

# Ask Jeff – Millennial Reign of Christ

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Tonight is going to begin I guess a little bit unusually. We had a question at the very end of last week that we need to carry over because it's not one of those questions that you can just say, "Let's just answer it in 1 minute and go." Last week, we ended our question time in the book of Revelation, chapter 20, and we were talking about the resurrection of the dead and in the context of Revelation 20, the question was brought up about this millennial reign of Jesus Christ and how that all figures in and who does what and how do they do it and what does this all look like.

So as you're turning to Revelation 20, I want to give kind of a brief diagram here of the book of Revelation. Chapters 1 through 3 are what we know as the message to the churches. Chapters 4 through basically 19 is an area known as the great tribulation. Then in chapter 19:11-15, we have the famous battle of Armageddon. Then in chapter 20, this is the key to tonight's question. In chapter 20 of the book of Revelation, we have described an event that is known as the millennium. Now, the word "millennium" is not going to be anywhere in your Bible. It is simply a Latin word that means "a thousand," and over the course of this chapter of Scripture it talks about that for a thousand years the devil is bound; for 1000 years Jesus reigns forever. For 1000 years. Other passages of Scripture that we'll turn to and just a minute are Isaiah 11, Isaiah 65 and Matthew 25. These are going to help us because the question that was asked and what I think is important for us to answer is: who are the subjects that are being reigned over.

Now, we'll go to chapter 20 of Revelation and I'm going to read it and then we'll begin to explore this passage of Scripture because I think this is one of the least discussed but probably one of the most intriguing questions in all of the Bible. Revelation 20,

1 And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. 2 And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, 3 And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season. 4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark

upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. 5 But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years. 7 And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, 8 And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. 9 And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.

In that passage of Scripture, 6 times the phrase or the word "thousand years" is used, hence the idea of this concept of the millennium. Now, when we study the book of Revelation or if you want to use the formal theological term, eschatology, it just means the study of end times, there are basically 3 main views that people have on the book of Revelation which are all in regard to chapter 20. You may have heard these terms before. You may have heard the concept that they are what is called a pre-millennialist, an amillennialist or a post-millennialist. All of those prefixes to this word millennium describe their view on the return of Jesus Christ in relationship to this chapter in the Bible. Here's what's interesting to me: every view that is basically out there in regards to how you interpret the book of Revelation is in response to these 6 to 7 verses. These are the key ones, this aspect about the millennium.

So what a pre-millennialist believes is that Jesus Christ physically returns to earth before this thousand year reign and initiates the thousand year reign. A post-millennialist believes that the "church of Jesus Christ" has the capacity to so eradicate sin that they create what is known as this utopia on earth and after 1000 years of sinless living, then Jesus returns to earth. An amillennialist, the word "a" in Greek literally means no millennium, is someone who believes that you cannot take this passage of Scripture literally. It must be taken figuratively and all the book of Revelation is just showing us kind of the ebb and the flow and the good and the bad of the battle and the struggle between God and Satan and good and evil and you really can't take it literally. Here's the problem I have with that last position: if you do not take it literally as it is said, then why did God say it 6 times? I mean, I don't know about you but in my house, we get upset with the kids when we have to say it twice. When we get to the third time, somebody is in trouble. If you have to say it 6 times, I don't think we're being figurative. I don't think we're using illusions here. I think we're being pretty literal.

Now, so if we can take that opinion and we can kind of set it aside, the other 2 theories that we have and this comes into play in just a moment, is you either have a pre-millennialist or a post-millennialist. A pre-millennialist, one who believes that Jesus Christ physically returns to the earth prior to this time period, is one who sees that the book of Revelation is written in a chronological order. Chapter 20 he reigns. Chapter 19 is Armageddon. Chapter 19 comes before chapter 20 so thus he comes before. Here is the

key aspect of a pre-millennialist: they believe the world is actually getting worse and as the world goes deeper and darker into sin and depravity, it is at that lowest point and at the conclusion where you have the great tribulation, it is then at its lowest point that Jesus shows up and rescues everything out of the depths of sin and establishes his kingdom.

The post-millennialist believes that everything is actually getting better. Anybody want to be a post-millennialist tonight? This was actually the number one held position regarding the book of Revelation in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Why is that? The Industrial Revolution. Remember the revival movements that took place in the 1800s? I mean, you had one period in the US in 18 months a million men got saved. I mean, we were seeing incredible movements of God. Everything was moving forward and people began to think, "Aha, maybe, just maybe all this stuff in the book of Revelation, maybe it is the church that creates this wonderful utopian environment and upon the eradication of sin then Jesus comes and celebrates it."

Well, post-millennialism was popular for a while and then it ran into a little hitch called World War I. When World War I hit, that kind of messed up post-millennialism because how could things be getting better when what we just experienced. There were a few people who held onto it and then there was another event that occurred, can you name that one? World War II. That pretty much axed it. There are a few people that are out there, there really are, they are few and far between. The overwhelming majority of evangelical Christians when asked on this position of Scripture where they are going to fall, the majority of them will fall into this pre-millennial camp and I'm very grateful for that. Why? Because it means that the overwhelming majority of evangelicals are just reading the Bible for what it says and allowing it to say what it says even if they don't like what it says.

What's important, though, is you notice back in chapter 20 it says that this millennial time period in verse 6, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection." Now, this was the question that was asked at the end of last week: what is this first resurrection? And if you remember in summary what we dealt with is this is, up to this point in chronology, up to chapter 20 right here, this first resurrection is dealing with anybody who prior to, whether Old Testament or New Testament, tribulation, whatever it is, anybody up to this point that we could label "saved," anybody who is a believer. This is from Adam and Eve to you and me and anybody who the Lord has deemed they were a believer, they are good, this is the first resurrection. Okay?

So it says, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." Now, this is the important question that was asked at the end of last week that we need to address. We know that Jesus is on the throne. We know that the believers, I'll just use that term, we are reigning with him. By the way, Revelation 1:6 and 5:10, it all talks about that we should be kings and priests and we shall reign with him. If you have a King Jesus on his throne and you have believers that are reigning with him, doesn't it just seem to make common sense that you have to have subjects to be reigned over? I mean, there is no point in having a king if there are no

subjects. It makes no point to say several times in Scripture that you and I will reign with him if there is no one or nothing to reign over.

So that being said, what I thought we would do to begin tonight is go back into some passages in the Bible that talk about this famous millennial time period and then kind of work into this area and subject matter of who are these individuals and how is this all going to work out. So if you'll turn with me to Isaiah 11 in the Old Testament, Isaiah 11, beginning in verse 6, this is one of the most famous passages of all the Bible. Do we all know that passage about the millennium where it says one day the lion and the lamb will lie down together? That's not what the Bible says. It says the wolf and the lamb will lie down together. Just a little trivia question you can use on somebody next time you're hanging out.

It says, "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea. And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea." And then it begins to talk about how this root of Jesse who is Jesus Christ, how he will set up this kingdom in the earth.

Now, fast-forward over to chapter 65 of Isaiah and it continues this thought beginning in verse 19, because this is the passage where we begin to talk about the subjects. This is the passage where we begin to find out who is it that is actually reigned over. It says in verse 19 of chapter 65, "And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying. There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed." Now folks, there is no way that can be in eternity, can it? There is no death in eternity, is there? There is no sin in the new earth and yet you're dealing with a child that is 100 and a sinner being accursed. "And they shall build houses." I'm not going to build my mansion. I don't know about yours. He says he's building it for me. "They shall build houses and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands." And it goes on and it continues in verse 25, "The wolf and the lamb shall feed together."

Now, those passages of Scripture and this is obviously just in brevity here, I believe that the Old Testament prophet in particular here Isaiah, is prophesying of this, remember he

calls it "that day." This time that is coming sometime in the future according to Revelation 20 where the Lord himself will descend and he will reign. Now, in that passage we just read, it talked about building, it talked about living, it talked about dying and it talked about aging of which none of those anywhere in Scripture can be related to all of eternity or you and I as the resurrected ones of Jesus Christ. So what we have listed before us, I believe, is the Bible describing for us the "subject matters" of which we have the privilege of reigning with Jesus Christ over.

Now, the question is: where did they come from? Who are these folks? How did they show up? I'm glad you asked. Turn to Matthew 25 and I want to turn you to a passage of Scripture that, unfortunately, I believe is one of the most misinterpreted in all the Bible and we can go there in just a moment. Matthew 25, Jesus is on the Mount of Olives. This is literally days before his crucifixion. This is obviously an extension of chapter 24 where the apostles come to him and say, "What is going to be the sign of your coming? What is going to be end of the days?" Chapter 24 is that famous chapter where it talks about wars and rumors of wars and talks about pestilence and talks about the abomination of desolation and a thief in the night, all of that great apocalyptic imagery. Well, chapter 25 obviously is a continuation of this message from Jesus. Pick it up in verse 31, "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory." What is that talking about? Chapter 20. He is talking about when he descends. When he shows up. When he places his throne on the earth.

Listen to what it says in verse 32, "And before him shall be gathered all nations." You all know what the word "all" means, right? All. "And he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink?" Then he goes on to continue. A very, very, very famous passage of Scripture that unfortunately I think has been taken out of context a thousand different ways in life.

So let's go back up to verse 31. Verse 31 of Matthew 25, it talks about Jesus descending. When Jesus descends, that's in chapter 19, right? Chapter 19, beginning in verse 11, it says the heavens open up, he's on a white horse and here he comes, the battle of Armageddon commences. At the battle of Armageddon, the old bumper sticker is right, Jesus is coming back and boy is he mad. I mean, it takes place. Now, who is with him at the battle of Armageddon as far as his army? You and I. Remember back to chapter 20 when it talked about the first resurrection of the dead? That means all the believers throughout time. We are the ones as believers. We are the ones who are his army. Now, it also mentions the angelic beings. Hey, I'm fine with flying alongside of them. In the book of Isaiah, one of those angels kills 185,000 men in one night with one sword. That's the kind of guy I want to fight with, just to be honest with you.

So you've got all the angels, you've got all of us, you've got Jesus leading the pack. I'll be honest, I think I'm just going to go in the back and go, "Get them!" I don't know but nonetheless, Armageddon takes place. In chapter 25 of Matthew, verse 32, it says, "And before him shall be gathered all nations and then he shall separate them." What that tells me based on the book of Revelation is that when Armageddon is, for lack of a better term, completed that not every living human being on the planet has been eradicated. Now, I don't know how all of that is going to work but you do not get the idea at the battle of Armageddon that every living soul is eliminated. You get the idea that Armageddon takes place and then what we sometimes call the judgment of the nations commences.

What I want you to notice here in Matthew 25 is that when Jesus Christ touches down on the earth to set up his kingdom, he divides the earth in 2 groups of people: those who are righteous and those who are unrighteous. How does he delineate between the 2? Those who believed in Jesus? That's not what he said, is it? He said, "Those who fed and clothed my people." Do you remember in the book of Revelation, chapter 12, it says that the nation of Israel is literally running from the antichrist for 3 and half years and it says there that the Lord fed them supernaturally. Now, I don't know if manna is going to fall from heaven or not. I don't know, but there may not be that many Krispy Kremes in the world. I don't know how that's all going to work but nonetheless, you get the idea that based on Matthew 25, that those people who helped the people of God and did not fight against God and are still alive at the end of this horrific time period in history, you get the idea that they are the inhabitants of this time period. Those who did not, it says, go into the lake of fire.

Now, I know that was a fire hydrant of information so allow me to summarize it really briefly: there is going to be a time period I believe in Scripture where Jesus Christ is going to reign in Jerusalem for 1000 years. I do believe that according to Scripture that those who have believed on him throughout the ages, that we have the privilege of reigning with him. The question is: who do we reign over? And I believe according to Matthew 25, those persons who are reigned over are the ones who at the end of the battle of Armageddon were seen as righteous, as not fighting against the people of God or God himself. But according to Isaiah 11, it says the young child will be an hundred years old and the sinner will be accursed. What is the difference between those individuals walking in as inhabitants to this kingdom and you and I as those reigning over them? We have a new body. We have been renewed. They are still a "sin laden society." What happens at the end of the thousand years, what does Satan do? He's loosed again. It says he shall deceive some. Who is he deceiving, us? No he's not deceiving us. He's deceiving those that we have had the privilege of reigning over for 1000 years.

You know, the interesting thing about the whole millennial kingdom and this is just my little soapbox preaching before we follow up with some questions? This kingdom of peace, this kingdom of hierarchy, isn't this what all of humanity is trying to do on their own? We're trying to figure this out on our own and Jesus is saying, "If you'll just give me time, I'm going to take care of this," because what we're trying to do, we're always trying to manipulate things so that we can have peace and that nobody gets hurt and that

everybody does exactly what they are supposed to do. That's not going to happen until what? When Jesus comes back and he sets up his kingdom.

Now, I know that was the millennium in a very small time period. Questions? Comments? Thoughts? Concerns that were left over from last week so blame that person? Yes Sir.

Great question. Those of you that did not hear it: in Revelation 20:5, it talks about those of the first resurrection in verse 4, in verse 5 it says, "But the rest of the dead." Now y'all know I love the word "but," okay? Any time you see the word "but" you've got to read what was right before it. In verse 4, it begins, "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."

My hopefully quick answer to that question is this: that when you get to this time period in history, when this reign of Christ begins, I get the idea from Scripture that anybody and everybody who has ever believed on the Lord at whatever capacity whether it was 1500 BC, whether it was today or it was smack dab in the middle of the tribulation, whoever it is, that by the time that this event occurs when Jesus sits on the throne, every one of those believers in the past have been "raised with him." The rest of the dead, there are those that have passed away and died who were not believers. When we fast-forward to verse 11 after Gog and Magog and the devil and all that stuff, it says, "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." So the picture that I get is: when Jesus sits on the throne, that up until that point, anybody and everybody who he has saved, redeemed, whatever word you want to use, is with him. The second resurrection or the one that's mentioned, that is that final judgment where those who have died in unbelief, those who have died in rejection, they are raised for that final judgment. Does that help at all?

The question that he is bringing up is a great question. In that judgment of the nations, chapter 25 of Matthew that we just read, let's take an individual who rejected the things of God. Let's take an individual who actually fought the battle of Armageddon against Jesus. Now, you could have never picked a worst team to fight on but they did, okay? So when Jesus shows up and wins the war, they find themselves in the wrong lane. They were the ones who rejected; they were the ones who fought against the things of God. They were the ones who received the mark of the beast. They bought every lie the antichrist gave them. It says in chapter 25, verse 41, it says that they are cast into the lake

of fire. So that is the place the Bible, it's hell basically. 1000 years transpires, we get to chapter 20, verses 11 and 12, and it says that those that were dead were brought to stand before God. They were judged according to their works and it says that they were basically condemned. What's interesting is that if you go forward into chapter 20, verse 14, "death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death." I think the picture that you get is that a person who rejects Jesus Christ, that they experience death and hell upon death but they also experience a second death in the sense that they are raised at the final judgment, they are condemned for all of eternity and they experience a second one.

You know, the old phrase that I heard years ago was this: if you are born once, you'll die twice but if you are born twice, you only die once. In the book of Revelation, I think it's in chapter 2, I think it's the church of Smyrna, I could be wrong, it says to those who overcome, they will not be hurt of the second death and so the picture that we've got is obviously that to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord, we talked about that last week, that we, you and I as believers, we don't have to worry about that one. We're good to go. Has that helped at all? A little bit? I got an absolutely. I'll take an absolutely.

Anybody else on that? Related to it? Yes ma'am. Yeah, you're a Sunday school teacher and have been working through Ezekiel. God bless all of you Sunday school teachers that have done Ezekiel in 8 weeks or whatever. That's incredible. Go ahead.

What she's bringing up, in the latter portions of the book of Ezekiel, now, let me go ahead and state for the record I am not an expert in Ezekiel and nobody is, okay? Just to let you know. I know I probably shouldn't but does anybody have a Presbyterian background by chance it's okay, don't be embarrassed. Nobody wants to admit it. If you do, at the turn of the last century about 1900, the Presbyterian Church in America actually did not allow anybody under age 30 to study the book of Ezekiel. They thought it would cause mental illness. Have you ever read Ezekiel? You've got a wheel within a wheel with eyes all around it and it's spinning in multiple directions at the same time. I mean, it's a little crazy to say the least.

But at the very end after you get the Gog and the Magog and the final battles, it talks about this temple being erected and built and it talks about a prince that is offering the sacrifice and the question that she brought up is a fabulous question because that can't be Jesus because Jesus does not need to offer a sacrifice for himself. I want to take you hopefully to answer this one, I want to take you to Revelation 1 and I'm going to look it up even though I could quote it. This is my favorite verse of the Bible, in fact, those of you who have received a copy of a book that I have written through the years, when I sign it I always put Revelation 1:5 in there. This is just my favorite verse in the Bible and it says, "And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood."



Now, we don't have, I don't want to say the word privilege, but we do not have in our country a monarchy. I mean, we actually rebelled against a monarchy 200+ years ago. But in a monarchy, you have a king or a queen and then you have a prince. The prince immediately takes over as soon as the king or queen is deceased or removed, correct? That's what happens, right? Jesus Christ here is called the prince. He is called the prince. Do you know what 2 Corinthians 4:4 calls Satan right now? The God or king of this world. One day in chapter 20, Jesus is going to take the kingship of this world. When Jesus is reigning as king, he cannot also be prince, can he?

The prince is subject to the king and so there have been many different speculations on who this individual is. There are some people who believe that it is King David, that King David is the one there in Jerusalem, there in that place that offers that sacrifice. It calls us as believers kings and priests, we shall reign with him small kings, not big king obviously. I don't know if we know exactly who that is but you're right. It cannot be Jesus because he does not need a sacrifice on his behalf because he is the sinless one. Is it King David? I don't know. Is it one of the 12 apostles? We don't know. Is it you? I don't know. I mean, we don't know. Wouldn't that be something if that was you one day? Wouldn't that be something? I jokingly say it because we really don't know. What we do know is that it's not Jesus but it is happening during the reign of Jesus that sacrifice is being made.

That's a great question. She said why are there sacrifices if Jesus is there on the throne? You know, I think sometimes, particularly as a bunch of Gentiles, that's us. I mean, if you ate dinner tonight you're a Gentile, trust me because what was in it, you couldn't eat it if you were an Orthodox Jew and I praise the Lord that I'm a Gentile just for that reason alone. I had bacon last night. I had sausage today. It's been a good 24 hours. But nonetheless, I think oftentimes as Gentiles because we did not grow up under the law, we did not grow up in that environment, I think sometimes we mistake the purpose of the law. I don't necessarily see the law so much as making you right with God as much as it shows you how you had strayed from him.

So for example, Jesus may be on the throne but during that millennial time period where you have these individuals that are being reigned over, it talks about them bringing offerings unto Jerusalem, sacrifices into Jerusalem and there is a whole lot there that we are not told, but the picture I get is kind of like when my kids do something wrong. I'll use that simple little illustration and there are some people here that are going to cringe when I tell this story but it's just the truth and they're going to have to deal with it. Behind my house there is a pond and when my kids disobey us, we make them run laps around the pond and depending on what they do determines the number of laps that they have to run. While they are running if they gripe, we add to it. If they stop running, we add to it. Once you've completed 11 laps, you've completed a mile. They have exceeded the mile limit at times in their life.

The reason I bring that up is if you allow me to use the analogy, the house, the king of the castle, they have come and something has been done wrong, because the law has been broken, something has to be done to make up for that. Does that make any sense? And so I think you see the sacrificial system not so much to appease God in the Old Testament as

it was to recognize one's sinfulness and the same thing you see in the millennium. Why would they have to make the sacrifice? It's not so much to be right with God as it is to acknowledge one's sin. Does that make sense? That they have agreed that yes, it was the proper judgment, I'm the one who sinned.

By the way, if you want to really get technical here, you can go back to the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus talks about this time period where he warns us about murder and he says, "If you say unto your brother, Raca, you shall be in danger of hell fire." He's actually talking about this time period when he sets up his kingdom because if you "sin and do not repent" you're in trouble. Why? Because you are one of the subjects that has come into the kingdom, not one reigning. Do you see why it's important to get the right person in the right place? Because if you get the wrong person in the wrong place, you're going to have a wrong understanding. Does that help at all? Have we figured out Ezekiel? Do you understand what the wheel in the wheel with all the eyes is? Neither do I. I just thought I'd ask.

Anybody else? Yes ma'am. That's a great question. Her question if you weren't able to hear it is the fact that Israel or the people of Israel even today, even in the midst of all the chaos that is happening over there, that they are desiring to build their temple again. The Bible makes it very clear in the book of Revelation, chapter 11, that during that "tribulational period" there is a temple because it talks about an angel who comes down with a reed and actually measures the temple and measures the gates and measures the courts. So even though in our politically charged environment there are many who will say that in that holy site of Jerusalem it will never be built again, God says it will so we've got to deal with that fact. It will be built. I don't know when and I don't know by whom but it will be built. Does that make sense?

So it will be built. What happens is during this great tribulational time period that lasts for 7 years, I think what's critical for us to understand in these 7 years is that according to the book of Daniel 9, basically the first 3 1/2 if you can call it, are good and the last 3 1/2 are, no offense, just hell on earth. Literally. When you begin to see what happens, it's bad. The dividing mark is what Matthew 24:15 and Daniel 9 call the abomination of desolation. That is where the antichrist goes into the temple of God and declares he is God. So you just thought some of our politicians had a God complex, wait until this point. He is literally going to go into that sacred place, that sacred building, that sacred site and he is going to tell the world he is God.

Now, by the way, this has been pictured all throughout time. Nebuchadnezzar, I think when you put up that big old statue of gold and made everybody bow to it, you've got a God complex, don't you? I mean, there have been people all throughout history who have done this. What's critical to that is that the abomination of desolation, I hate to say the word but it's literally true because it calls the pits of hell, literally hell breaks loose on earth. It's bad. Ma'am, to your point, there is no mentioning of that temple ever being destroyed which leads back to her Ezekiel question that is it possible that when Jesus Christ does come and reign that the temple that is mentioned is the same one that is built that endures this. Does that help you at all? Good.

You've got the wrong information? Did I give you the wrong information? You were thinking about new Jerusalem. Oh no, no, no. That's on the chart. That's way over here. Does that help? I'm sorry. Are you good? Anybody else? Nothing? We're good to go? I was about to go to the box and here we go, yes ma'am.

Wow. All right, let me give you the official Wednesday night symbol, you've just opened up the can. Here is her question and it is literally one of the most interesting, most valid, most keep-you-up-at-night questions in all of the world. She asked the question: what about those that are born during this time period and die during this time period? During the millennium, let's just use a very simple analogy here. Let's just for the sake of analogy let's just say that when Jesus comes at Armageddon and everything takes place, that there are only 100 people left. Let's just make it 100, okay? There have been people who are much smarter than me, wiser than me and have a lot more time than I do who have figured out what could the number of people or humanity be on planet earth in an environment such as this where Satan is bound, basically sin for almost all intents and purposes is eradicated and God himself is sitting in Jerusalem, how many folks in a normal birthing cycle pattern of life could we have? They have postulated that after 1000 years you could have upwards of 50 billion people but you wouldn't have a population crisis, you wouldn't have a food crisis because you've got God reigning on the earth so none of those are real issues. But the question does come up: what about those who are born because you get the idea that these people who inherit the kingdom, I mean, can I be honest, they're just like you and I. I mean, they are normal, born in sin people who do not have a new glorified body, have not been raised from the dead and they are inheriting this kingdom without the influence of Satan for 1000 years. It does say that their lives will be a lot longer because it says a child will be considered a child at 100 years of age. That's pretty impressive when you think about it but it does open up the door for death. It does open up the door for all kinds of scenarios there.

To the best of my ability, allow me to answer the question. Are you ready? I do not know but let me speculate. The speculation that I have is this, go back to Revelation 20, what we know as the final judgment. Now, there is an old adage and forgive me for saying it but it's true: sometimes a good doctrine does not make very good preaching and sometimes bad doctrine can make some really good preaching. What that means is sometimes just the truth of what God's word says, it's really kind of hard to explain at times. It doesn't make really good preaching. Notice in verse 12, "I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

Now, let's go back because the importance of studying this verse in context of everything that we've studied so far: everybody up to the return of Jesus, everybody who at any time

had "been saved" has been resurrected, right? But yet here we enter this millennial time period, we have a group of people and at the end of it there is a judgment and it mentions the book of life. Now, the book of life here cannot technically apply to you because you've already been resurrected, you've already gotten your new body, you're already good so it's got to apply to somebody. So ma'am, my best speculation is that the book of life and the book of works is this final judgment there in chapter 20, has nothing to do with your judgment, it has nothing to do with mine but this great final judgment is those that, for lack of better terms, were saved out of that millennial time period and all those who are not throughout all of time. Does that help at all? Not really. Sorry. I tried. I began with I do not know, does that help at all?

Now, you're talking about right now? During the millennial time period. Let me refrain back to my answer, I do not know, because the question is do they immediately go into the presence of the Lord? Well, the Lord is right there in Jerusalem. What we have during that reign of Christ, that thousand year time period is this magnificent thousand years but the Bible doesn't give us a whole lot about it. It really doesn't and I'm not dismissing the question at all but here's the great news: you don't have to worry about it. I'm being serious about that. You don't have to worry about this part because you right now as a believer in Jesus Christ, you will not have to worry about that quandary. Now, the only person that would worry about this today is somebody who is living on planet earth right now that if the events of the tribulation were to begin tomorrow, if the rapture occurred and boom it begins, 7 years from now if they survived and they "did what Matthew 25 says," they would enter into this millennial kingdom. Does that make sense? Now, here's the good news: you don't have to worry about that stuff. I'm not dismissing it but we just don't have enough there to tell us how that's all going to work out.

It's a great question. Well, thank you. I appreciate the confidence. If you didn't hear it, she goes, "I didn't think you'd be able to answer it." You're exactly right.

No ma'am, the only asterisk that I put by that and we don't have this in Scripture but let's infer from what we know: nobody ever died in the presence of Jesus. Ever. And so we have story of Lazarus, we have the story of Jairus' daughter. Could it be that during that millennial time period that just like those stories if you brought them to Jesus he raised them? I don't know. It makes sense to me. I don't know. Here's the good news: according to what the word of God says, I will be a part of the kingdom but not a subject thereof and so I'm not trying to say, "Well, good for me, bad for them." I'm just saying we have the privilege. That's why we call this the time of grace, that we have the privilege of admitting we are sinners, asking Jesus to save us and, boy, does he take care of us. The fact that he would let you and I reign with him doesn't make a lick of sense because we don't deserve it but he says we get to. So I'm sorry we don't have more concrete answers on that. We don't.

One of those areas we'll just have to wait and see, you're absolutely right. Yes ma'am.

Isaiah 65:20-21, allow me to go there quickly, "There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred

years old." I think what it's saying is that if a child dies at 100, they're still considered a child.

Yes ma'am. I don't think we have any problem with a "sinner" dying. She is really asking if you have this faithful believer who dies because to us to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord but during this time period the Lord is in Jerusalem. I'm going to refrain to, I do not know. I want to make that very clear, I do not know.

Yes ma'am. Do you know, it's amazing any time we get a question on the book of Revelation we never get back to the box. Have you all noticed that? The question she brought up was the famous 144,000. Go to Revelation 7 and let me go ahead and tell you what you probably already know. The 144,000 are not the people who come to visit you on Saturday morning. Just being honest. Do you know I can prove it? I really can prove it and I'm not trying to be ugly but I can prove it. We're going to go back to chapter 7 but this is still the 144,000. Chapter 14 says, "And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads." So if you're part of the 144,000, the Lord's name is in your forehead so that's one issue that they may not be able to pass when they come to your house. It says, "And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand," so obviously they have a special song that nobody else knows, "which were redeemed from the earth. These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins." That means to be a part of the 144,000 you cannot be a woman and you have to be a virgin. Oops. That kind of messed up that plan that happens on Saturday morning in some of our neighborhoods because that's what it says they are, does it not?

So back to chapter 7 because this is where we need to get back to. This talks about the famous 144,000. It begins at verse 4, it says, "I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel." Do you see that qualification here? The 144,000 are from the children of Israel. It says, "Of the tribe of Juda were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Reuben were sealed twelve thousand." It goes on and it lists the 12 tribes. By the way, the tribes in Revelation 7 do not match the tribes in the Old Testament. Why? Because some of them got kicked out and got replaced by others. It's very important to note that the tribe of Dan was listed in the Old Testament and is not listed in Revelation 7 because of the Baal worship and the apostasy by which they committed.

Now, the thing that I think is important about that is and I know any time you talk to folks you'll get this opinion and that opinion, but as a whole, there are some individuals who claim to have knowledge of and that's great if they do, I don't have a problem with it. As a whole, most Jewish individuals do not know their tribal affiliation as a whole so if you were to go up to somebody who is Jewish and say, "Hey, are you the tribe of Reuben?" They'll probably go, "I really don't know." Now, a lot of times they'll say, "Well, my family says but we don't know."

Let me take you back to the Old Testament. Do you remember when they came out of, I guess Babylon for lack of a better term, Nebuchadnezzar but then it became Persia so when they went back to the homeland, the days of Esther and Daniel, it really was under Persia, not Babylon. When they go back and rebuild Jerusalem, they had this great revival because they found the scroll underneath the Temple Mount and the scroll was the law of God that they hadn't had for 70 years. Do you know what they're doing under the Temple Mount today, right? They're excavating all that. Wouldn't it be something if they actually found the records where all these individuals today can actually connect the dots of where they are? What I think is key about the 144,000, the picture you get of the 144,000 during the tribulation is you've got 12,000 men who are not married nor acting like they are according to chapter 14, who are out of the 12 tribes and the picture you get is, I've heard people call them the 144,000 evangelists. That their role during that tribulation is to preach the truth about what's happening.

Now, what's key back to chapter 7, go back to verse 9. We've got the 144,000, "After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." In other words, during that great tribulational time period, there is not just 144,000 that get saved. So to those who knock on your door and tell you that only the 144,000 are going to "make it," according to Revelation 7:9, there are those beyond the 144,000 who also "make it." Now, I'm not here just to disparage a certain group of people but it looks like they are batting zero for right now. Does that help you at all with the 144,000? I hope so.

Yes? Anything else on the 144,000? You know, we're technically supposed to stop. I'm pulling a question just because that's my attitude. I'm pulling a question just so we can say we pulled one. Oh, you've got to be kidding me. I can't make this stuff up. Is it possible that Cain had a different cord than Abel? Have you all ever heard that before? Just for the fun, go back to Genesis. Here we go. A cord, meaning, well, allow me to explain that. Can I just do this one more time tonight, the can has been opened. Okay, Genesis 4, we have the birth of Cain and Abel. "And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD. And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell."

Now, we know the story of Cain and Abel pretty well and we know how it ends up not so good for Abel or Cain. Thankfully, in chapter 5 Seth comes along and things get a little bit better. But there are 2 children that are born: there is one Cain, there is one Abel. It is very clear in Scripture that Cain, shall we just say, does not choose a very good path. Abel appears to be a very righteous young man. He presents his offering. The Lord

accepts his offering and then he finds himself dead very soon at the hands of his brother. Now, the question was asked: did they have different cords? The Bible, I believe, makes it very clear in verse 1 that Adam knew Eve his wife and she conceived and bore Cain and said I have gotten a man from the Lord. She again bore his brother Abel and Abel was a keeper of the sheep. There is a theory that is out there, allow me to share this theory with you. It is propagated on a lot of late-night theological television programs. That ought to make you leery anyway, particularly since we're on late at night here. You might just get scared at what you might see. You never know. 1 o'clock in the morning, there I am. If you can't sleep, I've got you covered.

That being said, when Eve was tempted in the garden or shall I say when she was deceived, the Bible makes it clear that she was deceived. You go back into chapter 3 and it says that the serpent deceived her. Now, women, I'm about to liberate you tonight because we have been pictured for thousands and thousands and thousands of years that the first woman on planet earth sat down and had a conversation with a snake and actually listened to what the snake said. Just because you're a serpent doesn't mean you're a snake. A snake is always a serpent. Did you all catch that logic there? A snake is always a serpent, a serpent is not always a snake. It says the serpent spoke with her. Did you know over in 2 Corinthians 11 it says that the devil disguises himself as an angel of light? Now, do you know that every angel that shows up in the Bible kind of appears like a man? Now ladies, don't get upset, there is never an angel that shows up that looks like a lady. Don't get upset with me, get upset with God. It's not my fault.

Also in the Bible, the angels do not appear like they do at Hallmark. They are not short, fat, bald guys with halos, okay? In fact, the picture you get are very much mighty warrior men. I mentioned earlier the one that kills 185,000 men in one night with one sword. You've got the 2 men, actually the 3 because one was the angel of the Lord, who comes to Abram and Sarai, remember the whole Sodom and Gomorrah story. I would say they were pretty tough guys. Hebrews 13 says you and I have entertained angels unaware. Now, don't you think if I came home one night and said, "Hey Tracy, you're not going to believe who I met today. Man, I met this guy at the gas station. He had a flowing robe, glowing face and a halo on his head." She'd say, "I think you saw an angel." But that's not what the Bible pictures an angel being. The Bible says we have actually entertained them and didn't realize what we were even entertaining. Why? Because everywhere they show up, they look just like you and they look just like me as male, so to speak, not female.

You say, "Jeff, why is that important?" Because in the garden of Eden when Eve is having a conversation with the serpent, doesn't it just make more sense if she was deceived by one who transformed himself as an angel of light? Isn't that what the devil always does with us? He shows up as God's messenger. He shows up on holy premises. He shows up, "Oh, I just want to help you in this situation." Isn't that what happened in Genesis 3? She was deceived into that. Now, the reason that is important is that I do believe that in chapter 3 of Genesis during that deception, I do not believe that Eve was talking to a king snake. I really don't. I believe the devil himself disguised himself in such a way to deceive her and ultimately Adam in the whole transgression.

Now, let me juxtapose to the late-night television that I spoke of: there are some who believe that the fruit that was eaten was not an apple or pomegranate or grape but that Eve and the devil had a child and that that child was Cain. I'm just telling you what you can hear late-night on television. I didn't say you had to believe it. I'm telling you that it is out there. So you said you'd never heard that before, you go to bed too early, if you've never heard that before. It is out there and there are people who adamantly and ardently believe that and what they believe is that Eve had 2 children by 2 different individuals: one was the seed of Satan and one was the seed of Adam. That sounds really good until you read chapter 4, verse 1. It says she knew Adam and bore Cain so the Bible is very clear, I believe, that both of those brothers came from the same source, if that makes sense.

Now, it's a great question to ask and I don't know who asked the question because there are those who propagate these ideas and here's why I think it's important to address this. You hear all that and boy, you think, it's kind of science fiction, wild Bible study, but to dismiss that idea is as simple as reading chapter 4, verse 1. And allow me to remind us, no matter how good it may sound, no matter how bad we want it really to be true, what the Bible says is true in spite of what somebody else may sound like it is true. Does that make any sense? So I just want to encourage us no matter what.

Now, there are some things that we would say there is no way that can be true and the Bible says it is and so it goes both sides there. So what I want to encourage is I know I say this at the beginning but let me say it at the end: I know we call this Ask Jeff but as was identified earlier, I really don't know what I'm talking about. I don't know but the Bible does and my whole purpose is just to point us to what the Bible says and on this question, it's a fabulous question. There are people that have written hundreds of pages on this subject matter, believe it or not, of books but I think one very simple verse says sorry, that Cain was the child of Adam and Eve and I do not think you can defend the fact that he was the child of any other entity, particularly that of the enemy.

Now, let me tell you why that's critical. You know, I mentioned to you about those that come to your door on Saturday morning, you know there is another group of people who oftentimes visit your door and when they do so they usually wear name tags and they are riding bicycles. Have I identified those to you? You know that they believe that Jesus and Lucifer were twins and that one chose the right path and one chose the wrong. This idea is being propagated en masse just in different areas of the Bible but does the Bible say that? No, the Bible in no way at all can defend that even if somebody wants to advocate it.

Once again, I'm just going to go in and say the obvious: whether it's the 144,000 identification, whether it's Jesus and Satan's relationship or Cain and Abel's, who or whatever you look at, please, please, please, no matter what your background is, let this determine your belief and not anything or anybody else because Jesus said if you will know the truth, it will set you free and you don't have to fall for anything that's not true.