guess the differences in the calendar, so to speak?"

David. Yeah, the calendars are not exact. I mean, when you, you have to be a lot smarter than I am to go back and try to reconcile ancient calendars with modern calendars and to trace how those things have changed over time. The Hebrew calendar is different from our calendar, different ways of reckoning years and generations. It is a very confusing and difficult process but there's a lot of smart people that have done extensive work on calendars and on those issues. And for example, we know that Jesus wasn't born in 0, right? I mean, most scholars believe Jesus was born somewhere between 4 and 6 Before Christ, BC.

Jeff. Sounds kind of paradoxical.

David. Before Christ, right, exactly. So the calendars are not perfect. We know that they are off but they are generally correct. They are generally correct but they are off by several decades, 50 to 100 years even maybe in some cases, but we are generally in that time period. That we know. That is not even, I mean, in fact in the ancient world a year was 360 days, right? Their calendar was 360 and so everything's kind of thrown off and tilted but God is the one who knows exactly what the time is. We know the general times and seasons, he knows the day and the hour.

Jeff. That's right, but you brought up a great point.

David. I've got a question for you.

Jeff. Well, but you brought up a great point, David. You said the early church fathers believed in this thousand years to a day, yet people who hold to a pretribulation rapture, premillennialism as you and I, oftentimes at least I hear the criticism, maybe you don't, is that this is a modern phenomena, that people haven't believed this for years, that this is just the product of the '70s, you know, but what you're saying is historically speaking the early church fathers, individuals who actually walked among the apostles wrote that this is their interpretation of Scripture.

David. Yeah, I have the quotes pulled from those primary sources to use. And yeah, people do level that criticism and that argument against a pretribulational view of the rapture. They say, "Well, this is a new invention. This wasn't taught until the early 1800s and didn't really gain popularity until Darby and Scofield," Scofield Study Bible which is a classic, and then into the 1970s with Hal Lindsey. When "The Late Great Planet Earth," man, that exploded at that time. That was the greatest selling book, the number 1 selling book of all genres in the 1970s was "The Late Great Planet Earth."

Jeff. Really? Wow.

David. Oh, absolutely. It was an unbelievable, I mean, it went everywhere. But to answer that criticism, you know, Daniel says that these things are to be shut up and sealed up until the time of the end indicating there's gonna be certain things that are gonna be revealed in the time of the end that weren't revealed at that time. So it's just a bad argument. For example, whenever the Anabaptists, the first Baptists, the first people who separated from the Reformers who were wanting to kill them, right?

Jeff. Because we were the radicals. We were the radicals.

David. John Calvin, Zwingli, so some students of Zwingli in Zurich separated from him because they were reading the Bible, they came to the conviction that believer's baptism is the only thing that's in the Bible. There is no infant baptism in the Bible so they start baptizing one another and then Balthasar Hubmaier who was a German Anabaptist who was a Catholic priest, a very famous Catholic priest who read the Bible for himself and when he read the Bible for himself he was convicted that they were not to be baptizing infants and they began, he was convicted and he was running with Zwingli and Zwingli's students who broke from him and he sided with the students of Zwingli that, "No, it needs to be believer's baptism. It needs to be people who can profess their faith in Christ." And as a result of that, he began writing his works. With the writings of Balthasar Hubmaier, the earliest academic writings for Baptists, and he was killed for those, by the way, but one of the arguments that was leveled against these Baptists and the reason that the Catholic Church and the Reformed Church were persecuting these Baptists, their argument, the only argument that they could come up with, Hubmaier's, the only argument that they could come up with was that this is a new doctrine. That it's a new doctrine.

Jeff. That being baptized was new.

David. Right, exactly. Getting baptized, we hadn't been baptizing adults for 1,300 years and these guys are bringing up this new doctrine. That was their argument against Baptists. Yeah, nobody makes that argument today, right?

Jeff. No, not at all.

David. This is, we know that's the biblical way to do it. It's just a bad argument. It was a bad argument whenever they used that argument against the Baptists, the very first Baptists and yet I've heard some Baptists accuse guys like me and you of teaching a new doctrine, a new doctrine, which I thought it just ironic because some of our Baptist forefathers were killed for teaching a new doctrine. So just because it's new doesn't mean that it's wrong and it's really not that new, it's several hundred years old.

Jeff. Alright, sorry to chase the rabbit but I thought I'd have some fun.

David. Alright, man, let me ask you this question.

Jeff. Alright, go for it.

David. What's the purpose of Satan coming back on the scene after the thousand year reign of Christ?

Jeff. Oh boy, ah, that's one of those interesting ones. Yeah, that is a really good question and, you know, by the way this speaks to the why. You know, why would this take place, why would this happen, and one of the things that I shared with our folks here in Opelika all the time is a lot of times we know the who, the how, the when, the where, but sometimes we're not given necessarily the why and I think this is where David and I have been talking a lot of times where we kind of get on the edge of that envelop of where the why is in this in the midst of the how, the who and the when and the where.

That being said, in Revelation 20 which we've alluded to a whole bunch tonight, it begins with that famous millennial passage, the thousand year reign of Christ, Satan being bound for a thousand years. Then it says after that, that Satan is loosed for a season and I'm gonna go to Revelation 20 and I'm gonna read this passage because obviously it's being alluded to, what was the purpose of this, then we're gonna go back into Matthew 25 to do a more thorough examination. But it says and this is verse 7, it says, "And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison," that was the bottomless pit, "shall go out to deceive the nations," focus on that phrase the nations, "which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. They went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them." Well, we also see God kind of took matters in his own hand very quickly. This is the famous fire and brimstone descending from heaven to eliminate this rebellion.

The question is what is the purpose because here Satan has been bound for a thousand years in the bottomless pit, eventually that time is gonna come, that Great White Throne Judgment that I alluded to earlier where not only he, his angels, but all of those who are found written in the book of works, in other words, justifying themselves apart from faith in Jesus Christ, are placed in the Lake of Fire for all of eternity. Why after a thousand years of reigning on earth, why after a thousand years of Jesus sitting on his throne on the earth, not just fulfillment of prophecy but being in actuality, why would this happen?

Why would God allow him to deceive the nations? Why would he allow him to bring up another rebellion? I mean, here is one who his first sinful act was one of rebellion. You know, the Bible says in Isaiah 14, he wanted to ascend above the clouds and basically assert himself as the one who should be in charge. We know that he puts into the temptation of all of our lives to rebel against our Creator and our God, and yet here after a thousand year reign, why would he be loosed to initiate once again another rebellion?

Well, I think the purpose or maybe the possibility of the why takes us all the way back to the book of Matthew 25. Now when we get to Matthew 24 and 25, not only are we in the last week of the physical ministry and the physical life of Jesus Christ on the earth, but we also find ourselves in what we call the Olivet Discourse. We have the disciples coming to him, asking him very strategic questions about the end times, we might say that this is eschatological discourse, it's about the Second Coming. Chapter 24 that we discussed in great detail last week where it talks about wars and rumors of war, even the abomination of desolation, the parable of the fig tree etc., when you get to chapter 25 this is actually a continuation of the Olivet Discourse. It's not a separate event and so Jesus continues to speak of and talk about things such as the parable of the 10 virgins and their oil being prepared and those who are not prepared and such, but when you get to the end of chapter 25 it makes a very interesting statement that I think needs to be seen as a contrast to this rapture event that we talk about so often. It says in verse 31 of Matthew 25, "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory."

Now I'm gonna push pause there for a moment. This is not the rapture event that we've alluded to so often where he calls the dead and alive in Christ to be together with him. This is happening chronologically after Revelation 19 when that famous Armageddon battle takes place, Jesus descends on the white horse out of the clouds, the armies of heaven with him. This is what's happening, he's appearing in his glory. His angels are with him to sit upon the throne of his glory. That's a key phrase in verse 31 of Matthew 25, that he has come not just to win that final battle but to sit on his throne the thousand years.

Verse 32, "And before him shall be gathered all nations." Remember what we just read in Revelation 20, that he would deceive the nations? All the peoples, all the nations, "he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when did we see you hungred, and fed you? or thirsty, and gave you drink?" He says, "When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee?" And this dialog continues. You go fast forward to verse 41, "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Now I think the reason that the question is important, what is the purpose of Satan being loosed for this season,

David already spoke to it earlier about 2 Thessalonians 2, this great delusion that is going to come upon those who heard the Gospel of Jesus Christ, rejected the Gospel of Jesus Christ, during this great tribulational time period will not have access to salvation through Jesus Christ, they'll receive that delusion and they'll be deceived. But he also mentioned that Revelation 7 addresses there's a great multitude of people from all nations and people that will believe, we call them the tribulational saints. Many of them according to Revelation 6 lose their life, they're martyred for the Lord, they're beheaded according to Revelation 20, and so we have evidence that there are many people who refuse the mark of the beast, and as David mentioned, lose their life, but what we have here indicated on the backside of the battle of Armageddon there's an indication that there are those who go through the tribulational time period not possibly receiving the mark of the beast, not having allegiance to the mark of the beast that are considered the sheep here. They're the ones who Jesus says, "You helped my people. You served me. You fed me. You gave me drink. You visited me even not understanding what you actually were doing." And so therefore I think we have evidence in Scripture that when Jesus Christ descends at the Second Coming, not the rapture event that we keep talking about, when he comes to reign, that there will be people on planet earth who have not, shall we say, subscribed to the Antichrist agenda and somehow supernaturally, I would say almost miraculously, were not beheaded for using the mark of the beast, somehow survived this tribulational time period, and Jesus takes them and they become those who inherit the kingdom.

Now I think it's important to note here that you and I when we are raptured and this event will take place some point in the future, we receive according to 1 Corinthians 15, we receive a new body, one that is immortal, one that will not fade away. It says that that which is mortal must put on immortality, that we must be changed. And so those who come with Christ, I think there's biblical evidence we are in our new body that is immortal, that will never fade away, but these individuals who "survived the tribulational time period," there's a lot of debate about the age and status and such, they are not in their immortal bodies, they are not in their new body, they have not received the incorruptible, so to speak, and they are those, I believe the Bible says, are the subjects of Christ in his kingdom when he sits on his throne.

You say, "Well, why is that so important? Why would Satan need to be loosed for a season?" Because the Bible gives evidence that the normal means of life will continue in this millennial time period. It talks about children being born. It talks about life going on. It talks about the population that these subjects, and I hate to use that term, but these believers who were not a part of that rapture event, who are not a part of the army of the Lord, they have mortal bodies and continue to procreate, continue to grow, and continue to go about the things of life and there will be many people, I believe according to this passage, many people who will come into being who will be born who will know nothing but Jesus sitting on his throne and have never had to make a conscious choice that Jesus is the one whom I believe, they've never, Satan, he's in the bottomless pit for a thousand years, they've never known the concept of temptation, they've never known access to reject. Very different than even Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden, remember there were two trees there, the tree of life or the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Here in the millennium we get this idea Jesus is on his throne, Satan is bound, it's Jesus and that's

it and I believe that it is possible, again I don't want to overstep my bounds, I think it's possible that the purpose, why would Satan be loosed? It's because everyone who is found in the book of life, everyone who enters the new heaven and the new earth, the new Jerusalem has to make that decision that, "I choose Jesus," and there will be people who, I believe according to Matthew 25, that will come into existence during the millennium who have known nothing but a life apart from temptation, who have known nothing but Jesus on his throne, and I do believe that the purpose could possibly be that Satan is allowed to do so, so those people, much like you and I today, have to make that decision.

Here's the sad part: it says he deceives many. Can you imagine the possibility of knowing nothing in life but the millennium? Nothing but Jesus reigning on his throne? Nothing but that picture we have almost of a revisited garden of Eden and we reject it? But that's exactly what did happen in the garden of Eden and unfortunately that's what happens in a lot of individuals' lives today. You know, David talked about that he believes as well as I do too that amillennialism kind of, shall we say, pushes to the downside of importance of evangelism, I think what we're teaching tonight in regards to this question and others should increase our heart for evangelism because we have to make a decision and you and I today, we're not in the Great Tribulation, we're not in the garden of Eden, we're not millennial saints who one day Satan will come up and try to deceive, but many of you possibly have been deceived because Satan has talked you out of the need for Jesus.

He's talked you out of the need to repent of your sins and I think that is what is so critical as we read stories about people in the future, as we look in the Bible about people in the past, how easy at times it can be to say, "Well, that was history or that's the future." Well, what about right now? You know, this rapture event we talk about so often as part of the Prophecy Conference, according to 1 Corinthians 15 can happen in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. I've actually heard people tell me, "Well, when Jesus splits the skies that's when I'll get on my knees." The last time I checked, in the twinkling of an eye you don't have time to get on your knees and so one thing I would share is that all throughout the ages whether the garden of Eden, whether the millennium or whether today, we are given a decision to make: do we choose Jesus Christ or do we choose something else? And I think the purpose of Satan being loosed is I think the Bible gives us the possibility that there will be those in the millennium who have never really had that clear conscious choice and the choice must be made. Unfortunately, even after seeing Jesus on his throne for possibly hundreds of years, the Bible shows humanity's natural depraved inclination to do as Satan led it, to be tempted to revolt against their Creator and their God. So I do think it's interesting, though, that when this happens the Lord takes matters in his hands very quickly. It says he judges, fire comes from heaven and it's just over. There is no, shall we say, time or age of grace. It is done.

So David you may want to throw in your proverbial two cents on that one but I think it alludes to the possible purpose of this event taking place.

David. I think you did a great job, Jeff. I'm right on with you on that. That was an excellent answer. We've got another question here that has been asked several times tonight and maybe we can just kind of take turns on this: how do you see the Roman

Catholic Church as a role player in the end times, good or bad? So something along those lines has been asked by several people.

Jeff. That's a loaded question.

David. That's kind of a loaded question. Yeah, it really is. We have Revelation 17...

Jeff. The Mother of Harlots, brother. Mystery Babylon.

David. Yeah, we have to talk about it. I mean, there's really no other way to do that but do you want to talk about this or do you want me to go?

Jeff. You're the historian so why don't you start out and I'll wrap it up. How about that?

David. Alright. Well, I can tell you that from, you know, the time of the Reformation and, you know, throughout that time period from the time of the radical reformation that followed the Reformation, and then through the development of Christianity through England, especially through the reforms of Henry VIII and then the Separatists broke off from them, and then out of the Separatists came the Baptists, the modern Baptists. It's been a pretty common theme throughout all those groups that the Roman Catholic Church is the fulfillment of Revelation 17 and Revelation 17, for example, the Scripture says in verse 1, John has said, the angel says, "Come with me," and he says, "I will show you the judgment of the Great Harlot who sits on many waters." And so there's someone here called a Great Harlot. He goes down to verse 3, he says, "So he carried me away in the Spirit into the wilderness and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast which was full of names of blasphemy having seven heads and 10 horns. The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication. And on her forehead was a name written, 'Mystery Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and of the abominations of the earth. I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. And when I saw her, I marveled with great amazement.'"

Now in the Middle Ages and beyond and as the Reformation took place and then the radical reformation, these men and women who were separating from the Roman Catholic Church starting with the Reformers, as they were separating from the Roman Catholic Church it was putting their lives in peril, their families in peril. I mentioned Balthasar Hubmaier earlier. He was a Roman Catholic priest, he was educated. He had a PhD in theology. He was an elite scholar among Roman Catholic priests and he was the head over one of the most important churches and shrines in all of Germany and so he was a famous well-known priest. Whenever he decided to leave the Roman Catholic Church to submit to baptism himself, to give up his priesthood and all of his wealth and everything else to become a Baptist and eventually he was burned at the stake, alright, in Vienna. I mean, those were the kind of situations that people faced. His wife, by the way, was drowned in the river just the day after she watched him get burned at the stake. That was the common lot of these people who were separating from the Roman Catholic

Church at that time, those state churches were very dangerous. People's families were destroyed and the average person, these pastors who were being persecuted by priests and also by some of the Reformers, when they looked at those men who were the heads of the state churches, they saw them dressed with all the purple of kings, especially when people look at the Pope and looked at the Cardinals of the Church. The way they dressed, the resources, the castles that they lived in, the gold rings and medallions that they wore around their necks, the hats that they wear, just their whole makeup the average person would look at that, the poor person, especially those who were breaking away who had a different conviction about the Scripture, they're breaking away from the Church, they saw these rich powerful people coming after them, wanting to destroy their family, to make orphans of their children. And so you can imagine how they viewed the Roman Catholic Church at that time and we could say for good reason. It's unbelievable the persecution that was leveled from one Christian to another against another.

So when they would read this passage in Revelation 17, they would automatically think this refers to a harlot, a harlot in the Scripture is used metaphorically and symbolically to refer to someone who is unorthodox in their faith, someone who is committing spiritual adultery against God. That's what that represents and so what we have here is a church that is a false church. This is what we believe that this is what Revelation means. But when you go further and you dig in Revelation 17 and here was kind of the kicker for everybody and for us today even, verse 9 says, "Here is the mind which has wisdom: The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits." So this woman is a harlot which, again, denotes false religion, false teaching, a false prophet, and this harlot is sitting in a city that's built upon seven hills and the seven hilled city of the ancient world and everybody knows is Rome. And where is the Roman Catholic Church centered? It's in Rome.

Now we are not saying, Jeff and I are not saying that all Roman Catholics are unsaved. We're not saying that. We're not saying that all Roman Catholics are bad, that all Roman Catholic priests are bad. That's not what we're saying. We're saying that the church in the Middle Ages whenever they were persecuting Christians, that was bad, that was evil. We also believe that in the end times that the Roman Catholic Church, the head of the Roman Catholic Church is going to become in alliance, at least this is what I believe, Jeff, will be in an alliance with Antichrist, will be the False Prophet of the Antichrist. It will be a state church that is being propped up, that is propping up the Antichrist and leading the people to become followers of the Antichrist. That doesn't mean that every Roman Catholic today is bad, that's not what we're saying but this will be what will take place in the end times.

It's interesting, even the Roman Catholic Church itself, St. Malachy prophecies, they have a tradition within the Roman Catholic Church that there's gonna be a final Pope, they believe that these prophecies are leading to a final Pope and the final Pope will be an apostate Pope, and so that would align with Revelation 17 that when the Antichrist comes in the end times. And so there's even a Roman Catholic tradition itself that the Roman Catholic Church in the end times will be an apostate church and for me, you know, when we look at the theology, the doctrines of the current Pope, and I just, I saw, I read an



article this past week about a debate that's going on and some controversy that's going on from the last Pope who is still alive, which is very unusual, Pope Benedict, I believe, he left, he gave up his position as being Pope which is just unheard of and then the present Pope took his place but they're still living in the same place and they've been stepping on each other's toes because the Pope that is presently in place is very sympathetic to the gay rights movement, is very sympathetic towards other liberal social issues and so the former Pope who was a conservative has been critical of the current Pope. So there's some division that is going on there. So the present Pope, the direction that the Roman Catholic Church is going in causes a lot of concern for a lot of people both inside that church and outside of it.

You know, I've been talking a lot, Jeff. I'm sorry. I don't remember exactly what the specific question was. I think it was what does the Roman Catholic Church, what role will they play in the end times? I believe that there will be an apostate Pope who will align himself with the Antichrist. You have something to add to that?

Jeff. Oh, I agree completely and I think you made a great point and one thing we need to make clear is I'm sure there are many people who are watching and listening that may have friends that would subscribe to the Catholic tradition and just because we're being very negative toward that tradition both in the past and possibly the future, we're not making a statement about them individually. In fact, I would even say and I know, David, you would agree, we've got a lot of Baptists, that doesn't mean they're saved. Just because you're Baptist doesn't mean that you're right. And so when we talk about the Roman Catholic Church, when we talk about the Baptist church, if I can just use that loosely, we're not talking about an individual, we're talking about a system of belief, we're talking about a system of philosophy, so to speak, and I think that's important what David said is when you look at the doctrines of not only the history but possibly the future of the Roman Catholic Church in relationship to Revelation 17, I know you're the historian but didn't Martin Luther refer to the Pope as "His Most Hellishness"? Wasn't that his phrase for him?

David. Yeah, that was one of the more kind things he said.

Jeff. Well, I was trying to keep it G rated here, you know? But I think David alluded to it and I think, to me when we talk about the role of the Roman Catholic Church, I think David nailed it on all points but the only thing I would add to the equation is the concept of the Antichrist. You know, we think of a red suit with horns and a tail but really Antichrist means not the Christ and when you look at what the Antichrist does in Revelation 11, 2 Thessalonians 2, he comes with miracles and wonders. He has answers that nobody else can do and he actually performs the supernatural is really what we see him doing.

I find it interesting and I don't know if you would go here but I'm going to, David, in John 17 in the garden of Gethsemane Jesus when he prays to his Father calls his Father "Holy Father" and yet there's an individual in Rome who allows himself to be called Holy Father, he allows himself to be called by the same name that's referred to by God himself

which, by the way in 2 Thessalonians 2, what will the antichrist do? He goes in the temple and he claims he's, who? He claims he's God. And so I agree with all the purple and the scarlet and all of the atrocities that you allude to in history but even the very names by which these personalities allow themselves to be called by, a lot of times much like Antichrist, it sounds like maybe even possibly looks like but it's not the real thing. Miracles, wonders, signs, even titles that humanity will fall for the delusion. In fact, even as you mentioned last time in the book of Daniel, the people of God, the Jewish people will sign a contract with him to come alongside of him and come with him for those 3 ½ years of that first part of the tribulation time period. And so I think that this is not a statement against individuals per se, but I do think what we see not only in history but also in current days, the entity known as the Roman Catholic Church, that you cannot separate the biblical description of the Antichrist and these events from what we've seen in the past, and even as you alluded to, what we're beginning to see in days, a subscription to behaviors, ideologies that are so contrary to Scripture in the name of the church? Again, we see, I think, ample evidence that at some level if not a significant level, what we know as the Roman Catholic Church will be a part of.

Now, David, I'm gonna go here on this issue. You know, we talked about the rapture event. The rapture is the catching up of the dead and alive who are in Christ, correct? And that's a simple definition. If you have someone who's a part of a false faith even though they claim to be a part of a church, they're not in Christ, and so it is very possible that you would have numerous people who are part of a church, maybe even leaders in a church who claim to be under the auspice of Christianity who are "left behind." And so therefore I think you've got ample evidence there that you would have numerous individuals under that entity or umbrella that would just then add fuel to that proverbial fire of being a part of this system that aligns itself with the Antichrist because it was false. By the way, we talk about apostasy there found in 2 Thessalonians 2, apostasy by strict definition means presenting one as being true when actually being false. So when we talk about it being the apostate church, it says it's the true church when in fact it's actually a false faith system.

So I know that's kind of a loaded question and you and I have put ourselves on the proverbial tightrope there but I think you made a great point, David. We fall in line with many of the great men of faith throughout the years subscribing to a literal reading of Scripture and an actual understanding the evidence that is before us.

Alright, I'm gonna switch gears with you. I'm gonna go from Revelation and I'm gonna go back in the Old Testament. Let's go to the book of Ezekiel to an issue that is referred to in the book of Revelation, that famous Gog and Magog, and the question specifically is alluding to Ezekiel 38 and is the issue there of Gog and Magog against Israel. The second question is will it be Russia and Iran? This is one of those great questions of Old Testament prophecy, this famous Gog and Magog that we just heard about in Revelation 20 with this, shall we say, rebellion of Satan with what we know as the bottomless pit. So I'm gonna turn it over to you. Let's do a little Gog and Magog. Let's go to Ezekiel and have some fun.

David. Yeah, we might have to do this one together because, I mean, for me this is a pretty short answer. You know, it's gonna require speculation. You know, we don't know for sure who Gog and Magog are other than they come from the extreme north, north of Israel. If you go and look at Israel on a map, if you look at Israel on a map and you go just go north, I mean, you're gonna see a lot of the Islamic countries and, you know, Turkey and Iran and Iraq, and you keep going to the extreme north, though, you're gonna eventually get up to Moscow and to Russia.

When you look at the names, if you look at Ezekiel 38:2 it says, "Son of man, set your face against Gog, of the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal, and prophesy against him." These names, Rosh, Meshech and Tubal, there's a lot of people who make modern equivalents with different cities of Russia and I believe that there's probably truth to that. I've always subscribed Gog and Magog refers to Russia but there's been a big movement among prophecy teachers, people who study God's word and study prophecy to equate Gog and Magog instead with Iran, Iraq and these other nations that are just to the north of Israel because it's true, they are to the north of Israel as well. But I've always believed it to be a reference to Russia and I believe that these names kind of give it away.

You know, the question is will it be Russia and Iran and will the Ezekiel 38 prophecy against Gog and Magog, will it be against Israel? Will we be here on earth to see it? Now I don't know where you stand on this, Jeff, to me Ezekiel is a little bit more mysterious than Daniel and Revelation. I believe and my personal conviction on it is that we're reading in 38 and 39 is a reference to the battle of Armageddon. You know, when I look at this and you probably have a different view of me on this because there's several different ways you can look at these key prophetic passages in chapters 37, 38, 39 of Ezekiel. Chapter 37, you know, it's the valley of the dead bones and the bones, you know, he says, "Prophesy, son of man, speak to these bones and speak the Spirit into them," and he does it, he prophesies and he speaks the Spirit and those bones start rattling and they become alive again and they become an exceedingly great army is what it says in chapter 37. There are several ways you can look at this passage, the most prevalent is that this is referring to the restoration of Israel and that's a very likely scenario, that this is a prophesy of the end times of Israel becoming a nation again, that Israel was dead and then God spoke Spirit into them and they came back alive.

Another way of looking at Ezekiel 37, I don't know what you think about this, is Ezekiel 37 refers to the rapture. You know, to me that's an incredible picture of the rapture, all these dead bones in the grave and God calls them and speaks the Spirit into them and they rattle and they're resurrected and they come back alive. And following that, it goes into the description of what's gonna take place in the latter years. In fact, in verse 8 of Ezekiel 38 it says, "In the latter years you will come into the land." Verse 16 it says, "It will be in the latter days that I will bring you against My land." So we know that this prophecy is a prediction about what's going to take place in the latter days, in the end times, and so I take chapter 38 and 39 to refer to the war of Armageddon and then what will follow after that. So, Jeff, feel free to weigh in on this.

Jeff. Well, I want to make it clear to whoever asked the question, remember from our first prophecy conference we focused on Daniel and Revelation because neither one of us are crazy enough to focus just on Ezekiel because there's so much material that's in there. But I do agree, of course, another question was asked in relationship to this and I think you just have to ask it is the timing of this event. Many people would ask, you know, is it pre-rapture, post-rapture, etc., and I think you're right on target, David, I think you see this major conflict that sounds eerily similar to what we know as the description of the battle of Armageddon in Revelation 14 and 16 as well as other prophetic passages in the Old Testament but I think in addition to that when it comes to the timing, I like to focus on chapters 40 and 41 where it talks about this temple that is built and this worship that takes place and this battle in 38 and 39 takes place immediately before this temple. Well, we know from Revelation 11 there's a temple somehow, somewhere during this tribulational time period and yet at the same time we know that when Jesus reigns on the earth where does he set his throne? On the Temple Mount.

So you know, there's a lot of question, you know, pre-rapture, pre-abomination of desolation, pre-Armageddon. I don't know if I know enough about Ezekiel to get in the weeds there but I think you're exactly right, we see numerous accounts in the Scripture where the enemies of Israel attack them without question and many times according to Revelation 16, they come from the east but if you think about it, they're coming from the east, they're also coming from the north as well because we see what we know as Israel is really the center of the world from a geographical standpoint, and you and I have stood there together on the south side of the field of Armageddon, we've been there, brother, Megiddo, and you see this incredible battlefield that God, it appears as if he carved it out with a hot butter knife on the land to me, and you can see how easily that if you were gonna come into Israel even as the kings of the east as Revelation 16 calls the pre-Armageddon, shall I say, coalition of armies, you would not enter Israel across the Jordan River. That wouldn't make any sense at all even though it says the River Euphrates is dried up. It would make perfect sense to come in that north side at the famous battle of Armageddon or the field of Megiddo.

So I think you're exactly right, you see a description of utter destruction, well not destruction but utter battle, so to speak, that can only be equated to what we know as Armageddon and then you've got this passage about the temple immediately following, so I think I'm with you, I don't think we can exactly pinpoint. You know, many people have said, "Well, maybe Russia and Iran." Some people said Turkey and Russia. It's funny no matter what country's associated they always put Russia in there every single time. It's the other one that people will question who that might be. But I'm like you, I don't believe that this is an event that's gonna take place "pre-rapture." I think this is a tribulation event, more likely as you mentioned, probably closer to if not an actual account of what we know as the battle of Armageddon. But just to remind everybody, when you come to Ezekiel, you think that some of the language of Daniel and Revelation can be at times difficult to decipher, I'm just grateful they didn't ask the question about the wheel with the eyes going to and fro and turning every direction because who knows what that actually means there in chapter 1.

So it gets a little bit fuzzy, so to speak, but I mention the abomination of desolation, you know, the possibility of this event happening either before or after. David, I know that's spoken of very clearly in the book of Daniel, spoken very clearly in Matthew 24. Speak to what the abomination of desolation is and how that impacts the chronology of prophetic events.

David. Well, the abomination of desolation refers to an act that is committed by someone going into the holiest of holies in the temple where God's presence is supposed to be and going into that place and desecrating it. That refers to the abomination of desolation and there's several times that this has happened throughout history and the Scripture even mentions that it was going to happen several times. If you remember a couple of weeks ago whenever we were studying through the book of Daniel, we saw prophecies about Alexander the Great, we also saw prophecies, this is in Daniel 2 and Daniel 7 and Daniel 11, prophecies of Alexander the Great, prophecies of Antiochus Epiphanes who was the leader from Syria, and then the prophecies of the Antichrist and they're all kind of crunched in there together and you have to read very carefully to be able to discern who Daniel's referring to in each passage of those two chapters. So I tried to break those down for you.

Antiochus Epiphanes was selected and pointed out and predicted by Daniel, I believe because of the things that God knew that he was going to do. Antiochus Epiphanes was a type of antichrist and he was an oppressor of the people of Israel and he is a man who went onto the Temple Mount, went inside of the Holy of Holies and he desecrated it, he committed the abomination of desolation and as a result of that, the people of Israel revolted against him, eventually it was gonna lead to his downfall because Judas Maccabeus and his son, "The Hammer," they rose up, led a rebellion against him and eventually established their line of leadership that would eventually lead to King Herod. But the Maccabean Revolt is still celebrated on Chanukah and so that was a very significant event in Israel's history because the abomination of desolation is that significant to the people of Israel. When that temple is built, that's where God's presence is, that's where he is, that's where he is present in that Holy of Holies, and to go in there and desecrate it was the ultimate evil. By the time of the first century before the coming of Christ and the first century before Christ, the Roman General Pompey actually made an incursion into Israel and they conquered Jerusalem for a while, not for a while, for a long time actually, but Pompey went into the Holy of Holies and he went behind the curtain and he looked back there and he came out and he said that there's nothing there. And so the ark of the covenant was not there. This is the first century before Christ. He said there was nothing there. Now it's very possible before those Roman armies came into Jerusalem that they went and they hid all the artifacts and everything that they needed to conduct their temple worship, they would have hid that from the General so that he wouldn't defile it, but nevertheless he went in there.

So he didn't commit the abomination of desolation, that's reserved for the Antichrist and so what is the abomination of desolation? It's going to be at a future date. This is how we know that the temple in Jerusalem is going to be rebuilt. And Jeff and I have been up on the Temple Mount and we stood up there and saw the Dome of the Rock and we saw how

beautiful that was, that it's a site that is very holy and very significant to Muslims all over the world, and they're very jealous of it but let me tell you something: that Temple Mount has huge space. There's plenty of room for other buildings to be built and it's very possible and you could make, it's very likely that eventually the Jews and things could come together where the Jews could build their temple alongside of the mosque or the mosque could be removed. When the time of the Gentiles comes to an end and that, there might be something that happens that removes the mosque.

But nevertheless, we believe that the temple must be rebuilt. It seems very clear that that's going to happen and I personally believe that in Daniel 9 where the Antichrist enters into a covenant with Israel, they sign this agreement, there's peace all over the world, this is following the rapture. I believe part of that bringing peace to the world is somehow the Antichrist is going to bring peace to the Middle East, he's gonna allow the people of Israel to rebuild the temple on the Temple Mount. Now if he's able to do that because of the deception that he's put over the whole world or however that occurs, that that's just God's judgment on the world and that's what empowers the Antichrist to do this. However he does it, he's gonna use his supernatural powers and there's gonna be peace in the Middle East, at least for those 3 ½ years, that first half of the tribulation period. The temple's going to be rebuilt and then at the end of that 3 ½ years, the book of Revelation, Daniel, they make it very clear that the Antichrist who's filled with the Spirit of Satan, he is going to go into the Temple Mount and he's gonna do exactly what Antiochus Epiphanes did, he's gonna defile the Holy of Holies and declare himself to be God, and that's when we believe the false prophet will come alongside him as well and he's gonna declare him God as well, and then what is left is the great tribulation will take place in the second half of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week.

So, Jeff, I'll turn that over to you if you want to add to it.

Jeff. You alluded to that Temple Mount, the possibility of the location maybe even being alongside of what we know as the Dome of the Rock, but also you and I have been there together, there's precedence, I think it's on the north side of the Temple Mount, I could be wrong there, there's actually a Jewish synagogue and a Muslim mosque that actually share a common wall. Is that not the case there in Jerusalem? And so there's even precedence for these two faiths sharing a common wall in a very small environment, not on a holy place, so to speak, but there's...

David. I don't recall that. I'll take your word for it, Jeff.

Jeff. Well, that being said, who knows? I may not know what I'm talking about but I seem to recall that thinking, wow, if we had the smaller environment of a common wall, can imagine what the Dome of the Rock and the temple possibly sharing the same small space would be incredible.

But as you said, that abomination of desolation, that's the critical point to me, in fact, I will tell you as I study eschatology, as I began to years ago, decades ago, the abomination of desolation to me was so critical in regards to the prophecy in the book of Daniel

because that's that critical event. That's the point where the Antichrist is revealed for evil personified. That's the point where who we know as the Jewish people who have fallen for this contract have their eyes on. This is the point where Matthew 24, Jesus says, "When you see this happen, run for the hills. Pray that it's not on the Sabbath. Pray that you don't have young children." And so, you know, we talk about the rapture being this critical time period where the dead and alive in Christ are taken to be with the Lord pre-tribulation, to me the three big events of prophecy future, I know there's many, the three big ones to me are the rapture, the abomination of desolation, and then the return of Jesus Christ. To me those are the big three as far as... And I know there's a lot of different issues that are critical there but the fact that who we know as the Antichrist claims to be Christ, what a brazen act and essentially that's what Lucifer wanted to do when he rebelled against God, he wanted to be, shall we say, he wanted to be in charge, he wanted to be the one that had everybody's attention.

Alright, David, I'm gonna take us to Isaiah 66:22-24, specifically 23. What do those passages mean in reference to prophecy? Is this speaking of the thousand year reign of Christ? Isaiah 66, brother.

David. Well, let's read that and let's try to decide what these mean together, Jeff. "'For as the new heavens and the new earth Which I will make shall remain before Me,' says the LORD, 'So shall your descendants and your name remain. And it shall come to pass That from one New Moon to another, And from one Sabbath to another, All flesh shall come to worship before Me.' And they shall go forth and look Upon the corpses of the men Who have transgressed against Me. For their worm does not die, And their fire is not quenched. They shall be an abhorrence to all flesh." Jeff, when I read this passage and, of course, I've read it before, this is one of those passages that obviously has prophetic implications and maybe you have a different opinion on this than I do. You know, what I've done since I first started my walk with the Lord when I was in my 20s, one of the first things I did when I started reading the Bible, I read through the whole Bible and I marked every prophecy in the Scripture in yellow highlighter, and I've been doing that ever since then. So every time I get a new Bible, I read the whole Bible through and every time I come across a prophecy, an end time prophecy, a prophecy about the end times, I outline that in yellow. Now prophecies that have already been fulfilled I outline in a different color. But I study those prophecies and when I come to a passage like this and this isn't the only one like this, there are some passages that I come to and I don't have a strong opinion or a strong idea on exactly where this fits. To me there's several different places where this could fit and to me the Scripture is not exactly clear on what reference point we are looking at. Now why don't you weight in if you have a different view on this and I'm all ears.

Jeff. Well, it sounds very millennial except for that first phrase of verse 22 with the new heavens and the new earth which obviously sound very similar to Revelation....

David. Places that after...

Jeff. Yeah, Revelation 21. I think the thing that really, I think if you just read verses, you know, 22 and the first part of 23, it sounds very new heaven, new earth-ish, but then there's this part about the carcasses of the dead and you're like, "Where's that coming from?" And I think that alludes to something that, and I have known you for many many many years, you and I are very dogmatic when it comes to prophecy. I think it's been shown very clearly in these prophecy conferences, but we're also willing to, in some respects, be very humble and say we don't know exactly when this is gonna take place. It sounds kind of millennial and it sounds kind of new heaven, new earth, and I just think at times you have to take a step back and say what does the Bible definitively tell us about the millennium, what does it definitively tell us about the new earth. This one can sound like it can kind of go both ways and if it went both ways, it wouldn't change our faith at all and it wouldn't change any chronology of prophecy and I think that's important, that if you said, "Ah, this is millennium," and I said, "Ah, it's Revelation 21," it still wouldn't change the chronology of prophecy and how events are gonna weigh out, it just would put it in one place versus the other.

Now let's go back to the Ezekiel 38 question. If one of us and neither one of us would, if we put that battle before the rapture, it's changing chronology and so therefore I think this passage in particular as you alluded to, it's specifically vague but that phrase about the carcasses is strange to me because it initially sounds like the new heaven, new earth, now it sounds kind of a little millennial. It still doesn't change the prophecy as far as the chronology is concerned.

Alright, so let's go to another one of those ones that people like to discuss and debate, the famous two witnesses, David. They're found in Revelation 11. Who do you subscribe to those two individuals as being? And also you might want to allude to who others might claim they are. These two guys who, by the way, as you're looking up Revelation 11, our folks here know it well, I tease and I'm being sarcastic when I say this, I would love their spiritual gift. I would love to come to my enemies and just breathe fire and they're gone. I just think that's a really cool spiritual gift, the problem is it's not mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12. So I just thought I'd throw that out. So read us in Revelation 11.

David. Well, when I look at the two witnesses, you know, there's really two logical choices in my personal opinion, two candidates for these two guys. Now there's different views on this and, again, it's speculation, we don't know for sure but it sure does seem very likely that Elijah is going to be one of them and, you know, that's one that seems very clear from the Scripture that Elijah is to be one of these last two prophets. The fact that he was whisked up into heaven in a chariot of fire, he did not see death in this life, right? He was just physically removed. He didn't die. He was taken out almost like the rapture and so that makes him a candidate for this, for sure. The other one, there's one other man who did not die a physical death and this is a guy named Enoch and, you know, I don't know about you, Jeff, but I've always, to me it's always made sense that, you know, it's been Elijah and Enoch because Enoch also didn't die of natural causes, he was just taken to be with God.



So those two men, it just makes sense to me that God's gonna send them back in the end times to be these witnesses, stand in Jerusalem. We can just picture all the major news stations around the world with their cameras pointed by the Western Wall. I think that's even been depicted in some of these end time movies. But these two witnesses and we can picture the miracles that they do and the power that they have and nobody is able to touch them, and they are calling out the truth of the evil of the Antichrist and the false prophet, and you know that they're raging against these two witnesses and they want to kill them so bad because their lives are being exposed by them. Then eventually it's gonna come where God's gonna take his hand off of them and take their protection away and they are going to be killed. Then after 3 ½ days they're gonna rise again from the dead but the Scripture says before they rise from the dead, the people are treating it like Christmas. I mean, they're giving gifts to one another, they're celebrating that these men who have been tormenting them for all this time, that they are dead. So they're exchanging gifts to one another. These men are gonna be unbelievable, unlike anything this world has ever seen and they're gonna be able to do miracles unlike anybody has ever seen.

So if I'm gonna speculate about it, I'm gonna be real clear that definitely we have Elijah is one of them, I believe the other Scriptures make that very clear, but the other one I would say is Enoch. I have heard other names thrown out there like some believe that it will be Moses and maybe some other significant figures from Old Testament history, but for me it just makes sense, Enoch, Elijah, neither one of them died natural deaths and that's who I would go with. What about you, Jeff?

Jeff. Yeah, I think as you mentioned there's a third name that's mentioned and that would be Moses, and typically because it says he'll smite the earth with plagues and turn the water to blood, and I think you're exactly right, you know, Elijah and Enoch are the only two who never experienced death that we have clearly laid out in Scripture, so it makes sense that they would be the two witnesses. Those who would subscribe to Moses and I'll go ahead and confess as a good friend, I kind of like the Moses option, and here's why, not only because of the plagues but because of John 11:25-26 where Jesus says, "Though a man die he shall live and though a man live he shall never die." The reason I would, by the way, when I answer it the way I'm going to, I don't know what you do with Enoch, okay, so I'm gonna go ahead and qualify that. But Elijah and Moses would picture the rapture for me, one who never experienced death and one who had died who was raised up. But nonetheless, what we do know, we don't, we're not given their names, we're not given their names, but I would say probably 99% of the people either choose between Enoch and Moses and everybody picks Elijah. I think that's funny, everybody picks Elijah, it's that other one that everybody is questioning and even the Jewish Passover today, who do they celebrate returning as Malachi 4? Elijah. What we do know is what they teach, what they do, what happens to them and the fact of their bodies being raised.

I think it's fascinating, the Bible gives us the description of what they do but doesn't give us their names. Again, though, I think that's an important point. You mentioned this earlier even about something that would have completely contrary thought, it's that amillennialism, this is not a test of faith, this is not a test of salvation, and even with the

specifics of you and I, premillennial, pretribulational, all the things we've discussed, you can have differences on who these two people are, at the end of the day is it really gonna make a significant prophetic difference? No, because it doesn't change what they do and it doesn't change how the Antichrist responds and it doesn't change the fact of how they're treated being beheaded and etc. But I've know people get really upset with each other over these identities and you just have to really question of all the things to get upset about when it comes to prophecy, why would you get upset about these two guys when we know what they do and how they are ministering during these times? But again, people who love each other and care and respect each other do have differing opinions at times but, again, I think it's a great point. I think there can be a case for all three of them and at the end of the day we just don't know necessarily the specifics.

Now this is where I'm gonna have some fun with you and I'll join in with you on this but according to what I'm hearing here in the studio, there have been multiple occurrences where this question has been asked. Are you read for it? When the rapture happens, what happens to our beloved pets? Have fun, brother.

David. Oh. That's a great question right there. I've got to be honest, I have never pondered that specific question. I've been asked many times will we have our pets in heaven, will I see my dogs and my horses or whatever in heaven, and I've got to be honest with you, it's speculation. I don't have a great answer. I will tell you that we know there's animals in heaven, I mean, because there's gonna be horses, white horses are gonna be coming down during the Second Coming so there's definitely some kind of animal life in heaven. I personally do not see any problem with there being animals in heaven. Do animals have souls like we have souls? I just do not believe that they do but there's some animals that definitely have emotions and feelings, and so who am I to say that they don't, right? So I'm kind of, Jeff, I'm very wishy-washy on this, man. I'm not gonna be able to stand strong on it. All I can tell you is, let me just say it this way: sure your pets will get raptured with you, how about that?

Jeff. Okay. Now the Bible, it says the dead in Christ and alive in Christ, not the animals of Christ. It doesn't say that. But you know, I don't know if many people know this particularly there in Baton Rouge but I am the proud owner of a Rottweiler and I just don't see a Rottweiler being raptured. I just don't see it happening but nonetheless, again, it's an important question because to so many people their pets are their family and something that they care for and they're loved, and you know, I tease with folks, you know, typically on a Wednesday night I do a Q&A that we call "Ask Jeff," and I call this question that makes people cry is because in Ecclesiastes 3:19-21 it talks about that all things befall animals and humanity, death, but the spirit of man arises where the spirit of the animal goes to the ground. I do think there's a difference between the animal kingdom and humanity because we're told in Genesis to have dominion over them.

So David alluded to it and he's exactly right, there is mentions of "animals" even at the Second Coming there's horses that are being alluded to and addressed and even these passages about the millennium like in Isaiah 59 where it talks about the lion, I mean, the wolf and the lamb shall lie down together. I mean, those are millennial passages and we

know about Jesus reigning there. Again, it's one of those things where I think we see animal life described in Scripture even in millennial or eternal states, the thing that is not mentioned in Scripture and, again, I know people who side hard on one side or the other, it never alludes to your specific or my specific animal. By the way, I'm a dog lover. My family would tell you the first person the dogs are gonna jump in the lap of at home tonight are gonna be me because that's, I'm a dog guy. I just really am. If my dogs are in heaven with me, I'd be thrilled but I'm not betting on it, and I'm not saying that to be ugly and I'm not saying that to be crass because I know there are a lot of people watching that that's really upsetting. But the Bible does say there's a difference between humanity and the animal kingdom and when you go to John 3:16, "For God so loved the world he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth should not perish but have everlasting life," you know, what we know as humanity is the only aspect of creation that we see God redeeming. Now some might argue, "Well, the animals don't need redemption." You've never met a Rottweiler. They do.

So that being said, I know it's one of those questions that some people take hard positions on, some people want to take a default position on but, David, I'm gonna agree with you, the Bible does address in prophetic aspects Second Coming millennium, there is animal life that is represented but it doesn't specifically say if my personal pets will be a part of that animal life. I'm not here to upset people, I'm not here to exonerate people, I just think that, you know, you mentioned evangelism earlier, I'm not here to dismiss our pets but more than our pets being raptured, we need to make sure will our spouses be raptured with us? Will our children be raptured with us? Will our neighbors be raptured with us? You know, we know for a fact conclusively Jesus went to the cross and rose from the dead for the salvation of humanity's souls and we need to be concerned about the souls of those we live with and we love. I'm not saying don't care about your animals, I'm not saying that at all. I love my dogs. But I know for a fact that the people who live in my home have an eternal destination of heaven or hell. I know that for a fact and so therefore the Gospel needs to be shared with those people I love and even those, to be honest with you, I don't like. It says go into all the world, it doesn't say go to just those you're related to.

So I like to take the evangelism position, David. Let's focus on the ones we know are lost and we know need to be redeemed rather than spending a lot of time and possibly tears speculating that "what about" here or there when we just don't have conclusive answers. So I don't know if that helps you out on that position or not but that's what...

David. No, it does a lot. I agree with everything you said but people are very sensitive about their animals and sometimes in a detrimental way to their walk with the Lord, I'm afraid. You know, it's, I think God wants us to have a soft heart and to be gentle to all of his creatures in this world and so I think that that's a commendable thing to love animals and to not treat animals disrespectfully. I agree with all that but an animal does not have value in the eyes of God in the same way that a child does, that a human being does. We're created in his image. God's gonna take care of the animals and he's gonna, you know, God's gonna judge everybody for injustice whether that's injustice done against

another human being or injustice against an animal. I believe God will judge us for that as well because I believe he expects us to be gentle in our workings with his creation.

So having said that, though, I do not believe God puts even close to the same value as animals as he does on human beings and so I wanted to clarify that, but if God chooses to take animals to heaven and reunite us with our dogs in heaven and our cats or whatever it may be, that's his decision but I do not believe for a second that any true Christian when they die and leave this world and they go to heaven and they enter through those pearly gates and walk on those golden streets and they see the glory of Christ, I do not believe that any born again Christian will even have a remote thought about a beloved pet from this world. I don't think it will even enter into their minds.

Jeff. I couldn't agree with you more.

David. Yeah, so we'll just leave that at that.

Jeff. So we're wrapping this up right at the very end. I'm gonna go to one last question. We've gone almost two hours and we've done our best to address the questions that have come in not only two weeks ago but in the live feed tonight. This is a good one and I don't know if we can necessarily be concrete about it, obviously we can be speculative. David, based on your study of the book of Daniel, Revelation, other passages, what do you believe to be the nationality or the ethnicity of the Antichrist?

David. That's a good question. Yeah, there's been a lot of speculation on that and I really, you know, to me I'm not ashamed to be able to say when I don't know something and this is just something I do not know. I alluded to it whenever I went through my study of Daniel in our first prophecy conference, that there's some that speculate because of some of the language there in the book of Daniel because he refers to the God of his fathers, that perhaps that indicates that he might be of a Hebrew descent, that he might be Jewish, and to me that's as much a legitimate possibility as saying that he's gonna be from Rome, you know, that he's gonna be like a Roman Emperor, right? Again, we talked about the Revived Roman Empire but for me and my understanding of the Scripture, whatever nationality he is I do not know but I believe that he will come to power through what is now what we call the European Union that makes up and comprises those nations that made up the old Roman Empire. We're seeing, we have seen that thing in our lifetime come back to life, those 10 toes that are partially of clay and partially of iron, they've always been there, they've been separated but they're gonna come back together in the kingdom of the Antichrist. And so I believe that he will rule through Europe through that power structure that makes up the European Union, but of what nationality he's going to be, I would not venture to make even a strong, I would not give a strong opinion on it. I don't know.

Jeff. Alright, let's have fun before we close in prayer tonight. You know, I mentioned the term antichrist means not Christ but yet looks a whole lot like Christ, it's a false Christ. How would you respond, David, if in light of our conversation tonight and a lot of

history, what if someone rose to lead the Catholic Church that claimed to be from the tribe of Judah? What would you claim there? That would be interesting, wouldn't it?

David. So do you believe that the Antichrist will come through....

Jeff. No, what would you say if in the future a papal figure who reigns the Roman Catholic Church claimed a descendency through the tribe of Judah and was actually from that Hebrew origin? Wouldn't that put a lot of pieces together? I'm being hypothetical as we wrap up tonight but that sure would cause alarm, would it not?

David. It definitely could make us look at things a little differently, for sure.

Jeff. Absolutely. Again, a lot of speculation there. It's a great question. By the ways, all these questions and many more are great but we're gonna wrap up tonight. I just am going to presume that in the days ahead not just through this pandemic but obviously months and years, David, I don't think this will be the last time we're on the screen together. Usually we do this in person but thanks to a global pandemic, we have the marvel of technology. We've addressed a lot of issues that are concrete, a whole bunch that are speculative but as I did last time, why don't you wrap us up tonight with a word of prayer and we'll say goodbye to everybody. Does that sound good?

David. I'll be glad to do it.

*Dear Lord Jesus, we come before You and, God, we thank You for the opportunity to gather together. Even though we're in two different states, God, we gather together, we are Your church, to study Your word, to consider Your word, to dialog about Your word and as Jeff just said, Father, we know that there are some things in Your word that are difficult to understand and we don't want to be guilty of adding to Your word anything nor taking away from it. God, we want to know Your word, we want it to be in our hearts because we believe Your word is a light to our path, that it guides us where we need to go. And so I pray for all of our listeners tonight, all those who are in attendance, all those that will listen to this, God, I pray that You will take something that we've discussed, that You'll speak to their hearts and it will lead to their salvation or it will lead to them to love Your word more, to study it more, and to become more passionate about it, to share their faith more. God, that's why we do this is to equip Your church, God, so we ask that You bless tonight and use it to equip the body of Christ to do the work of the ministry and fulfill the Great Commission. It's in Jesus name that we pray. Amen.*

Jeff. Thank you, friend. Appreciate you. Love you. We're gonna say goodnight from Baton Rouge and Opelika, Alabama. See y'all next time.

David. God bless you. Thank you.