

Ask Jeff 7.25.18
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All right, as we get started tonight, I may have mentioned the outline for tonight's Bible study is the exact same one as last week and so we're out of them, so if you still have last week's and you grabbed a fresh copy, if you wouldn't mind sharing with a neighbor and such. We hoped that you would bring last week's back and and, well, we were wrong.

Okay, so let's start with the Circle of Concerns otherwise known as our prayer sheet. Allow me to communicate a couple of things about this. Number one, we update this about 90 minutes before we get started so we try to have it as updated as possible, but if you know somebody, some situation, some scenario that we need to be praying for or about, please let us know and we will make sure that it gets on here. Number two, don't throw this away. Make this a part of your life over the course of the next few days and week so that you can be praying for these individuals. And number three, you do not have to be a member of First Baptist to get on this list. Friends, family, coworkers, associates or somebody you are aware of, if they need to be prayed for, we want to be praying for them.

You'll see on the first page you have those that are in medical facilities as well as at home oftentimes with medical conditions and those that are out of town. Unfortunately, there is a section at the bottom for sympathy, for those who have lost loved ones in their family, and on the backside we have those that are serving on the mission field as well as those that are serving in a military capacity. We always want to make a point to pray for them because oftentimes they are physically away from home, away from family and oftentimes away from the comforts of life that you and I are so accustomed to. But just a reminder again that if you know of a situation or a scenario, please let us know so we can be praying for them.

Let's pray and we'll get started.

Lord, as we gather tonight, we recognize that the names of individuals and situations that we need to be praying for are so much greater than this list. Lord, there are so many individuals that are hurting and struggling, not just physically but emotionally, relationally and such and so, Lord, tonight we just lift them to you. You told us very clearly in your word to come boldly before your throne and, God, we come boldly believing that you're not just a God who can but you're a God that will. You will heal, you will deliver, you will restore, you will redeem those who are struggling. So God, we

yield and we lift them to you tonight, just believing not that you just can but that you will. Lord, we do pray for those who have lost loved ones whether we're aware of it are not. We know they are hurting, we know they're struggling. We pray that you would bring comfort, you would bring peace in life and more than anything, God, that you would bring direction and guidance in the days of the valleys of life. Lord, for those that are serving on our behalf on the mission field or in the military, Lord, just be there when we can't be. Lord, would you be more present in their life at this moment, in this place, wherever they are than we could ever imagine. God, we know that you don't have to have a group of human beings around you or comfortable surroundings to be completely engulfed by the power of the your Spirit so, God, we pray that you would pour out your Spirit on their lives, that you would guide, you would give direction, more importantly you would give comfort in this time of distance. Lord, tonight as we open up your word, Lord, we don't want to go anywhere you don't want us to go and, Lord, we don't want to speak the words of man, we want to hear your words from your word. So God, tonight wherever it goes, make you direct us. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

All right, tonight if you're a very first timer whether here in person or on the other side of that camera to Wednesday nights at First Baptist, let me kind of lay out how it rolls. The first half of our Bible study is a Q and A, question and answer. You ask the question and the Bible gives the answer. I don't give the answer. I'm just directing this to what the Bible says the answer is. The best way you can submit a question is go to the website fbcopelika.com/askjeff. You submit your question on there and it goes into an electronic database. Once it goes into that database, it goes to an app on my phone. It is brought up completely at random. Not only is it brought up at random but it's brought up anonymously. I do not know who you are and so therefore if you're nervous about, scared about, or ashamed or whatever it may be to ask a question, that's the best route to go because nobody knows who you are. But when you submit a question, you have the option of giving us your email address. When you give us your email address, I still don't know who you are, okay? It doesn't come up on the screen but when I push the little "answered" button, it will send you a link to the video of the question being answered in the event that you were not present to hear the answer.

Now maybe tonight you're one of those guys who says, "Do you know what? Forget the website, forget being anonymous, I'm just pretty brazen. I want to put my hand up in the air and go for it." You have the right to do that. You can take the conversation anywhere you want. We can go deeper in the subject matter, we can change subject matter. We've even had people put their hand in the air and say, "Hey, I'm tired of talking about that. I want to talk about this." That's great because you direct the Bible study and that's the thing I love about Wednesday nights.

As we roll into the second half of the hour, we typically, the reason I say typically is sometimes we get a little sidetracked on some subject matters, we typically go into our Bible study as now we're walking through the book of Revelation, we find ourselves tonight at the end of chapter 11 which I think is probably the most critical chapter in the entire book of Revelation.

So that being said, we are going to go to the famous database here. Let me click on a few buttons. Let me let it load up. All right, it says did Satan know what would happen to Jesus during his time on earth? Did he know that Jesus would give his life for humanity? Is that why the sky turned black? Hm, that's a very good question.

So let's think about this for just a moment. Did Satan know what was going to take place in the life of Jesus? Did he know his ministry? Did he know his mission? Did he know his purpose? Did he know his eventual goal to go to the cross and to raise from the dead? Absolutely. Absolutely. You say, "Well, how do you know for sure?" Well, in the book of Revelation 12, there is this passage, we've discussed it many times where it talks about this woman who we know as Israel giving birth to a child whom we know as the Messiah, whom the old red dragon desires to devour from his birth. I want you to think about the physical incarnation of Jesus Christ and all of the things that took place surrounding his early days of physical life in regards to his physical condition.

How about this one, how about a very much of a pagan Roman ruler that just so feels led to create a census and a tax where they've got to travel halfway across the country by foot when she's nine months pregnant. Isn't that timing just perfect? Number two, how about the fact that when what we know as the magi or the wisemen come, and they come to Herod and they say, "Hey, we want to know and meet this new Messiah, the King of the Jews." Do you remember how he responds? He has all the children under two years of age killed. So what you see behind the scenes is death and destruction and all types of plotting, and so I believe completely and absolutely that Satan did know and desired to eliminate Jesus Christ's mission and his purpose, after all, when his ministry initiates, goes into the wilderness, the famous temptation, we see the three vocalized temptations where he lures him to void his mission and ministry of being the Messiah.

But the question specifically brought up the darkness of the cross event and that's where I want to kind of spend some time and then we may go back the whole concept of his entire life and ministry. You may be familiar that Jesus Christ spoke seven specific statements from the cross. I want you to turn to Luke 23, I cannot remember the exact verse but Luke 23 tells us that at one point during the crucifixion event there was darkness over all the earth. That's what was brought up in the question. It is in verse 44, it says, "And it was about the sixth hour, and there was a darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst." So what we have here is in our way of looking at time, from about 12 noon to about 3 PM you have total darkness, all right? Now if you'll notice in the gospel of Luke, it says this statement, after, it says today you will be with me in paradise. That was the statement to one of the repentant thieves that was next to him on the cross. But what we're going to do tonight, take all of the four gospels, all the seven statements of Jesus, lay them out in chronological order and I want you to see something very unique about this three hours of darkness.

Now the first statement that was made chronologically – oo, I got taller, that was nice – says, "Father, forgive them," do you know what the rest of it is? "They don't know what they are doing," that's right. They don't know. I'm going to abbreviate for the sake of time

tonight. All right, so the second statement chronologically that was given is there is this event where he converses with John and Mary, do you remember that event that takes place where he says, "Woman, behold your son," and, "John, behold your mother." So we're going to have the whole, what I'm just going to say, mother/son conversation. Then we have this statement in Luke where the statement is made, "Today you will be with me in paradise." Now the fourth one is probably the most controversial of the seven, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" We'll talk about that in just a minute. The next one is, "I thirst. It is finished, and into your hands my spirit."

Now you may be wondering, "Jeff, do you have a problem with lining things up?" All right, now the reason I did this is I put it in what is known as Hebrew chiasmic form. Now that's a big fancy word saying that in the Hebrew way of communicating, the Old Testament way of communicating, they oftentimes will communicate ideas, thoughts and patterns and such in odd structures where – do we have another microphone back there? I see you rapidly texting somebody. So the first and the last, the second and the sixth, they all correlate and the critical one is the one in the middle. In other words, when you see a series of statements such as this, the statement that is in the middle chronologically is actually the statement that everything else hinges upon. Now do you find it interesting that the most significant statement in the pattern is the one that is the most controversial, okay? We'll get to that in just a moment. Now here is what is important to the question that was asked back in Luke 23, it said, "And that was darkness over the face of the earth." That darkness takes place right here.

So what we have chronologically, just allow me to do some timeframe for you, Jesus Christ comes out of all the midnight trials and bouncing back between leaders back and forth into the early wee morning of the hour. Most likely that he was put upon the cross or at least was at Mount Golgotha about 9 in the morning, okay? That's just a rough timeframe. So this darkness begins according to what we just read, it begins at noon, correct? So these first three statements take place sometime between 9 AM and noon, all right? Now we have darkness between noon and 3 PM and then this statement happens. As soon the darkness releases, he says, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" This last statement, "Into my hands I commend your spirit," remember that Joseph of Arimathea and a man by the name of Nicodemus brought his body off the cross to prepare it for burial and they had to make sure they did it quickly because the sun was setting for the Sabbath, all right? Now if you've ever been in the Middle East, roughly about that time of year this would have taken place somewhere between about 5 and 6 PM. So all of the events from the moment that the crown of thorns went upon his head and the nails in his hands until the moment which he was taken down, probably no more than nine hours, okay? So it was a brief very intense amount of time but out of those nine hours, the first three hours there are statements, the middle three hours there is darkness, and the last three hours there are statements.

Now the reason I went into all that detail is because the question was did Satan know, did he understand what was happening and how does that correlate to the darkness? So I want to begin with this statement right here and then we're going to go back to the darkness. I'm not going to ask for a show of hands or a nod of a head, but does it bother

you, it probably does, that Jesus said, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" I mean, that's a tough statement, if we're going to be honest with ourselves.

So I want you to go back to the book of Psalms chapter 22. The reason we're going to Psalm 22 is the absolute best most proficient way of interpreting your Bible is with other passages in the Bible. Well, Psalm 22 is the only other place in your Bible where we have the phrase, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" The other place is in Matthew 27 when Jesus makes the statement on the cross. There are only two times in your Bible that you see this very famous statement. In Psalm 22:1, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?" As you walk through the book of Psalms, chapter 22, you will notice that there are eight specific prophecies in Psalm 22 about the crucifixion experience and the Passion Week. For example, as you make your way down, verse 7, it says, "All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, He trusted on the LORD that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him." Did that not happen at the crucifixion event? Remember they said he saved others, let him save himself. You make your way down and it talks about in verse 14, "I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels." You go on further, verse 16, "For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet." Very specific prophetic statements a thousand years in advance about what would happen at the cross.

You say, "Jeff, how does that tie into the question at hand?" This is the only one of the seven statements that Jesus makes on the cross that is actually a quotation from Scripture. All the rest of them, though valid and true, are not derived from other passages in the Bible, all right? Even though the principles may be true, they're not. The one, "I thirst," is a fulfillment of a prophecy but it is not the prophecy itself. Why is that critical to our understanding of the question? Can y'all think of a significant time in the life and ministry of Jesus Christ where he directly quoted Scripture to somebody for some reason? The temptation to the devil. Isn't that interesting that all three temptations that the devil gives him whether it's turning the rock into bread or coming down off the top of the temple, or all those, every one of those temptations Jesus responds, "It is written." This is the one statement he makes that is actually a quotation of Scripture.

Now it would make sense that Jesus would quote this Psalm because it's all happening right there. Most people see this as a negative statement, it's actually a very positive statement. You say, "Well, how is it positive?" Look at the very last part of Psalm 22. This is the most saturated messianic Psalm that we've got in the Old Testament. So at the end of Psalm 22, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? They are compassed around me. They are dogs. They are gambling over my clothes." The whole thing. Verse 28, "For the kingdom is the LORD'S: and he is the governor among the nations. All they that be fat upon earth shall eat and worship: all they that go down to the dust shall bow before him: and none can keep alive his own soul. A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation. They shall come, and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done this." Psalm 22 is a

Psalm that begins with what is perceived as defeat and ends with victory. It is an entire Psalm saturated with the crucifixion event and so what I would like to postulate before you tonight: is it possible that the reason that Jesus Christ quoted Psalm 22 on the cross is because he was not only stating the truth of this entire Psalm and, by the way, for those of you that say why didn't he just quote the whole thing, hard to do when you're hanging from a cross, okay? I mean, when you're going up and down and trying to breathe and dying of asphyxiation and all those other things. That being said, is it possible that the reason he quoted Psalm 22 is because he was responding on the cross much like he responded in the wilderness to a temptation? I want you to think about what happens for three hours before: total darkness. 1 John 1:5 says, "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all."

So let's go full-circle to the question. Did Satan know, did Satan realize, did Satan understand Jesus' purpose and his goal? Absolutely. Did he try to thwart it upon his birth? Yes. Did he try to thwart it in his early days? Yes. In fact, he tried to thwart it through some somewhat minor ways, tried to discredit his story and his testimony and people came to him and said, "You're not even born of the right lineage. You don't have the right dad and you don't have the right this, you don't have the right that." They're always throwing accusations at him. You do know what the term Satan means, it means accuser. Accusation after accusation. In the wilderness experience, the temptation to bypass the cross and to do that which should not be done.

So you get to the very end, you've got three hours of darkness. Allow me to use this hypothetical and let me just use it in the personified place. If I, and I'm not, okay, but if I were the devil, I know Paul Harvey had a very famous speech about that, but if I were the devil and I knew what the victory Jesus was going to bring through the empty tomb would mean for me, I would give him everything I got at one point. I'd give it all. I want to tell you my personal, humble, and I think it's right opinion. I think all of hell emptied out on the Middle East for three hours. It says the sun was darkened. All the scientists will tell you there is no record of an eclipse years before or years after this event. This is a supernatural darkness that's taking place here. It says the sun was darkened, the veil was torn, that what we see happening here is a fulfillment, by the way, of the book of Amos 9, a prophecy that it would be dark for a period of time at the messianic experience.

So all that being said, because you have darkness for three hours, God is light, and in him is no darkness at all, because Jesus quotes Scripture just like he did when Satan tempted him, I'm of the opinion that this was what I call Satan's last stand. Now some of you are thinking, well, but didn't Satan want him to die? No! He's sinless. He's a perfect sacrifice. He's the fulfillment of all the prophecies. If Jesus dies and raises from the dead three days later, he loses for all of eternity. This is his last stand, it's his last shot. I believe that Satan knew exactly why Jesus was here, exactly what he was going to do, and the prophecies that he would fulfill, and I believe you see not only from the actions of Herod and Caesar but also the behavior of Satan himself in the wilderness and even the event on Golgotha, that he strategically was trying to thwart the eventual cross experience so that he would not lose the eternal battle.

Thoughts, questions, concerns, issues, what abouts? Yes, ma'am.

[unintelligible]

Oh boy, you're going there, aren't you?

[unintelligible]

Okay, so the question is between his death and his resurrection, was Satan trying to keep him from "raising from the dead"? Now there's an old spiritual, now we typically know spirituals as songs, but a spiritual can also be a communication, a sermonette or whatever. There's an old spiritual from long ago, pretty well-known, where there is a, it's not really a dramatic expression but it is more of a sermonic expression that a pastor used years ago and you can go and probably look it up and find adaptations of it where he talks about or kind of does a dramatization of what would it have been like in hell for those three days. And the demons are going, "Oh, that's right, devil, we've got him, we've got him." And he's saying on day one, "Hold on, boys. Hold on, boys, let's see." And on the second day, "Oh, he's still dead, devil. He's still dead. We've got him, devil. We've got him." "Hold on, boys. Hold on, boys." And then on the third day when he rises they're like, "Devil, devil, what's happening, devil?" He says, "I told you boys to hold on it wasn't over yet." The point is at the point of his death, there wasn't nothing the devil could do to hold him. Does that make sense? He is the sinless sacrifice. He has no hold on him at all.

Does that make sense? Do you know what I'm saying? So there was nothing the devil could do to keep him, thwart him, I mean, he's God and the devil is not over God obviously, and so therefore in that time period between the death and the resurrection, there was nothing the devil could do to keep, thwart, change, alter. That's why I say, this is his last shot because the only way for Jesus not to accomplish the eventual goal and mission is to somehow, somehow go off track and on his own volition to sin or trespass the laws of God of which he did not. He fulfilled them, in fact, 48 specific prophecies about the life, death, burial and resurrection of Jesus, that's the last one fulfilled right there. "I thirst." It said that he would be thirsty and dry of mouth. So in other words, he's still fulfilling prophecy at that point. Guess what? "It's finished, folks, I've accomplished everything that I was here to accomplish. In your hands I commend my spirit." But for those three days there was nothing the devil could have done. God is in charge. He's in control, in fact, Romans 6 says that God the Father by his Spirit raised Jesus from the dead.

I don't know if that helps, somewhat, maybe, a little bit, we're good? Anybody else on that one? Oh, yes, sir.

[unintelligible]

It's not on that, it's different. Here we go.

[unintelligible]

Yom. So the Hebrew word for "day," okay, are you eventually going to apply that this experience? You can. All right, so the Hebrew word for "day" whether it is in the book of Genesis 1 and 2 or whether it is all the way throughout Scripture, the Hebrew word for "day," I'm not going to overly complicate this, y'all ready? It means day. It means day. The problem we have with that word is we want to make it something more understandable to us rather than what it simply says. For example, it says God said, "Let there be light and there was light, and the light was separated from the darkness and that was the end of the first day." And people say, "Oh, there's no way that could have happened in one day. It had to be a thousand years. It had to be a million years, it had to be an epoch of time." No, last time I checked, God could do it in seven seconds. He doesn't need seven days, if that makes sense. So in other words, the word "day" and I'm going back to creation and then I'm going to go forward to this, people struggle with the word "day" in Genesis 1 and 2 saying how did it happen in seven 24 hour days, but then you get to Genesis 2 where Eve comes from Adam, she came six days later, nobody says that she came 6,000 years later. So why did we change the definition for "day" here because a day is a day.

Yes, sir.

[unintelligible]

In the evening, the day, evening and morning, so 6 PM to.... Yes.

[unintelligible]

Correct, yup, you got it. Yup, you got it. So a day is a day unless the Bible specifically in context were to change or alter that definition, but a day is a day. The problem isn't what the Bible says, the problem is how we see the Bible. Does that make any sense? Is that helping at all? Maybe not, really?

[unintelligible]

I got a hesitant, "Yes."

[unintelligible]

Yeah, other definitions of what the word could or could not mean? Yeah. All right, so here's the ultimate thing, any time that you're taking a word from one language to the next, okay, anytime you're translating that word, there is a bridge to go across, right? The number one, let me just tell you the number one rule of thumb: context, context, context, all right? It's just like in real estate: location, location, location, right? That being said, so the verses around the chapter you're in, the context you're in defines that word more than the word itself.

So that being said, I'm going back to Genesis 1 just for fun here. Is there anything about the character, the nature or the power of God anywhere in Scripture that would give us any type of idea that there is no way he could have done it in 24 hours? No. So it is perfectly within his character, it is perfectly within the context of Scripture, and that is perfectly within the limits of the definition of the word itself. The problem is when we say, "Well, from my perspective or the way I see it, there's no way it could be done in that timeframe so the word must mean something else." So what you're doing is you're interjecting your opinion, your perspective of what that word should be based on your inability to reconcile how God pulled it off in spite of you. Does that make sense because like I said, he could have done it in seven seconds, you know?

So all throughout Scripture... Now when it comes to that word "day" particularly in Hebrew, that's where we tend to argue is in Genesis 1 and 2, I mean argue as humanity because we say, "Oh, there's no way it could have happened in one 24 hour day." It could have because God did it, plain and simple. You know, he pulled it off, he has the ability, he has the authority. He could have done it in seven milliseconds if he had wanted to, the problem isn't with God and what he said, the problem was is us and how we see things.

I don't know if that helps at all with the word but just remember, any word whether it's Hebrew to English in your Old Testament, Greek to English in your New Testament, do not let the word independent of anything else give you your definition. It is context, context, context every single time. Hopefully that helped a little bit. Maybe.

[unintelligible]

Oh yeah, okay. Well, I didn't say you didn't believe it was 24 hours. Okay, we just want to be very clear, he believes it's 24 hours. I'm with you.

Yes, sir.

[unintelligible]

That's okay, go for it.

[unintelligible]

Last chapter of Daniel. Yes, he does.

[unintelligible]

So in Daniel, I think, is it the last chapter or are you talking about chapter 10 where he fights the Prince of Persia, then the Prince of Greece? The very last chapter in Daniel 12? Okay, so go to Daniel 12. This will be our segue to Revelation probably. I'm trying to get there one-handed. Ezekiel. I'm coming, Daniel. I'm coming. All right, here we go. Daniel 12, "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there

was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book." Is that the passage you're talking about? All right, so, a very good question. We have Michael the Archangel mentioned here in Daniel 12:1. I apologize, my mistake, he's also mentioned back in chapter 10 but that was not what you were referring to. You see Michael referenced several times as the representative of the people of God whom we know as the Jewish or Israelite people. There are only, I'm going to backtrack and then come forward, there are only three what we know as angelic beings in your Bible that have a name or are given a name that we are aware of. There is Michael the Archangel, there is Gabriel the messenger, anybody know the third? Lucifer. Ah, yeah. Those are the only ones whose names we know. I heard there is a Uriah that shows up in the book of Job who just comes out of nowhere but it's never said he's an angelic being. He's just this character that shows up in chapter 32 of the book of Job.

So Michael shows up, he's the Archangel, and it says that there is this time period that is worse than any other not since the beginning of time. That's exactly how Jesus described the great tribulation in Matthew 24. He said there will be tribulation that is so great that since the beginning of the world there's never been another. In Mark 13, Jesus called what we know as the great tribulation as the worst times since the creation. So therefore I would say that that first verse describing when Michael shows up in this capacity, that we fast-forward it all the way to that time period in Revelation between chapter 6 and 19.

Does that help a little bit? Maybe?

[unintelligible]

Okay, so the question is when he shows up here, is that before or after what is known as the abomination of desolation? Now this is going to kind of transition us to Revelation unless y'all want to go back to this which is perfectly fine with me. But in the book of Revelation 6 through 19, we have a time period that Jesus called the great tribulation that is oftentimes referred to as Daniel's 70th week. Jeremiah called it Jacob's trouble and it's bad. That's the only way, I mean, it is bad. It's seven years described literally seven years and, yes, a year is a year. It's seven years that is described. Jesus said in Matthew 24:15 that there would come a time known as the abomination of desolation, all right? You say, "What is that?" 2 Thessalonians 2 says there is coming a time in the future where the antichrist, the personification of the devil himself, will walk into the temple of God which in chapter 11 of Revelation is described, and he will claim to be God himself. Very similar to what happened in 167 BC during what we know as the Maccabean revolt when the pagans went in and they sacrificed a pig on the altar of the temple, all right? That was a picture or foreshadowing thereof. That's how we get the celebration of Hanukkah today or the Festival of Lights because the Lord allowed them to overcome. All that being said, the abomination of desolation if you take a strict chronology happens in the very middle point of that time period. I mean, it's right in the middle, okay? That's where it talks about the covenant being broken in the middle of the week of Daniel, etc.

The question he's asking is when it says that Michael shows up at this point to deliver the people, where is it in that timeframe? Are you ready? I don't know. I don't know and here's why, all right? So let me elaborate on the "I don't know" part, okay? The purpose of Michael, every time Michael shows up in conjunction with corporate Israel, it's always protective. He is a supernatural shield of protection, okay? In the book of Daniel 10 earlier, remember Daniel is praying, he's fasting for deliverance and Michael says, "Hey, I tried but it took me 21 24 hour time periods to get to you. It took me 21 days." Sorry, I'm just having fun. I apologize. Or did it take him 21,000 years? Do you see how you can make a day make whatever? Oh well, so it takes 21 days. Again, he represents the corporate protection of Israel.

So the question is at what point? If, I don't know, but if I had to make a very educated guess, I would say that it was at the point of right after the abomination of desolation and here's why. Go back to Matthew 24. Matthew 24, Jesus is addressing this issue. Matthew 24, let me get back there. Verse 15, he says, "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains: Let him which is on the housetop not come down." In other words, let me give you the Southern interpretation of that, "Get out of Dodge." It just got bad and it got bad quick, okay? So Jesus is saying as soon as that abomination of desolation happens, it gets real bad, all right? Now the first three and a half years were pretty bad, don't get me wrong, okay, but I mean, it's super super bad, all right?

Now fast-forward to the book of Revelation and we'll probably get to chapter 11 but let's get to chapter 12 of Revelation and I want to share with you what happens when they're "on the run." Revelation 12, remember I began with this at the first question. It talks about that this woman who gives birth whom we know as the Messiah Jesus, the dragon, Satan, desiring to devour him. There is a war that's fought in heaven that begins in verse 7. But when you get to verse 13, now just a reminder as you are turning there, chapter 12 of Revelation is parenthetical, that's a fancy word for saying we are coming out of the chronology here. In other words, we're not necessarily trapped in the "seven year" period, in other words, when you get to verse 1 and 2, it's taken us all the way back to Joseph and his dream, okay? But when we get to verse 13, we are right smack in this time period because it says this statement, "And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child. And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent." That's fancy language for three and a half years, in other words, that second half of Daniel's famous week there.

Now the reason I bring that up is verse 15, "And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth." For this time period immediately following the abomination of desolation unto the end, there is a supernatural covering or protection of them. They're provided physically. By the way, I've mentioned before, the book of

Revelation you're going to see the Exodus experience almost in repeat. I believe the manna experience could easily be repeated because they are nourished for those three and a half years while they are out in the middle of the wilderness, all right? There's the possibility of the rock and the water even though it's not specifically mentioned but we know with Moses, I mean, it took place. But it says that the earth drowned out the mechanism that the enemy was using. You see that there was the great wings of an eagle, the supernatural protection of God. It is possible based on your question that Michael the Archangel is on the scene orchestrating things in a supernatural realm just like he does in the book of Daniel when he says, "Hey, there is a battle taking place over your head that you can't see with your eyes but it is real."

Does that make sense? So it does say he will show up. The language in Daniel 12 is very much the language of the great tribulation. The timing of it I don't know exactly but it just makes sense that when they go on the run the antichrist is revealing his true nature, they are protected. It just makes sense that Michael, the one who does protect them all through Scripture, would be the one on the scene helping them. I cannot in concrete say that's when he shows up but that's my best educated guess.

Does that help at all? That's a good one. Hey, check that out. That was a good one. Anything else? Yes, sir.

[unintelligible]

Ah, yes. The word antichrist is not used in the book of Revelation. It's not there. The term is "the beast." The term "antichrist" is actually only used in the book of 1 John and 2 John which is okay because guess who wrote Revelation by the Spirit of God? John, right? So now just a little humorous thing for fun, you know, because sometimes we need a break from all the heaviness. The place where I grew up just south of Dallas, there was a country club that because I was on the high school golf team I had access to and I had friends that were members there, and that was nice, and at that time hole 10 was a par five, okay, that was 666 yards long and the name on the wall said "The Beast." They didn't write "The Antichrist" for obvious reasons, they wrote "The Beast," because that is remember the number of the beast, 666. So when it talks about "the beast" in Revelation, that is the antichrist, that's the same character.

[unintelligible]

The number of his name?

[unintelligible]

Ah, how does a name have a number? Well, let me give you a little warning: don't try to get too fancy. People have tried to get fancy throughout the years and say, "Well, you know, this letter in this language has a certain numeric value and so we're going to equate it." That is why some 30+ years ago there was a contingent of people that thought that President Ronald Reagan was the antichrist because his name was Ronald Wilson

Reagan, six letters, six letters, six letters. Sorry. There are others that thought at the same time that Gorbachev was the antichrist because he had the big red mark on his head. It's amazing how we want somebody to be something so we make what it says to do that, all right?

So turn over one page 2 chapter 13, the famous mark of the beast, then we'll get to the outline, I promise. It always ends up in Revelation or Genesis. It's amazing how that works. Not a whole lot of question Numbers. Somebody submit a question from Numbers. Please don't. I don't Numbers that well.

All right, Revelation 13:16, "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." Per your question, sir. "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." There are only two places in your Bible, remember I told you the best methodology to interpret the Bible is, other passages in the Bible? The only other two places in your Bible that have the number 666, one of them is in 1 Kings where it talks about that Solomon had 666 pounds of gold in one of his treasure chests, okay? Well, it's a unit of measurement and that's fine. The only other place where you see this number is found in the book of Ezra.

Go to the book of Ezra 2. Remember that they are coming out of captivity. Let me get to Ezra real quick. I'm working on it. I'm trying to find you, Ezra. Ezra 2. Now open Ezra 2 and doesn't it look exciting? Yeah, that looks like fun, doesn't it? Like, man, if I'm having trouble sleeping, I'm going to open up Ezra 2 tonight and I'm just going to start reading. This is a lineage, this is a genealogy, this is a census of the Israelites coming out of captivity into Babylon back into the Promised Land or what we know as the Promised Land, and it's telling us everybody and their descendants. I want you to look in chapter 2, verse 13, "The children of Adonikam, six hundred sixty and six." Now the interesting thing is that that name Adonikam means "man of rebellion." Man of rebellion.

So let me make this very very very very simple. There have been books, there have been courses, there have been all types of anthologies written on the possibility of the personality and identity of the antichrist, okay? When it says in Revelation 13 that his number is 666, all right, I don't think we have to go to Latin, I don't think we have to go to Hebrew, I don't think we have to go to some fancy language and do some numerical equation Bible code thing, all right? I think what the Lord is saying very simply is when this guy does this, this is that man of rebellion I've been telling you about for years. I think one of the problems is we over analyze. 2 Corinthians 11:3, the Apostle Paul says, "I am frustrated with you because you've left the simplicity that is in Christ." So the only other time outside of a treasury chest that 666 shows up, it is a man whose name means "man of rebellion." Well, is the antichrist the man of rebellion? Yes, in fact, 2 Thessalonians not only calls him the man of rebellion, it calls him the man of sin. He is called the son of rebellion. And so I just think the Lord is making it very simple, when

you see this happen, when you see this thing take place, please know not good, don't do it, run away.

So now the other question that I want to ask per se is, does that happen before or after Michael shows up and all that, and I don't know that, so, okay. But does that help at all? We're good there? Alright, so...

Yes, ma'am.

[unintelligible]

Yes. It's positive because I believe based on the three hours of darkness and all that's taking place here, he is quoting Psalm 22. Does that make sense? If, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me," if that was nowhere else in the Bible, I think we'd have a point to struggle right there and we'd go, "Why did he say that?" But again, that statement is made in Psalm 22. It is the most saturated messianic Psalm we have, eight specific references to the cross event. I think what Jesus is doing as he's going up and down, is when he makes that statement, he's basically quoting Psalm 22. The positive is the verses I read earlier, it's a Psalm of victory over death, it's a Psalm of victory over the enemy, and now this is just Jeff here, what I think is happening after three hours of darkness, I think what Jesus is saying because, by the way, out of the seven statements, that's the only one he shouts. It's almost as if he says, "Victory is mine. Get back, get out of here, I got this." So it is a positive in that like Hebrews 12:2 says, the joy that was set before him when he went to the cross, that Satan was defeated as John 13 says. Satan is defeated, sin no longer has to take us captive because of what he's doing.

Now I'm not saying that what he was experiencing was fun and positive but in light of that messianic Psalm. Does that help at all? So don't think he was having a good time and smiling but it was positive in that at this point Satan, sin and death is defeated. It's over and according to the very last verse of Psalm 22, and the nations will come and celebrate him which is what we see in the last few chapters of the Bible because of this. So I'm sorry if I skewed that a little bit. I apologize but that's why it's positive because it's the fulfillment of the prophecies.

Yes, ma'am.

[unintelligible]

Oh, absolutely. I'm going to repeat the commentary she gave because soft-spoken. Psalm 22, 23 and 24 are a very interesting trilogy of Scripture, okay, with the death, the life, the resurrection of Jesus, to be honest with you, kind of read all that into those. That being said, she said don't you think people would have recognized or would have known it? Absolutely. Think about the crowd that was gathered there. Yes, you had the Roman executioners who were clueless but you also had these Jewish religious elitists who wanted to make sure he was dead. They prided themselves on having the Scriptures memorized so when he said, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me," they didn't

look at each other and go, "Where did he come up with that?" They knew exactly what he was doing at that moment, and I would dare say that even those that were at the foot of the cross, the four women and John who may not have had the Old Testament memorized, probably would have known that Psalm well because it's the most messianic Psalm. And understand, the Israelites, they had been looking for the Messiah for thousands of years and so they knew. Nobody argued, again, I'm going back to the birth of Jesus now, the only people that argued where Jesus was to be born was a Roman ruler by the name of Herod. Even the magi in Babylon who came over knew, "Oh yeah, Micah told us that. It's all good." They knew Bethlehem was the place. In other words, there are these Scriptures about the life and the ministry and the death and resurrection of Jesus that were so much not only spoken of but preached and memorized, they knew them. So when he said that statement, they knew exactly where he was quoting. It wasn't some random, "Oh, I'm in a rough patch," if that makes sense. So I agree with you completely. They knew it.

Yes, sir.

[unintelligible]

Correct.

[unintelligible]

Yes, sir.

[unintelligible]

Yes, okay. Right, okay, okay, I agree with you. Let me extrapolate what he was saying. Based on this statement, "Today you will be with me in paradise," well I'll go ahead and say this, victory was made the moment Jesus had his first cry, okay? I mean, victory was there, that this is where the victory was. All right, so let's just look at the anthology of Scripture that we have in regards to the enemy, Satan. Even when he knows he's defeated, he still fights. Does that make sense? I mean, think about this for a moment. In your Bible in the book of Revelation, it says that he is placed in the bottomless pit for one thousand years. When he comes back up, instead of going up to God and saying, "Do you know what? I've really messed up." What does he do? He gets a contingency of rebels again. You know, I mean, he really does and so even though he has been defeated, even though he knows he's defeated, he still fights in spite of. Yes, I agree with you completely. Victory was declared when he said, you know, "Today I will be with you in paradise," but he's still, the enemy still reared his ugly head and Jesus declared, this is my opinion, to him that victory is here. Now he doesn't believe it because obviously he is still up to his wicked ways but I agree with you completely, that victory, that it wasn't that we were in limbo to say, "Eh, are we going to win this or not?" No, I don't see it that way. I think you're right, this is victory.

I think you also see this is a statement of victory because upon his ascension, John would care for whom we know as Mary and Mary would be as a mother to John. And this is a statement of victory. How can the Father forgive them if he does not accomplish the task? So they are all statements of victory, this one I'm just saying is significant to that one incident and possible crowd that has come. I'm glad you brought that up. I didn't want you to think that we were in limbo up until that point.

Yes, ma'am.

[unintelligible]

All right, so the question is let's just remove this, not that we are, from Psalm 22.

[unintelligible]

No, no, no, no, no. But again, how many of you have been taught, have heard or have learned that when Jesus was on the cross God turned his back on him? All right, find that in the Bible. Find that in the Bible. You won't. We take this statement to mean he turned his back on him. How can the Lord have turned his back on Jesus if he says, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit"?

[unintelligible]

In Psalm 22?

[unintelligible]

No, no, no. The reason I bring that up and it's not personal, I promise, is I think we all...

[unintelligible]

Yes.

[unintelligible]

Sure you can. If you don't believe you can mix holy and sin, then how are you breathing right now? A holy God is residing in your sinful body.

[unintelligible]

Thank goodness (laughter). In other words, okay, so, again hear me out because I am so glad you went there because this is one of the questions I hear from college students a lot is in regards to this and the whole turning of the back. I don't know how except from this one statement we've adopted this mentality that somehow God turned his back because let me describe this, the place that we know as hell, people say, well, that's the absence of God. No, it's not. It's saturated with the wrath of God that can only be present with God.

You see, here's the problem, people want to go to hell to get away from God but they're with God the whole time. It's his wrath. Does that make sense? It's not the absence from God. You see, that's a great misnomer that in the presence of sin there is the absence of God. Well, if that was the case, then how did Jesus who was God walk around sinful people? Does that make sense?

Yes, sir.

[unintelligible]

I'll never leave? Well, Jesus said that about us, yeah, but my clincher is this final statement, he says, "Father, into your hands." So that relationship has not been broken. Does that make sense? And I think it comes from, and this is just my opinion, I think that that mentality that God turned his back is taking this statement out of its Psalm 22 context and just making it an independent statement of, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me," and not realizing that's a quotation of Scripture.

[unintelligible]

Oh, because there's darkness?

[unintelligible]

Well, yeah, because God is light and in him is no darkness at all. It was dark over the land. It was dark in the Exodus ninth plague. But God wasn't absent from the scene. Does that make sense? I mean, he wasn't absent, I mean, he wasn't completely void of. It wasn't like a deistic approach, like, "Okay, y'all are on your own, I'm outta here."

Yes, ma'am.

[unintelligible]

A momentary blink.

[unintelligible]

Who might all be wrong. So, hey, as recently as this week, I had someone very much disagree with me because they said, "You say things I've never heard before." I say, "Find it in the Bible." I don't see, momentary, I understand momentary blink, at some point, now here's where you've opened up a fun equation and you notice we didn't get to the outline again. Here's where you open up a fun can of theological worms. At what point did Jesus take on the sin?

[unintelligible]

And here's why. When he says, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit," do you know what the next statement is? And immediately he gave up the ghost. The wages of sin is death. So if as I'm advocating, if he took sin on with this final statement, in other words, "into your hands I commend my spirit," because in John 10, Jesus said, "Nobody takes my life from me lest I give it." In other words, they're not going to kill me, I'm going to willingly lay my life down. If I'm right, and I could be wrong, but if I'm right, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit," then he dies, if that's when sin comes upon him, then this doesn't mean a blink. You have to ask the question when did sin come upon him? It's a very valid question to ask. At what point? Some people say it's when he said, "It is finished." The question we have to ask ourselves is what is "it"? Is "it" the final prophecy or is that when he took sin on? If he took sin on, why did he say "Father"?

I'm just here to make you think. At the end of the day, he took sin and we can be saved because of it. Does that make sense? And trust me, trust me, when you get one day face to face with God, he is not going to say, "Nah, you had it in the wrong order, dude. I'm sorry." But no, you took my sin. "Yeah, but you thought it was the fourth statement, it's really the seventh. I'm sorry." Don't get over-analytical. Does that make sense?

Yes, sir. Now I've got you confused.

[unintelligible]

If God didn't blink, why did it get dark? Well, Exodus' ninth plague, God allowed darkness over the land yet God was still moving among his people. I mean, you could call that a blink but I don't call that the blink as a definition of turning a back or removing himself from the situation.

Yes, ma'am.

[unintelligible]

Okay, so that's a great question. Going full-circle all the way back, when he makes the statement, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me," is it still dark, has it become light, what do we have? Matthew 27 is where he makes the statement, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" Luke 23 is it says it was dark for three hours. Unfortunately or fortunately, the Bible doesn't explicitly tell us that he made the statement and the darkness went away, or the darkness went away then he made the statement. It just says he made the statement and the darkness was from noon to three. Does that make sense?

[unintelligible]

Ah, which one, which statement?

[unintelligible]

Darkness as in Matthew 27? I do believe, I could be wrong, oh, I got it right. 27:45, "now from the sixth hour there was darkness over the land unto the ninth hour," so that's noon to three, "and about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Notice it's about the ninth hour. Why didn't go Lord just say "at 9:01," but he said "about"? You say, "Well, why is that significant?" Well, Matthew 17 says that after six days Jesus took them up to the Mount of Transfiguration, the same passage in Luke says and at about eight days. So again there's this specific vagueness we've got. I don't know why the Lord gave us specifically vagueness but here's what we do know, it was dark for three hours, at the end of the three hours he makes this statement. After that statement he says, "I thirst. It is finished. Father, into your hands I commend my spirit." And guess what? 2,000 years later because of all this, your sins can be forgiven and you can be saved. End of story. End of story.

So but it is fascinating to me at least to look at the order and to ask the question when, where, how and what.

Yes, ma'am.

[unintelligible]

So out of the 121, I made a little sense. Well, I appreciate that.

Now, okay, it is 7:30. I'm going to wrap up with this before we pray. I made this statement at the very beginning, okay? Jeff Meyers has a complete absolute ability to be wrong on a lot of things and so do you, but the Bible isn't. Our goal is to the best of our ability put the pieces of Scripture together to see the portrait that the Bible is painting, not the picture we want to paint and use the Bible to say what we'd like it to say. So that is our goal, is just to say what does the Bible say and then put all the pieces together. Does that sound good?

All right, let's pray and we're going to get out of here.

Lord, as we depart from this place tonight, not only thank you for the study, not only thank you for your word and that it just hopefully encourages us to dig deeper into it but, God, I want to thank you in advance for the college students that are about to roll into this building, God, that for the 500-600 students, they will impact as they approach the Auburn campus and, God, just like happens every year, I pray that there will be many of these incoming freshman that will meet you as their Lord and Savior for the very first time. God, I pray for those students who have been struggling, that this will be an opportunity that they can get on the right foot with you biblically and spiritually before they even take a single class. Lord, give these students direction, give them wisdom, but more importantly give them the stamina to go through the next couple weeks. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Please take conversation out of the room as college students are about to arrive.