

Ask Jeff 6.20.18  
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If you would not mind, please turn to what is known as the Circle of Concerns or the prayer sheet here at First Baptist Church of Opelika. Now, just to let you all know, and even for those that are watching by way of multi-media, you do not have to be a member of First Baptist to be on our prayer list. We want to pray for whoever needs to be prayed for. Just kind of a little reminder, allow me to kind of walk through what this is if this is new to you. This was printed about 90 minutes ago, and so we try to keep it as updated as possible. Every now and then, of course, we miss something, but please let us know if there is something or somebody we need to be praying about. The second thing is simply this. Don't throw it away. Take this home. And hopefully, utilize it throughout the rest of the week to pray for those who are connected to, not necessarily members of, but are related to the First Baptist family. You will notice at the top there are those that are in medical facilities and assisted living facilities, those that are home. The majority of those are physical issues of course. And then those that are out of town in hospital type situations. At the bottom you will see one good news. There has been yet again one more baby born at First Baptist Opelika. That seems to me a regular occurrence around here, which is wonderful. And then, unfortunately, we have three of our families that have experienced death in their family that we want to express sympathy to. If you know them, or are aware of them, please reach out. Not only just verbally, but to express your gratitude and concern for them at this time. On the back you will see that there are those that are serving on the mission field in some type of capacity and those that are serving in the United States military. We always want to pray for them, because this is an act, whether they are on the mission field or the military, this is an act of selflessness where they are willing to allow themselves to oftentimes be a long way off in conditions much worse than they would have here in order to share the gospel and to protect us or to do both.

So, let's pray tonight, and then we will get started.

*Lord, as we gather as a body of Faith, Lord, we know that in this room is just a small piece numerically of the blessing that is First Baptist, Opelika. Lord, we know there are those on this campus in various Bible studies and all types of rehearsals and such for the upcoming worship services this weekend. There are students that are all over this county. There are people that are in foreign lands and close by on mission trips. God, thank you,*

*thank you, thank you for the blessing that this body is to each one of us but more importantly that you are to this body. Lord, we pray for those that are hurting. Lord, many of them with struggling illnesses and diagnoses that they didn't want to hear, and they're struggling to deal with, and caretakers that are tired. Lord, we just pray for your hand of healing. We pray for your hand of blessing. God, we pray that somehow, somehow you would do what only you can do, and that is reach down out of heavens and touch the situation, the circumstance. Lord, we pray tonight that you would marvel the doctors in the situations that are taking place, so that they would know that you are not just a God that can and will heal, but that you are a God that cares even about the little things in life. For those families that have lost loved ones, Lord, we just pray for peace. Lord, we pray for comfort. We pray for your Holy Spirit to just envelop them as a family and as a community and allow them to know that your love for them is even greater in moments of struggle and heartache. Lord, for those that are separated from us, the mission field, military, both, God, we just pray for peace, for strength, for stamina. Lord, I pray that you would give them an uplifted countenance. Lord, when they want to give up, when they want to give in, when they are tired of the battle, God, I pray that you would lift their head, as Psalms 121 says, to the hills. That they would know that you are their hope. Lord, tonight as we open your word, Lord, whatever we are dealing with, whatever we are struggling with, whatever we're celebrating tonight, we know that you desire to address our lives through your word. Lord, may we not desire anybody else's opinion but yours. May we not care about any idea but yours. May we just investigate what you have to say about what we are concerned about. It is in the name of Jesus Christ we pray, Amen.*

Alright, crew, if you are here for the very first time tonight, or maybe watching for the first time, welcome to Wednesday nights here at First Baptist Church of Opelika where our adult Bible study typically is divided into two somewhat distinct sections. The first half is the Q&A time where you have the opportunity to ask any question you want about any subject you want. Obviously, subject matter that hopefully is related to or the Bible speaks to.

A couple of ways that you can make that happen. Some of you have come up to me recently and said, "Hey, I'm not real tech savvy internet wise." If you want to just hand me a piece of paper or get somebody a piece of paper that has a question, feel free to do so. For those of you who are into apps and the internet and such, the best way to do it is to go to the church website, [fbcopelika.com/askjeff](http://fbcopelika.com/askjeff). You can submit a question. When you submit a question online, you have the opportunity to put your email address. Now, when you do that, it doesn't show me who sends it. So, you remain completely anonymous. However, as soon as that question comes up, and I push the little answer button, when that takes place, it will send you a link to the night in which we answered the question, just in case that you weren't here when your question finally came up. Speaking of that, the questions go into some type of computer algorithm. I have no control on how, when, what, or where. And so, some of you say, "Well, I submitted one eons ago. Where is it?" I have no idea. You may have submitted one, two days ago, and it

comes up tonight. It just goes into the computer, and you know what they say, "Garbage in, garbage out." So that being said, I have no idea how it comes out, but it does. It's completely random. And then, as we approach the midway section, we will transition into our systematic Bible study, which we are currently walking through the book of Revelation. Allow me to give you a little teaser. I believe that tonight we are going to start the most important chapter in the book of Revelation. Revelation 11.

So, we will begin with our Q&A time here. We will go to what is known as the database, and it says, "Why does the book of Genesis use the word 'replenish'?" You may be saying, "What? Huh?" This is a unique question. Because, in fact, okay, let me go and share with you, I think we need to turn to Genesis 9. We are going to get to the Noahic account, and there is another instance in the book of Genesis 1.

Now, allow me, before we go to this passage, allow me to give you a little insight in one of the greatest pieces of wisdom that I ever got in all of my theological training. I found myself in my very last semester of Greek. I know that some of you think, "Well, the Old Testament was written in Hebrew." It is the principle, not the language here. I had taken several semesters as an undergrad at Baylor University. I had taken several semesters as a Master's level student in seminary, and I was in a Monday night Greek class, three hours at a time. I mean it was brutal to say the least. And we got into this discussion about a specific word. And it was one of those Baptist discussions, you know, where you are rightly divided in the middle. One half was for one definition, and the other half was for another. And you know, like Baptists, we are going to fight about it. You know, it was what it was. But it was kind of a hostile environment, and I will never forget our professor kind of ceased everything, and he stopped, and he said, "Okay guys." He goes, "Let me give you some wisdom." I will never forget this conversation. He said, "Never get your biblical doctrine from Greek or Hebrew syntax, because you can make words say whatever you want them to say any way you want them to say it." Here is what he said, "Let me use the secular term, and then I will go to the theological term. In real estate, there are three important words, right? Location, location, location. When it comes to biblical doctrine there are three very important words. Context, context, context." In other words, look at what is being said. Look at the verses around it. Look at the story. Look at the characters, because every time you see any word, those words have multiple definitions, alright? And the way in which they are to be translated is in the context of the story, alright?

Now, the reason I bring that up is because in Genesis 9 there is a word used that is not very controversial here but is back in Genesis 1. Verse 1 of Genesis 9 says, "And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply." Some of your Bibles will say, "and replenish the earth." And some of your Bibles will say, "and fill the earth." Now, in context they technically are both correct, correct? Was the earth empty as far as humanity was concerned? Absolutely. So, they needed to fill the earth. However, some of your Bibles in their translations have utilized the word replenish, because it means to fill that which is now empty that used to be inhabited at one point. Anybody

going to argue with that? I mean, it's pretty simple, right? And so, in the context thereof, you could use either one, but you would understand why the word replenish is perfectly understandable and perfectly fitting for the context there. It used to be inhabited. Great flood. Now there is no humanity. They needed to replenish. Notice the word order. Bless them. Be fruitful. Multiply. Replenish. That word order is going to be important, okay?

Now, go back to Genesis 1, and unless I am wrong, and I have the right to be. I don't like to be, but I have the right to be. In Genesis 1 this is the only other occurrence that I know of where the word replenish is used in the book of Genesis, and this is where it gets a little interesting to say the least. Genesis 1 beginning in verse 26, it says, "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." Verse 28, "And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply," sound familiar? "And replenish the earth," or fill the earth. Notice that the three-fold admonition is the same. Be fruitful. Multiply. And. Interesting that whether you look at it Chapter 9 verse back into Chapter 1 or Chapter 1 into Chapter 9, the commission to humanity is the same. Noah is told to do the same thing that Adam and Eve were told to do. Be fruitful, multiply, and populate the earth.

Now, in chapter 9 of the book of Genesis, it is completely understandable of why the translation replenish would be utilized. It used to be inhabited. It is now void. It needs to be inhabited again. The interesting approach to this in Genesis 1:28 is why in the course of context, remember we are dealing with a word here, it doesn't just mean one thing one time, it has a lot of different definitions. It can mean to occupy. It can mean to fill. It could mean to pour within. I mean, there are lots of different ways, because all words have different definitions within a realm of. Why, why, why would someone translate this word replenish? It's because of the belief and the theological predisposition that some have that when Lucifer was Lucifer before he became Satan, that he and the angelic host who eventually rebelled against the Lor, were at one time previous inhabitants of the earth and dwelled therein. And so, when you see in Genesis 1:28 there are some translations out there that translate for Adam and Eve to fill, multiply, and replenish, what they are communicating is that their belief that there used to be inhabitants, now it is void of inhabitants, it needs to be reinhabited. Now, just because it says, "Fill the earth" does not void that understanding or that interpretation, but the word replenish makes it even more clear.

Now, for those of you who have been searching online while I have been talking. I don't think I am wrong. I think these are the only two places in the book of Genesis where the word replenish is used. Same three words. Be fruitful, multiply, replenish. One is given to Adam and Eve. One is given to Noah and his descendants. Both of them stand upon ground that is empty. Both of them are in a place where there are no inhabitants as we know it. Both of them are told to do the exact same thing. And so, the reason that

replenish would be used would be to emphasize an understanding or the possibility of the inhabitant of what used to be Lucifer and his followers prior to their fall.

So, kind of one of those, "Oh wow, I never saw that." I have had people in the past read Genesis 1:28 and say, "I never saw replenish before. If you're going to replenish that means you do something that was once done that's not done. What does that mean?" Now you understand. That's why that word would be utilized. It does not, and there is no biblical understanding, and to my knowledge, no reputable theological position that believes that there were previous inhabitants of a human nature. Does that make sense? In other words, God hasn't been starting over. There is no one who comes at the replenished word with the idea that there was a what we call a pre-Adamic race, or another group of humanity, or another life form. It is always in reference to Lucifer and the angelic beings alone. So don't think that, "Oh well, God is trying it for the third time," so to speak.

So, any questions, concerns, thoughts? I know it is kind of a strange topic, maybe not. You all are good. Yes, ma'am?

[unintelligible]

Okay.

[unintelligible]

Oh, you have a problem with replenish?

[unintelligible]

Okay. Hahaha.

[unintelligible]

No, that it is a line from a famous song.

[unintelligible]

That he will rise again.

[unintelligible]

Okay, now, help my slow-moving hard drive here. Where is it in Scripture that says he rose again? I know there is a famous song that uses that phrase. Can you help me out?

[unintelligible]

Okay, we will push pause on that. Yes, sir?

[unintelligible]

Oh, okay. Don't going back to Genesis.

[unintelligible]

Well, Satan did fall.

[unintelligible]

The angelic host. Right.

[unintelligible]

Oh.

[unintelligible]

You just want to open up the whole can of theological worms, aren't you? Wow! Okay! For those of who you did not or could not hear what he was asking, he basically asked about seven questions. And that all is precipitated, to be honest with you, with this word that is found in Genesis 1:28. If the word replenish is the word that is utilized, and if the Scriptures relating to the former inhabitant by Lucifer and his angels, what we might call pre-fall, then it opens up a whole other slough of issues, okay?

So, here we go. Let's go to Isaiah 45. Isaiah 45. I believe it is verse 18. I could be wrong. Isaiah 45:18. Alright. It says, "For thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it." I don't think anybody is going to argue with that. "He created it not in vain." Hold on to that thought for just a moment, okay? "He formed it to be inhabited: I am the Lord; and there is none else." Now, we understand two things from Isaiah 45:18. Number one, that earth as we know it was designed and has always been designed to be inhabited. We are not just some celestial ball for no purpose whatsoever. It was meant to be inhabited. Second of all, notice what it says. It was not created in vain. It was not created without purpose. It was not created without structure. It was always, and it was created with a design and a purpose, okay?

Now, go back to the very first page in your Bible. And I don't mean the table of contents or the dedication page. The very first page that has Scripture. In the book of Genesis 1, and I know this has been alluded to in some Wednesday nights past, before we go to Genesis 1:2 though, I want to share this with you. I had the privilege in times past to take a course on the book of Genesis 1-11. Probably the most controversial section of

Scripture in your whole Bible. We have split denominations. We have removed ourselves from friendly relationships on how we perceive these 11 chapters, alright? Some, well, I won't say some, I don't want to use some, most, or few. There is a group who sees this as what we call mythological, meaning don't take it too seriously. Don't think just one Adam one Eve. Don't think global flood. Don't think all that. It is just stories to prove a point. I honestly do not fall into that camp whatsoever. I think there was one Adam. I think there was one Eve. I think there was a flood that covered the whole earth. I think it is history written, even though we may struggle with as it is written, alright? But there is really two camps there. Even within the camp that reads Genesis 1-11 as literal history, there are at least four different approaches to Genesis the first two verses. Does that make a little more sense now when it comes to people differing on how they view the Bible? We can't even get to the first two verses together. We split into four different lanes.

But as I went through this course years ago on the book of Genesis, we spent eight weeks just on the first chapter of Genesis. The reason I say that is we are not going to solve it tonight, okay? But the very first two verses, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth," nobody is going to argue with that. Nobody is going to get upset with that. We're all good with that. It's verse 2 that opens up the proverbial can of theological worms. "And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."

Now, I think each and every one of us would agree that verse 1 of Genesis 1 started it all, correct? It does say, "In the beginning." I mean at the very initial start, God created the heaven and the earth. Notice three aspects in verse 2. The earth was without form, void, and darkness. Let me start at the back in there, darkness. 1 John 1:5 says, "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all." Those that would use the position based on the word replenish, that Lucifer and his angelic comrades prior to their fall were inhabitants of the earth, they utilize this Scripture as critical, because they say, "Darkness is present. And it says that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all." That the darkness is verified proof that sin must have entered creation by this point. That sin must be present. Well, where did sin enter creation? Through Lucifer, did it not? When he became Satan. And so, again, going back to the initial question of replenish, it presupposes that we have this, shall we say, cosmic fall early, early, early on in the Scriptures.

Now, for those of you that may struggle with that. That's okay. You do understand though, by the time you get to chapter 3, Satan has to have fallen, because he is in the garden deceiving humanity. So, at some point in chapter 1 and 2, you have to have the fall of Satan. A lot of folks say, "Well, it happened before the Bible was written." It can't be, because the first words are "In the beginning." He couldn't fall before it began. So, at some point between verse 1 of chapter 1 and verse 1 of chapter 3, Satan fell. That's the big question. Where did it happen, alright? Those who would advocate the replenish as referencing the angelic hosts put it back in verse 2.

Now, back it up. The earth was without form and void. What did we just read in Isaiah 45? Earth was not created in vain, but to be inhabited. And so those who, again, would advocate for, as you were sharing, sir, about this concept of an angelic inhabitants prior to, utilize this verse to say something happened. There are words that are utilized that can only reference the entrance of sin into creation and that go contrary to the original purpose of earth, which according to Isaiah 45:18 was to be inhabited. Why is it formless and void?

Then you get to verse 3. Go back to verse 2. Yes ma'am.

[unintelligible]

The Spirit...

[unintelligible]

Okay, so her question is there is the presence of water in verse 2, absolutely. The question is then why would the Spirit of God, in your words, leave heaven and hover over the waters? Well, thankfully, the Spirit of God can go wherever the Spirit wants to go, when he wants to go, how he wants to go.

[unintelligible]

Yeah. Yes. So, alright, so, again, ultimately, what, hold on. Just push pause. Ultimately, what this leads to, and sir, I don't know if this is the road you want to go down, but this is where it ends up, is ultimately, at some point you entertain an idea, a concept, or a position that has been attributed by many. It's called the gap theory. This idea that there is a gap of time between Genesis 1:1 and 1:3 to, for a lack of better terms, interject the entrance of sin, the fall of Satan, and creation's struggle and sinful consequences.

Now, remember that Romans 8:22 says that because of sin all creation groans. All of creation is groaning. Okay, we understand that. The other interesting thing in the book of Genesis is that until you get to Genesis 1:26, the waters, as you mentioned, the lands, the vegetation, none of it is mentioned to be created. It says, "Let there be. Let there be." "Let there be." The very first verse says, "And God created." And in verse 26 it says "Let us create man." The only two times in Genesis 1 where the term create, to make something out of nothing, is in those two verses. The rest of it is, "Let there be." "Let there be." "Let there be."

Now, God can create the way he wants to, and whatever language he uses, I am fine by that. But those that would advocate this position that's kind of somewhat being alluded to is the concept is that everything was formed and fashioned, even the waters, you're right ma'am, everything was there, and that for lack of better terms, this is just the best analogy, that according to this position when Satan fell and sin entered creation, that



"God turned out the lights." He turned out the lights. If we were, and we won't, because we are being broadcasted right now, if we were to turn out all the lights in this room, and it were pitch black, the electric wires would still be there. The bulbs would still be there. Everything would still be present, the walls, the paint, the carpet, but if you said, "Let there be light, and let there be this, and let there be that," you're simply "turning back on" what was already previously created with the exception of humanity, which was created new in verse 26.

Sir, is that that road you wanted to go down tonight?

[unintelligible]

Oh! Well, nobody else is, but I am sweating up here. Because it is an interesting road. Now, here is the thing. Here is what I say about looking at it from this position, beginning with the word replenish, going back into verse 2 of Genesis 1. This is the blessing and the curse of this position, okay? That the entire concept of creation, fall of Satan, turning back on the lights of creation, humanity coming new, replenishing, all of this based on Scripture alone. You know there are a lot of positions out there when it comes to Genesis. You know, they look at scientific evidence and dating and such. There is none of that. It is all about the Bible. The cursed part of that is that means that the passages being referred to mean what they say they mean. If that make sense.

So there is kind of the blessing and the curse there. But, the only other passage that I know of, and again, you can correct me if I am wrong, it says here that the earth was formless and void. The only other passage that that is utilized is in the book of Jeremiah 4. In Jeremiah 4, and by the way, the prophets are really good at taking events in the past to illustrated events for the future. I mean that's what pastors do all the time. We tell stories of something that happened long ago or a historical event. In Jeremiah 4 it says, "And the earth was formless and void." The exact same phrase. And by the way, this is one of those Hebrew phrases. I don't like to speak Hebrew, because I am not very good at it, but this is one of those that is kind of fun to say. Tohu va bohu. Doesn't that just sound fun? I think it sounds fun. But that's the phrase formless and void. It's only used two places, Genesis 1:2 and in Jeremiah 4. And in Jeremiah 4, it says, "And the earth was formless and void." And it says, "And there were no inhabitants on the earth." There were none. And it talks about that the birds were no longer there. The mountains had been crippled. It says the cities had been laid waste. A lot of times people look at Jeremiah 4 and go, "Oh, that's talking about Noah's flood." Well, it couldn't have been talking about Noah's flood, because there was still humanity, there were still birds, and there was still creation as we know it. And so, on Jeremiah 4, a lot of times people say, "Well, it's used the same phrase, same words. It must be talking about the same event."

Alright, now, all that being said, at some point between Genesis 1:1 and Genesis 3:1 Satan falls. You cannot deny that. You've got to put it somewhere. The question is where. The other point you brought up, sir, was why the garden of Eden. Why did Cain say I am

scared to leave? Think about that for a moment. Why would he be nervous about leaving? You say, "Oh, well he was scared to leave the presence of the Lord." People, they leave the presence of the Lord every day of their life, and they're not scared. In fact, they are very bold about it. Those who, again, hold to somewhat this disposition of looking at Scripture say that well because Lucifer and his angels had fallen, because they had previously inhabited, that's why they were told to replenish, that the "garden of Eden" was a separate, sanctified place. Because as Romans 8:22 says, "All creation was groaning in sin." And then rather than the "earth of Eden," it was just a garden. When Cain is dismissed, he is scared. Because do you remember what he says in chapter 4? "What if they kill me?" Who are they? Well that opens up a whole other can. I appreciate you, sir, for going down this path tonight.

Now do you understand why it took eight weeks to go through the first chapter of the book of Genesis? And the reason that a lot of people struggle with the book of Genesis is because it always creates more questions than answers. Let me give us some encouragement tonight. Always answer Scripture with Scripture. Always compare Scripture with Scripture. And it may not be what you hoped it would be or taught it was. Just work with it. Let it flush out to the end, and see how it pans out when you get through the whole. Don't bring your position in and say, "Well, it can't mean that, because this is what I believe." Let the Bible speak, and then go from there, if that makes sense.

Anything else on this fun one? You all are like, "Okay, I'm tired of Genesis." We're good? Alright. Yes?

[unintelligible]

27:63. Matthew 27:63. I'll be glad to. Can I begin in 62 for context's sake? Thank you, ma'am. It says, "Now the next day, that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate, Saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver," they're talking about Jesus. They're calling him a deceiver. That "while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again." Alright.

[unintelligible]

Here it gives you trouble, because, yes ma'am.

[unintelligible]

He will rise.

[unintelligible]

Boy you all have done started a fight.

[unintelligible]

Hahaha

[unintelligible]

Hold on. Hold on real quick. Before we get to throwing Bibles into each other, Luke 24, which would be funny, because we are videoing. We could be a YouTube sensation tonight. A bunch of Baptists get into a fight. Shocking. Luke 24:7. Okay, verse 7. It says, "The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again." Some of yours will say that, and some of yours will not. Am I correct? And ma'am, you said that's causing you trouble?

[unintelligible]

You don't like that again part?

[unintelligible]

That he will rise viably?

[unintelligible]

Yeah. Alright, so, hopefully, one of my jobs here is to referee the fight. Alright, I guess I should start wearing the black and white stripes, you know. Or I could wear the bowtie, and we could. Hey! We could drop the mic down like they do in the wrestling matches, you know. Bring it down. Oh sorry. Okay, alright, go to, I think I can make us all content. I think. I don't know. No promises. Did you say, "Give it a spin?" Hahaha. Alright, go to John 3. Now, I cannot promise that this will make either or both sides content, and it may make everybody mad. That's alright. It won't be the first time. John 3. Famous story of Jesus and Nicodemus. This is the you must be born again passage. Alright, I am going to start with verse 10. Well, let me start with verse 9, because I just, a little point of personal privilege here. Nicodemus, who Jesus called a master of Israel, said unto him, "How can these things be?" This man probably had the first five books of the Bible memorized in Hebrew. He was a lecturer. He was a theologian. He was a leader. And Jesus says, "You must be born again." And he couldn't get it, alright? Verse 10, "Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness. If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things? And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up." Interesting what verse 13 says. "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down." In other

words, Jesus is referring to himself almost as if he has ascended prior to. Don't think empty tomb, like raised him from the dead. But hath ascended, has risen. And so, therefore, when he said, "I will rise again," yes, there is an empty tomb, but what did he eventually do? He ascended in Acts 1. Up from the grave he arose, of course. He said he will rise again. What we know as the passion account, the passion story, I know there is a famous movie by that same title, understand the passion story really begins in Gethsemane and ends at the ascension. It's the death, burial, resurrection, and ascension. Because it says that he rose and sat down at the right hand of the Father to ever make intercession for us.

You know, I think sometimes, and I am guilty of this as many, sometimes people talk about, oh you know, the death on the cross, death on the cross. That's great. But you got to have a resurrection. Anybody ever heard the famous preacher E V Hill? Okay, E V Hill tells the story, and if you have ever head E V Hill, I cannot do it justice, okay? But I will make it brief. E V Hill, who was an African American pastor in the Los Angeles area, tells the story that every Monday, every Monday, that there was a group of pastors in the area that got together. They would have breakfast or lunch, I don't remember which one, and every week they would take turns. One of them would preach, or share, or teach a message, usually what they had preached the day before. And they were sharing it with everybody else, because most pastors do a lot preaching, not a lot of listening. All that being said, He said, "There was a woman who sat on the front row every week who just came to be there, and they called her 'Old 1800.'" They had no idea how old she was, but they figured she had been born in 1800. That's what they said. She was an older woman, and they said that they would get to talking about preaching about the cross. And every time they started talking about the cross, here is what she would say. "Don't leave him there! Don't leave him there! Don't leave him there!" And he said, "It forced us to talk about his burial." And she would say, "Get him up! Get him up! Get him up!" And the point of the story was we talk a lot about the death of Jesus, but the death of Jesus is of no account without the resurrection. And I would also say, we, me included, are also really bad. We kind of forget about the ascension. We say, "Well, he just ascended. It's no big deal." He ascended to make intercession for us.

And so, when it says, "Do not worry. I will rise again." I think sometimes we are guilty of just limiting that to an empty tomb. He rose to ascend. It's all together. I think we are guilty sometimes of segmenting it out. Does that make sense? And so, when he says, "I will rise again," initially, yeah, that just sends chills up your spine. Like, whoa, whoa, what do you mean again? There is only one empty tomb, right? But in John 3, he speaks as if he has already ascended prior to. Now that opens up a whole other fun story. But that's a rising again to be with the Father at the right hand. In that context, I think it makes us all content. I think we are all guilty, myself included, of forgetting about the ascension. But he didn't raise from the dead and still walk the earth for 2,000 years. He ascended and, what do the angels say? "And he shall return in like manner."

So, I understand it's a phrase that we struggle with, but I think when we take the whole scope of the passion, it's not as difficult as in parts. We got to have...there is only one resurrection. But there is also an ascension that, according to Jesus in John 3, may not have been the only time he ascended to the Father. Which opens up a whole other fun story.

You all ready to go to Revelation? Okay. Here we go. Revelation 11. Let me give you a little intro here. The book of Revelation, I believe, and this is just my personal opinion, I believe is probably the most misunderstood, misinterpreted, and most disheartening book of the Bible for most believers, because, not of what it says, but why it says what it says. The book of Revelation quotes or references the Old Testament over 250 times. And can we all just be honest as born-again Bible believing Christians, we know our New Testament a lot better than our Old Testament, don't we? I mean, we just really do, as a whole. And so, the book of Revelation, oftentimes, is difficult for us, because of all its allusions to and it's references back to the Old Testament.

The book of Revelation opens up the Old Testament, because the majority of the prophecies in the Old Testament are not about the first coming. They are about the second coming. So Revelation really is the key that unlocks the majority of the Old Testament prophecies that most of us, unfortunately, are ignorant of. Most of us. Not all of us. So, Revelation is key to opening up the Old Testament prophecies. I believe, personal opinion, I believe that chapter 11 is the key to the book of Revelation. If you can get chapter 11, you can get Revelation. If you can get Revelation, you can get the prophecies of the Old Testament. You hopefully already have the New Testament, and you will have the whole package, alright?

Now, you will see on your outline there is just a list of ten items without a, shall we say, a detailed outline like you normally receive. Oh, you will receive one in days past. I am going to go ahead and tell you in advance. We are going to walk through chapter 11 systematically and slowly with a fine-tooth comb. And here is why. If you get chapter 11, you'll get Revelation. This is it. This chapter, for whatever reason, puts all the pieces together. The book of Revelation often times is confusing, confounding. I think chapter 11 does that.

So, here is what I have labeled tonight. Ten guaranteed things, or ten things guaranteed, to happen in the future. Chapter 11 in the book of Revelation.

[unintelligible]

Is there a paper falling from the ceiling?

[unintelligible]

I am hoping this is leftover Vacation Bible School, maybe? Did that just happen?

[unintelligible]

Okay.

[unintelligible]

Can we do the wave? That was just the Lord confirming chapter 11 is the most important chapter in the book of Revelation. He is just saying, "Yup, I will give you a little, yup. There you go."

Alright. All of the events. Remember, those of you that were here the last couple of times, chapter 10 was parenthetical, a pulling out of the chronology. Okay? Everything in chapter 11, everything in chapter 11, takes place within what we know as this great tribulational time period. Okay? This great tribulational time period, which I believe, based on numerous statements, not only by Jesus, but other passages in the New Testament, is an event or a time period that we are not currently in, but one day the world will go through. It's called Daniel's 70th week. It's called Jacob's trouble. Jesus himself called it the Great Tribulation, okay? The book of Daniel dates it as a 7-year time period. That being said, these events, as of this moment, are all future. Okay? And yet, every one of these is significant in and of themselves.

Now, what we are about to share, what we're about to talk, this is so politically incorrect it's not even funny. Alright? So, if you're a fan of major news, you're about to either struggle with me or struggle with the news. Okay? Verse 1 of chapter 11, "And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months." Now, those of you that may remember a long time ago when we first began our study of the book of Revelation, I said, "One of the most important things is how do you, or where do you, date the book of Revelation?" Okay? There are two ways of dating it. You can either date it in around 70 AD or about 95 or 96 AD, alright? The reason that it is important how you date the book of Revelation is that if it's 70 AD, what we know as the temple was still there in Jerusalem. In 95 or 96 AD it was not. I completely believe historically and biblically that it's the latter date is the more appropriate day. In other words, the temple was not in Jerusalem, and it was not a very holy city, because it was occupied by the Romans.

Notice what it just said. There is a temple. It can be measured. And it is holy. Wow. Who would have thought a hundred years ago that Jerusalem would be again inhabited by Jewish people. The world would never have imagined. In fact, it was about 100 years ago that what we know was a declaration, the Balfour Declaration, that was made that the Jewish people could go back to what we know as their homeland, the Jewish place, the

temple. What this tells me is there will be, and I know this is politically incorrect, there will be a third temple built.

The last time I was in Israel, by the way, those of you who want to, going back in April, Dr. King and I are going to a trip over there. The last time I was there, the, how should I say this, the guide and I, the guy was a Jewish guy, he was not a Christian by faith but Jewish, he and I got into a, shall we say, disagreement? Now, I got into a disagreement. Now, he has since deceased, and I don't want to speak ill of the dead, but this will just give you a picture. His mom was Russian. His dad was Polish. And he was a red headed Jew. You see what I am up against? He fought in three wars in the Israeli army, and he was all up in my face. That was an intimidating moment. Can I just share with you that? You say, "Why did he get so upset with you?" The reason he got upset with me is because where we were there in Jerusalem we were talking about, not only the Old Testament passages, but this passage that there will be a third temple built. You do realize that right now where many Jewish people believe the temple was and historically yes, there is a Muslim mosque there. And his whole point was that our rhetoric and our language, now remember he was not a, what we call, a religious Jew. He was basically a political Jew, for lack of better terms. And you know, historical, but not religious at all. He believed that our desires and our language was causing or helping, not helping the conflict that was existing. In other words, this building needs to be removed. Another building needs to be put in its place, and that will start World War III, basically. Again, we'll talk about it in the future. There are a lot of options for that to happen with the Dome of the Rock still being there, okay? Not necessarily even being removed, and how that could happen, we can talk about that later.

But what I want you to hear tonight is there is going to be a third temple built, because in Revelation 11 it says, "And I measured the temple, and I measured the courts, and it was in the holy city." And when John was on the Isle of Patmos, there wasn't a brick left of Jerusalem on that mount. And so, there will be a temple built. There are several groups that are in the plans to try to make that happen. We'll talk about that at a future dates. But please understand. It's going to happen. I don't care what the pundits say.

The second thing. A return of the Mosaic law, temple, and courts. What happened in the temple? And what happened in the courts? Jewish law and sacrifice. This was the second disagreement my guide and I got into, because he said that the people would not stand for the bloody sacrifices again like history has shown. Well, the problem with that is, as we speak right now, there are young men training up and learning how to do Levitical sacrifices in anticipation of the temple returning. By the way, you do know there is a phrase that the one thing that people don't learn from history is to learn from it, and it always repeats itself. And we want to deny that it will, but there is a return to the Mosaic law, because you've got a temple, you've got courts, you've got exact measurements, and, as you will see in just a moment, in verse 19 it even mentions the ark again. Yeah, no, not "Raiders of the Lost Ark," but I do enjoy the song.

Thirdly, Jerusalem, if this is not already true, but Jerusalem will become the center of all world events. Anybody know what happened in Jerusalem in the last month? Our country, its only ally, declared it the capital. Did it cause a controversy? Oh, did it ever! Everybody is all upset about that one, alright? Again, Revelation 11, this was written 1,900 years ago. Not 19 days ago. The holy city that is at the center of everything. You do realize a 100 years ago, coming out of World War I, the Jewish people, like everybody else, were decimated. They weren't in their land. They had no possession there, and the idea of Jerusalem even being a major player in global events was ridiculous at best. And right now, it's actually the location of the American embassy right now. Wow. I mean, it's happening before our eyes. But it will be the center of all events.

Number four, the seven-year tribulation. Notice it says, "The holy city they shall tread underfoot forty-two months." This "famous seven-year tribulation," it talks about Daniel's, you know, 70th week. There in Daniel 9 it is divided into two sections of three-and one-half years. Basically, it's saying, and we've talked a little bit about this in the past, that in the seven years, the first half will be somewhat bearable. The second half will be almost intolerable. It says, "They will tread upon it for forty-two months." This is a seven-year time period. And so, that is significant. It's not figurative. It's not allegorical. It's not, "Well, it's a brief amount here or there." It's seven years.

Alright, beginning in verse 5. The arrival of the two, actually verse 3, the arrival of the two witnesses, okay? It says in verse 3, "And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth. And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed." Now, we will get to this in the days ahead, but there is great debate over who these two witnesses are. Everybody almost agrees that one of them is Moses. The great divide is, is the other one Elijah or is it Enoch? And we will talk about that in detail when you get a detailed outline in the weeks ahead. But there will be these two guys that arrive on the scene.

You do notice that they possess a very unique ability. That everybody that opposes them, fire comes out of their mouth and devours them. I have said that on Wednesday night before. I will say it again. I wish this was my spiritual gift. I really do. I mean, can you imagine how great it would be? Someone opposes you, and you go [blowing noise]. They're gone. Bye. But notice it says that they in this manner shall be killed.

These two witnesses, irrespective of who they are, we'll discuss that in the weeks ahead, they're in Jerusalem. They proclaim the truth of God's word. The world is against them. And nobody can oppose them until the beast shows up, whom we know as the antichrist. But there is the rival of these two witnesses that will be on the scene.



Number six. This is where it gets interesting. Verse 6. "These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy." I am not here to declare the two witnesses, but we all know that happened in Elijah's day, did it not? Okay. They have power over the waters to turn them into blood," Moses, "To smite the earth with all plagues as they will." We know Moses did that. What I put on the outline, a repeat of the Exodus events. This may be the one on the list that to me is the most fascinating.

In the first five book of your Bible, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, you actually have two accounts of the Exodus event. The book of Exodus and the book of Deuteronomy. I don't know if you have read it, but it's really, they're the same, but they're very different, if that makes any sense. The term deutero literally means the second time. The second time. To your point of rise again, how many times did they leave Egypt? Once. But we have two stories of their exit. And they're both very different, the way that they end and kind of the procedure, and a lot of people that are critical of the Bible have said, "Well, it's not divine authorship, because we have conflicting stories here." And they're, "Oh no! Contraire! Contraire!" Is it possible that Exodus is the historical account of leaving Egypt, and Deuteronomy is the prophecy of a future exodus that's coming? Interesting that the witnesses perform the same miracles as the old prophets of the exodus of old.

And so, what you see is it happening again. And I'm going to challenge you, if you have time, you don't have to do it tonight or before next week, read through the book of Deuteronomy, and read it through the eyes of the tribulational account of Scripture, and it's amazing! It's amazing! Because you're like, "Well, this is why it says it rather than Exodus, because it's a different day. It's a different era. It's a different event." Does that make sense? Which means that those that are Orthodox Jews, who refuse to accept any Scripture but the first five books of the Bible, God has already given them the prophecy that they need for the end times, even though they don't accept the New Testament. Isn't that amazing? So, there is a repeat of Exodus events. By the way, when you get to Revelation 12, it talks about the people of God running from the beast, the antichrist. Much like they ran out of Egypt.

Alright, number seven. This is the one everybody is always talking about. The manifestation of the antichrist. Verse 7. "And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast," that's the term for the antichrist in the book of Revelation, "that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them." There is a figure coming known as the antichrist. He is called the antichrist in 1 John. He is called the beast in Revelation. All of chapter 13 is dedicated, well, most of it, is dedicated to this person that we collectively know as the antichrist. There is a person in the future who will rise up and, for all intents and purposes, he will be the ruler of the world. Period. It's going to happen. These are future events that are going to take place according to Revelation, not just chapter 11 but throughout.

Number eight. It says, "And they shall dwell," let me read this whole account of what he does to them beginning it says that "their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves. And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them," notice verse 10, they will "make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth." Now, I am just going to kind of go tangent for a minute. Don't you find this interesting that we have an entire culture and world that wants to get rid of "Christmas" but they celebrate like Christmas when these guys die. They send gifts, and they celebrate.

Verse 11, "And after three days and an half the spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them. And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them." Now, what I put on your outline is this is a rapture event, okay? We'll deal with all the details when we get through all the particulars here. But the word rapture means to be transported supernaturally from one location to another instantaneously, alright? You could say that when Jesus ascended in Acts 1 he was raptured. Because he was taken up supernaturally and pretty much immediately. When I say this was a rapture type event, you had two people who were alive and well, because their heads rolled back on their bodies, that's a whole other issue. They're alive and well. They're on planet earth. And in an instant they are taken up into the clouds. Remember those famous rapture passages that we shall meet him in the air? Okay. So there is a rapture event. Notice that I didn't use the word the. I used the word a. Okay? We'll talk, and we will disseminate all of that as we go forward.

Number nine, verse 15. This is what I think is the most important verse of chapter 11. If you can get verse 15 of chapter 11 of the book of Revelation in context of Scripture, you got the whole picture. Here we go. "And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever." Back in Revelation 1:5 Jesus is called the Prince of the kings of the earth. Well, if you're the prince, you're not the king, right? You're the ruler in waiting. Job 41:34, Satan is called the king of the children of pride. 2 Corinthians 4, Satan is called the god of this earth. And in Matthew 4, what did Satan offer Jesus in the temptation? The kingdoms of the world. He said, "They're all yours. If you want them, just worship me." He said, "Get behind me Satan. Thou shalt live by the word of God alone." That being said, in verse 15, which is technically the seventh trumpet. Remember, you have the seven famous seals, you have the seven trumpets, then we're going to have the seven vials. It's at this point that the title deed, the ownership, the kingship to earth is given to Jesus Christ. It's going to happen. I got news for the media. Jesus is coming back, and he's the king. And he's going to rule. He's going to be in charge.

You know what this means? Based on just what we've read tonight, just over the last few minutes, I got news for you. Earth does not get dismissed because of global warming. Sorry. There may be evidence for it, but that's not how we end ourselves. I got a better one. We don't destroy ourselves with nuclear war. Because Jesus is going to show back up and take over, alright? Everything that you read tonight, okay, they said the Jews would never have Jerusalem. They got Jerusalem again. They said the temple is never going to be built. It will be built again. And they say that we are our own worst enemies. That may be true, but Jesus is going to clean this mess up one day. Alright? So, we know for a fact, Jesus is going to receive, for lack of better terms, the deed to the kingdoms of the earth, and one day he is coming back. He says it right there in verse 15. Okay?

The last, but not least thing, verse 19, I put the heavens will be opened up. It says, "And the temple of God was opened in heaven," now there is a fun one. Not the temple that we just read about in verse 1. By the way, if you read the book of Hebrews in conjunction with the book of Leviticus and Numbers where it talks about how to build the temple on earth, it's identical. It's almost as if what we have on earth is a picture to help us represent what is already in the heavens. Okay? It says that "the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail." Heaven is one day going to open up. Now, eventually, heaven is going to open up and Jesus is going to come back. We know that in chapter 19.

Now, the reason I wanted to go through this list tonight is that even the "church of Jesus Christ" struggles with some of this, but this goes completely contrary to all of the fodder that we're fed by the secular world. All of it. And I want to close. We got just a couple minutes left. I want to close with something. When I was, and some of you may have heard this, when I was a young child, we were in the midst of the Cold War. We had missiles pointing at Russia. Russia had missiles pointed at us. There was still a wall in Berlin, and everybody was upset with everybody. And I'll be honest with you. I struggled. I struggled. I had a hard time sleeping at night. I am watching the news. It's all this chaos going on in the world. I will never forget some of the best advice that I ever received in life. My student pastor, my youth pastor, I thought he was an old man. He was in his early thirties. I went to him, and I just told him. His name was David. Maybe he's watching. I said, "David." I said, "Man, I am really struggling with all the news and all the this." I mean, you understand, I was in a class in school where one of our projects were we had to research and design a nuclear bomb shelter. That was one of our research projects. I mean, that's a little scary when you're a young teenager. I mean, that's scary stuff. So, I was scared, and I said, "I don't know what to do. I am not sleeping at night. I am worried about everything." Here's what he said. He said, "Jeff, let me give you some advice." He said, "Read the book of Revelation. Go home. Read the book of Revelation. Come back and talk to me." I said, "Okay." So I went back and home. I read all 22 chapters. I came back. He said, "Well, did you understand it?" I said, "Nope." He said, "Okay." He said, "Let me ask you one question. Does the world end in nuclear war?" "I don't know." He said, "What did you read?" I said, "I don't know." He goes, "Go read it

again." I said, "Okay." So I went and read it again with that question in mind. And I came back, and I said, "You're right! According to this book, there may be wars and rumors of wars, but the world doesn't end with what they're telling me is going to happen. The world ends when Jesus shows back up and says, 'I got this.'"

And so, what I want you to know. This list may go contrary to what all the world is teaching and preaching, but this list is also some of the greatest comfort you will ever have in this world. Because we are being fed so much stuff about the way things are going and the way things are going to end up. It's flat depressing. But what we just read is, guess what? Our hope and redemption draweth nigh. It's going to work out. It may be a long road, but it's going to happen eventually. And eventually, Jesus shows up, and the heavens opened up, and his temple is revealed. In the end, he wins. Remember that when you go home tonight and turn on the news and it's depressing once again. Okay? They got it wrong, folks. They got it wrong. Bible's got it right. And to me that brings a lot of hope.

So that's why we study the book of Revelation. Beginning next week, we're going to very systematically go through these subject matters, and we're going to dig through them, because I promise you, you get this, you'll get the Old Testament prophecies, and you'll become very comfortable with your Old Testament. Alright?

Let's pray, and we'll get out of here.

*Lord, tonight thank you for not just the challenge of, but the comfort of your word. Lord, I know there are a lot of questions that we don't answered. I know there is a lot of things about this word and that word. But God, we read tonight there is coming a day where all is going to be wrapped up. You're going to take over. You're going to take charge. And once again, you will be the king of this place. Lord, we look forward to that day. We welcome that day. But until that day comes, Lord, may our head be lifted to the heavens. May we trust in you alone, and may you give us the wisdom, and the discernment, and the ability to drown out all of the voices that speak contrary to what we studied tonight. In Jesus name we pray, Amen.*