

Ask Jeff

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Good evening. It is 6:30 Central Standard Time here in Opelika, Alabama. It is my privilege to welcome you to our Wednesday night large group adult Bible study. And again, this is kind of a public service announcement that I give every time of year around this time of year, please I want you to hear from the sincerity of my heart. I'm not trying to kick you out or tell you to leave, however we do have a very distinct privilege here at First Baptist. This is not the only Bible study happening right now. We have men's Bible studies, women's Bible studies, co-ed Bible studies. We have a host of Bible studies. And so again, I'm not trying to tell you to go somewhere else. I just want those of you particularly that may be new to our church to know that there's a lot of options that are out there, and I just want you to know how you can take full advantage of them.

Now, with the exception of those listening on 97.7, because it is Sunday morning to them, for the rest of us, both in-house and out-of-house, we are, quote, in real time. You say, well, what does that mean? That means that everything that we discuss tonight, the Bible study, is going to be done as an interactive format. If this is your first time with us, everything that we discuss is originated by you. You have the opportunity to send in a question, a concern, maybe a passage that you're confused about, whatever it may be, and the best thing is you can remain completely anonymous. That's right, nobody knows who you are because the best way is to communicate by way of text messaging. Now area code 334-231-2313, that's the number you can use either here in the room, outside on the other side of the camera, you can be in another country, however, you need to use the 01 country code for the US. When you do so, it comes to this computer, eventually ends up on the screen, and we can dialogue about your subject matter.

Now, if we're talking about a topic or a concern, and you want to kind of dig a little deeper, maybe take it a little different direction, you can submit a follow-up question. If you do so, it will show up on the screen in a different font, and I will know that we're staying on topic.

Now, for those of you that are in-house, in the room, you have a very distinct advantage. You can raise your hand. When you raise your hand, you have the opportunity to direct the conversation, the question, wherever you would like it to go. The only issue is you lose your anonymity. Why? Because we can see you. We can hear you. We know who you are. Now, let me put you just somewhat at ease. Your voice nor will your image be

seen and/or heard on the radio or TV. It's only in-house. But we're all family, so it's all good.

So, without further ado, why don't we do some Bible study? That's all good. Here we go. Yes, ma'am. So much for the screen, because my hand went in the air. How can I help you? Oh, we just got the dinosaur question. Congratulations. We're done for the night. No, I'm kidding. We're not. Now, let me repeat the question so that you can understand, because she was soft spoken. I want you to hear what she asked and then I know I made a light of it, but I'm really not making light of it. It's a question that a lot of us have. Very few of us, young lady, are brave enough to ask it so I applaud you for that. The question was, is there Biblical evidence for the creation of, the formation of, and the interaction of what we know as the dinosaur entity with humanity? Did I sum up your question appropriately? There we go. So now again, I know that when we look at this question from a secular perspective, there's a whole lot of different perspectives. There's a whole lot of different opinions. There's a whole lot of different ideologies. However, ma'am you asked me about a biblical response. Allow me to come at it from one direction and then we're going to go out to another, okay? The first direction I want to come at is this, there are passages in your Bible that people believe are referencing the dinosaurs that are not. Okay? For example, go to the book of Job right before the book of Psalms. We're not going to go to all of these passages, I promise. I just want to give you a very good example. If you go to the book of Job, we're going to go to chapter chapter 41 I'm going to begin reading in verse 1, I'm not going to read the entirety of it. It is going to sound and many have claimed that this is biblical evidence of the dinosaur creatures. Now in the book of Isaiah we have a creature known as behemoth, okay, here in Job we have a creature known as Leviathan

Now, in verse 1, it says, "Canst thou draw out leviathan with an hook? or his tongue with a cord which thou lettest down? Canst thou put an hook into his nose? or bore his jaw through with a thorn? Will he make many supplications unto thee? will he speak soft words unto thee? Will he make a covenant," and it goes on to talk about an entity that is described as a very large, violent, vile, water-dwelling entity. That's the description, right? And so many have said, aha, that is a great description because if you look in the book of Job beginning of chapter 38, God answers Job out of the whirlwind, out of the north, and basically asks him a series of questions that he cannot answer and essentially is establishing the fact that he is God, Job is not, he knows what he's doing. And so many people have gone to chapter 41 and said basically what God is doing is continuing this thought that we cannot fight against Leviathan, there are these creatures that are so large we don't stand a chance against them. Here's the interesting thing, I want you to look at the very last verse of chapter 41. You can't just stop after the first three or four. "He beholdeth all things," this is talking about Leviathan, "he is the king of the children of pride." Now I got news for you, even if this was a dinosaur, dinosaurs aren't over the children of pride. Who do you know that's over the children of pride? Satan. Exactly. And so what we really have in Job 41 and what we have in Isaiah with Behemoth is we actually have a description of who Satan is.

Now, if you were to read Job chapter 41 in context of what I've just said, where he is a multi-headed, water-dwelling entity that is vile and violent, do you know you've just described a character in the book of Revelation who is attributed to Satan? And by the way, you say, what about the water? Why the water? Did you know that all throughout the Bible there's a place the Bible speaks of the dwelling of the demonic and of Satan? It's called the deep. That's a water described entity. So again the first part of the question is there are passages in the Bible where people quote claim are describing dinosaurs and honestly if we look at them in context they're really not, okay?

So then the question begs, well, where does or does the Bible describe? So you gotta go back to the book of Genesis and one of the things that you will discover is on the very fifth day of the creation account in Genesis 1, it describes the formation, the creation of the animal kingdom, including large water-dwelling animals but land as well. Why is that important? The Bible does not give you names, it does not give you specifics, nor does it give you any of those details of what you and I would know as the dinosaur species. However, what we do know is this, that when Noah built an ark, the Lord brought two of every kind. Now, I don't know about you, but in my vocabulary, "every" means 'ery. Y'all know what that means, right? That means everybody, right? So if this is a part of the creative order, then every would include them, right? And so therefore, the big question is, well, what about that? You go back to Noah's Ark, you go back to all that cosmology and stuff, there's been a whole lot that's happened. What I want you to hear is this, that if the dinosaurs are as we have been taught throughout the years, they would be a part of an animal kingdom. The Lord was mentioned as creating all of the animal kingdom, bringing all the animal kingdom on the boat, and guess what? Once they got off the boat, not everybody made it because the Bible describes a very carnivorous, violent atmosphere even among the animal kingdom.

I know I was very specifically vague and did not directly answer because there isn't a chapter and verse. There's not a chapter and verse that says, "And Adam named the Tyrannosaurus Rex." It doesn't say that. Alright? It's just not there. But we do have descriptions of the entirety of the animal kingdom and every creature. Those words lead us to be completely inclusive of, even if not given the specifics of. Have I helped you at all? Not really. Now, here's the great thing. I want to help you biblically. When somebody asks you, what happened to the dinosaurs? You know what you say? They died. And you can't miss. Every single time you cannot miss, right? Again, it's one of the great questions. I know I came at it very vaguely, but here's the deal most, most biblically based answers to this question are very much less biblically based than they tell you they are. There's just not that much in the Bible, but there is enough in the Bible to be inclusive of because you got the entire animal kingdom and you have every creature. Sorry I didn't help too much. Will you forgive me? It is what it is.

Yes, sir? Does Jesus care if you wear a ball cap to church? Sir, put it on. It's all right. Now, you know, he's on. Okay, this is a great question. It really is because there's a very famous passage in the Bible that some have taken otherwise. Okay? Some of y'all wearing ball caps are going, oh boy, I just got nervous. Go to 1 Corinthians chapter 7. 1 Corinthians chapter 7. As you're turning to 1 Corinthians chapter 7, I have a humorous,

I'm sorry, chapter 11. I apologize. Chapter 11. Well, I'm going to tell you a story about chapter 7 while you're turning to chapter 11. Is that okay? You know we've got this thing now where we as a church are kind of challenging ourselves to memorize the totality of scripture? Did you know that 1 Corinthians 7, which talks about the relationship between a man and a woman in marriage, do you know that was like one of the very last chapters of the New Testament taken? It's like, man, I am not touching that one. But whoever you are, thank you for doing so. Somebody did.

Chapter 11 of 1 Corinthians is the passage, sir, where the question regarding a ball cap in church has arisen in our culture. I'm going to begin in verse, we're going to begin in verse 1. It says, "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ. Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you. But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God. Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoureth his head. But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven. For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn: but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered."

Now, I'm not going to read the totality of the chapter. Feel free to do so. You're taking off. Time out. Before you take it off, if you read verses 5 and 6 and following, it makes it sound as if you have a hat on, that God's not going to listen to your prayers. Isn't that what it sounds like? It really does. Here's the problem, that's the reason I read the first three verses, this passage has nothing to do with a hat. It has everything to do with our respective order in light of how God has arranged things. What is it saying? By the way, this is more politically incorrect than your hat question. You ready? This verse, this passage, says what all the Bible says. What does it say? The head of man is Christ, the head of the woman is the man. It's what it says. And by the way, it's been that way since the book of Genesis. It doesn't mean different worth, it means different role. Okay?

Now, why is that important? Basically, it is saying that men, if your woman is leading your home spiritually, you're going to have trouble communicating with the Lord. That's what it's saying because it talks about a man in a relationship to a woman and a woman in a relationship to a man. I hate to tell y'all, this passage ain't got nothing to do with wearing a ball cap. Okay? Now, again, I'm not suggesting that everybody wear a trucker hat with FBCO on this Sunday. Alright? I just want you to know our communication regarding, quote, hats in church is more of a cultural thing than it is a biblical thing. And I can prove that. You know why? If you were to go to a Jewish synagogue right now, you know what a man does? Covers his head. He wears a yarmulke on top of his head. Isn't that interesting? You do realize Jesus was of the tribe of Judah. You realize that the Apostle Paul was of the tribe of Benjamin and grew up in a Jewish culture and if he literally meant a hat, he was basically saying that everybody was doing it wrong in the Old Testament, yet I promise you when Jesus went in the synagogue and preached, he wore yarmulke. You say, well, why do men do that? You know why they do it? To show, listen, that they are submissive to God. That hat they wear is basically saying God is above me. Now if we were gonna be uber liberal or literal?

[unintelligible]

It's a brim hat. That's fine. That's fine It's not a yarmulke. I get it. I get it. But I want you to understand something, the purpose of that article that a Jewish man wears, the purpose is to show that he is under God. That's the purpose, okay? So, again, I'm not throwing stones or much the opposite, we have to ask ourselves, what's the purpose if someone were to wear a hat, such as tonight? Well, maybe they've been at work and their hair's messed up. Yeah, it's all your hair's banged up. I'm going to quote you, your hair banged up. That's a great statement right there, right? And I think this question, number one, shows the necessity of context, but it also shows this, it is more important to ask the question why than what? Not what are they wearing, why are they wearing it? Because I'm going to ask you a question, I'm going to go there. You ready? No, you're fine. For those of you who just say, I can't stand it if a person where's a hat in church, what if they just got done with a series of chemotherapy treatments and their head needs to be protected? Why are they wearing it? To dishonor God? No. Aren't you grateful they came to church? So, folks, I think we need to ask the question, why more than we ask the question what, and our statements of judgment need to be tailored in the context of scripture, not the context of our culture. Now at the same time, you've never, unless they did it without me knowing, you've never seen any of my boys wearing a hat in church because Jeff said, you ain't doing it, boy. That's what I said. So guess what? That was a Meyers thing. Does that make sense? And that's a whole other scenario. So great question, though. You're still not going to put your hat on, are you? There you go. You're good.

So, yes, sir? Nice hat, by the way. Oh, it's cold outside? Is that what you said? Absolutely. Yes, sir. Creation. Yes, sir. Seven days of creation. All right. Great series of questions. I'm going to repeat the questions. Put your hat in the air if I miss one. Is that all right? How could I have already missed one? All right, so his question is regarding back to the question regarding what we know as the creative story in scripture, the necessity or non-necessity of a literal 24-hour day, particularly in light of passages such as 1 Timothy that talk about a day being as a thousand years, a thousand years as if a day to the Lord, and in addition to that, the concept of the first day we have light and darkness, but we don't have the sun and the moon until day four and so how can we reconcile those concepts? And additionally, there are a host of things that, to your last point, you can create with evidence of history without necessarily having elongated concept of time. Did I, put your hat in the air if I nailed it. Yes, we're the hat church. No, I'm joking. I'm joking. All right.

So that being said, first thing we need to do is we know we need to go in the New Testament to the book of Peter. We need to go over to 2 Peter chapter 3 and I want to address the famous verse regarding the days of a thousand years, thousands of years of a day. Then we're going to go back into the Genesis count because whether my friend back here realizes it or not, he has done exactly what we all need to do, not just in reading any passage, but particularly the book of Genesis, he's asking the question why. Why does it

say this in quote light of that? So I applaud you rather than asking about what it says, he's asking why it says it the way it says it.

Okay now 2 Peter chapter 3 verse 8, "But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." This is that quote proof text regarding his question of is a day as you and I know it necessarily 24 hours, or could there be concepts of time that are different than or shall we say longer than? The biggest problem with verse 8 is the first word. What's the first word? "But." I know and you know, not just that that's my favorite word in the Bible, but if you have the word "but," that means you have content above it that you have to interpret that verse in light of. Right? So if you go back up to the very beginning of this passage, verse 3, "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. But, beloved..." This passage, though it alludes back to the creation story, is not a commentary on Genesis. It's a commentary on Revelation. It's telling us that just because scoffers, that's why I went back to verse 3, just because scoffers claim that it's been thousands of years since Christ promised his soon return, they scoff at that, it's saying a day as if a quote, thousand years, a thousand years as if a day. What verse 9 is actually saying is, for those who question Jesus' return, the weekend hadn't even been completed yet. It's been quote two days. This passage is not a commentary on Genesis. It's not a commentary on the creation. It is a commentary on what we know as the Second Coming and the quote vague timing of that.

So having dismissed that verse as a proof text, that still doesn't dismiss your question, sir, of, well, when you go back into Genesis does it have to be, does it need to be, is it absolutely? Here's how I would describe or answer that question before we get into the subsequent questions One of the greatest concerns I have when doing Bible study, whether myself, yourself, or us collectively, is when we look at a biblical passage and say, I know what it says but I don't know if that's what it really means, because what we've said is, I can't reconcile what it says, so therefore I'm going to interpret it in light of that which I can. Now, here's why I bring that up, sir. In Genesis chapter 1, it speaks of the creation order we spoke of that. People struggle, 24 hours, 1,000 years, some people would even say epochs of time. But you know what nobody struggles with? When you get to chapter 2. When you get to chapter 2, all of a sudden the word day is used and nobody struggles. For example, how does chapter 2 of Genesis 1 begin? Do y'all remember? "And on the seventh day, God rested." So did he rest for a thousand years? I'm asking. Did he rest for a million years? Because later in the Bible we discover that the, quote, Sabbath day is 24 hours. So in chapter 2, we interpret it 24 hours, but in chapter 1, eh, it doesn't necessarily. Do you see the dangerous road that becomes is when we try to make the Bible say what we want it to say.

Now, let me swing on the other side of the proverbial spectrum. When people say, I just struggle with the 24 hours, you know what I say? I do too. You say, what do you mean you struggle? I don't understand why I didn't do it in 24 minutes. If he is an all-powerful, all-knowing God, what took him so long, 24 hours? I mean, if you think about it, from God's perspective, that's a long time. When it says he spoke and it was, whoo, he drew out those sentences. I mean, I'm being serious when I'm saying this. So again, I think sometimes we're asking the wrong questions, okay, so I don't think there is any difficulty with a quote 24-hour literal time period particularly when you have an all-powerful, all-knowing God who doesn't need 24 hours to do anything. He can do anything instantly.

Okay, but here's the crux of it. Go back to Genesis chapter 1 and this kind of dovetails last week's discussion. I know I was not here to do follow-ups. Thank you for putting up with me while I was several states away. Genesis chapter 1. I want to bring your attention to two very critical verses. Verse 1 and verse 26. Verse 1, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." You know that verse, you probably have it memorized even though you didn't realize it. Alright, so fast forward to verse 26. "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man..." You say, why is that so important? The word create means to bring forth into existence that which previously was not. Okay? Not one single person in this room or watching online has ever created anything. What you have done is taken established material and formed, fashioned, and molded it, whatever it may be. Not one of you has ever spoken into the thin air and created anything. Only God can do that, right?

Verse 1, it says, and God created the heaven and the earth. Verse 26, or 7, and God created man. You know what I find interesting is between verse 3 and verse 25, the word create is never use. So to your point, sir, about the sun, the moon, what's the phrase the Lord uses? "Let it be." Not the word create. So when you use the phrase let it be, you're bringing something into existence that already has matter, but now has form and purpose. Hence your history thing. Doesn't discount the 24 hours though because it still says and the first day, the second day, the third day. And so again, I think the answer is a both/and here and I hate to default to Isaiah 55, "His ways are not our ways, his thoughts are not our thoughts," but when you start digging through the text and you start saying, well, how could you have light and darkness for three days before you have the sun and the moon? But then you go to like 1 John 1:5, it says God is light and in him is no darkness at all. So if God is present, you don't have to have a sun. In fact, you get to Revelation chapter 22, or 21, it says one day in the new heaven, new earth, new Jerusalem, it says there is no sun there because Jesus is the light thereof. So you technically don't have to have a celestial sun to have light if Jesus is there. Boy, it'll get deep real quick, won't it?

Again, though, go back. I don't want to oversimplify like I did the dinosaurs, but we're in the book of Genesis. God started it. We messed it up. He fixes it, okay? All the other details we're in flux with but I love the fact that we're asking the why question here. There is... yes, ma'am Go for it why not so much for the screen. Could have been 2.4 milliseconds.

[unintelligible]

Great question so for those you could not hear concerning does still dovetail with your question because we alluded to Genesis 2:2 where the seventh day he rested. The question is so why did God rest? All right, so let me ask you the pejorative question here that I know you answered, do you honestly believe that God got tired? No, absolutely not, right? So allow me to quote Jesus himself. He said, quote, he said, "Man was not made for the Sabbath, but the Sabbath for the man." In other words, that Sabbath day wasn't because God needed rest. That Sabbath day was for him to show us something that we needed to understand. Does that make sense? So don't get in this concept that somehow he was tired. I promise you, God did not get exhausted at all doing what he did. And by the way, sir, you mentioned day four. One of my favorite parts about day four is it says, and he flung the stars also. Do y'all notice that language? It's almost as if we said, oh yeah, I grabbed that on the way out. You know, just, oh, there it is. Just real simple.

So there is no exhaustion. You get to Exodus chapter 31, and it makes it very, very, very, very clear that the purpose of the Sabbath was for man, not for God. Now here's where it gets interesting. For the sake of time, just trust me, we can go there if we need to. When you go into Hebrews chapter 3 and 4, it talks about us entering God's rest, okay? I'm about to pull your question, your question, I'm gonna pull them all back together. You ready? You and I, our goal should be in his rest, right? If a day is a thousand years, and a thousand years is if a day refers to Revelation and not Genesis, then the seventh day is the day of rest. And by the way, if you do a strict chronology of humanity's genealogy, you will discover that Adam and Eve were approximately 4000 BC. We are now six days past that. Jesus returns and that's the day of rest. Ah, do you see how that comes together? Because that passage isn't about Genesis, the passage is about Revelation, which leads me to tell you this, did you know that everything you need to know about the book of Revelation, you can learn in Genesis? Because it's teaching us about the end before we even get all the beginning.

Yes, sir?

[unintelligible]

God is outside of time. God is outside of time. God is outside of time, but he put us inside of it because I don't know about y'all, but my alarm clock went off way too early this morning. And I wanted to say, well, an hour's as if a day, a day's as if an hour. Nope, didn't work. Didn't work that way. But again, hold up, real quick. So I know we're kind of ad hoc here. We're all in this Genesis, which is great. I'm going to go ahead and make you a prophetic promise, the more you study Genesis, the more questions you will have. The more questions you will have, they will gravitate more toward the why than they will the what. And one of the hardest things to do is take those passages and make them line up with other scriptures because we have a tendency to have our perspective, our theology, whatever it may be, and we force them into it, if that makes sense. And so kind of our

goal is to pull back and say, let's just let it say what it says and reconcile it with scripture, it that makes sense.

So again, sir, to your last question about this kind of creation with history, when it says let there be or he formed, again, you go back to verse 1, he created, meaning there is nothing without him but each one of those days, the picture is to form it, not to originate it like he does with man, which will make your head spin real quick, if that makes sense. I don't know if I've helped you at all, but those are great questions that, unfortunately, can I be honest with you all? There are people out here in the world, there are people in the world, who claim to have all the answers to Genesis. They don't. They really don't, okay? They have their answer to Genesis because I got a feeling that most of us are gonna get to heaven one day and the Lord's gonna go, "You know that book of Genesis? You didn't get that one right. Let me show you what happened."

Yes, sir.

[unintelligible]

No, I apologize if I insinuated that. I am not suggesting there was matter prior to Genesis 1:1, I'm saying in Genesis 1:1 when he says "and God created," he established matter and then it says, "Let there be, let there be, let there be, let there be," until you get to verse 27, and he created mankind. Ah, question was, does that mean that everything that was, quote, formed before mankind was created on day one? Okay, here we go. We talked about it last week. We're just, you opened up the can this week. Here we go. Genesis 1:1, "In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth," right? Look at verse 2, "And the earth was formless and void." Now does that sound like a good picture to you? Not at all. In fact Isaiah chapter 45 verse 18 says God created everything with a purpose to be inhabited. That verse, I know we talked about this last week so just give me two minutes of your time. In Jeremiah chapter 4 verse 23 there is this prophecy of Jeremiah looking back in the past and he uses the phrase formless and void and he's describing an entity that was destroyed because of its rebellion against God. Now, I'm going to ask a question, hear me clearly. I'm not talking about epics of time. I'm not talking about millennia and all that mess. I'm just talking about theology. Okay? The most neglected question of Genesis is this, when did Satan fall? That's the most neglected question of Genesis. He could not have fallen before Genesis 1:1, "In the beginning, God created." Correct? So he fell sometime between there and chapter 3. The question is, where? What took place? And so one of the big issues we've got to discuss, because in chapter 3 of Genesis, he's a serpent, he's a bad dude, he messes us up. So we know by chapter 3 he has fallen. The question is, where in that spectrum, I did not say time, I just said theologically here.

I would argue that verse 2 of Genesis 1 sounds very much like something has gone awry because I'm going to share with you a little, you know how I like to play Carnac? Y'all want to play Carnac again? Look at Genesis 1. Genesis 1:1. Get your Bibles out. Get your Bibles out. Get your Bibles out. We're going to have fun. Y'all ready for this? Turn on your Bible or open your Bible. I don't care which one you got. Genesis chapter 1, verse 1. "In the beginning, God created the either heaven or heavens." Look at your Bible. Some

of your Bibles say heavens, some say heaven, right? Here's where Jeff, not really Carnac, comes out. Y'all ready? Y'all know the answer to this. If your Bible says heaven singular, it's the King James Bible. If it does not, it's something else. Now, I don't know about you, but last time I checked, singular is not plural and plural is not singular. Is it?

Now fast forward in Genesis chapter 1. I want you to go to verse, hold on real quick, let's go to verse 6. This is day 2 as you and I know it, okay? "And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so. And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day." Now, did y'all notice anything distinctly missing from day two? It did not say it was good. Uh-oh. You know what you have being described there? Waters above, waters below and a division in between.

Sir, is it significant that it is capitalized in verse 8? Oh, it's capitalized in verse 8. Okay, so here's where it gets real interesting. Here's a little linguistic side. I had no idea this is where we're going because you're the ones that raise your hand. All right, here we go. In what we know as biblical Hebrew, which we have to translate into English, there are no capital letters. There's only one verse in the Hebrew Old Testament that has capital letters and that is in Deuteronomy 6:4 where it says, "Here, O Israel: The LORD your God is one God." The word "here" is capitalized and the word "God" is capitalized, in other words pay attention, right? So when we capitalize, this is where it gets fun, heaven by the way, shamayim, that's the word, did you know that heaven is both plural and singular at the same time? Did you know the word Elohim for God is both plural and singular at the same time? So when we translate it, sir, we're not actually telling you what that word is because the word is both, we are translating it by giving it a capital letter, person, place, or thing, correct? By making it plural or singular, we are describing how we are seeing it. Correct? So let me tell you, if your Bible says heaven singular, let me tell you what your Bible is doing. In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth. Everything is good, everything is fine, everything is cohesive. But by the time you get to day two, there is a division that is not called good. Why would there be a division not called good if sin has not entered the creation? Because everything should be cohabitable. Do you see what we're opening up here? Okay, I'm not asking you to read something that's not there into it. I'm asking you, as this man said, ask the why questions and start putting pieces together.

Yes, sir. Oh, the question, what waters and waters? He asked, is one of the waters the lake of fire? I hope not. But there is waters above. Y'all remember the book of Revelation, chapter 4, John goes up, and what is before the throne of God? A crystal sea. Do you know, and we described it earlier, it's also in Psalm 104, do you know what the Bible calls the expanse between earth and heaven? The deep. And we have waters here on the earth, correct? Here's what's important. Beginning in verse 6, it didn't say the waters above and below. It says the waters above and below. It didn't say the waters above the clouds and below the clouds, the waters above and the waters below.

You know the Bible speaks of three heavens, right? The heaven of the throne of God, the heavens of what we might call the celestial beings, planets, etc., and the heavens of our atmosphere. The Bible also speaks of three waters, the crystal sea, the deep, and the waters here on the earth. Isn't it fascinating how that all works out? So when it says there was a division, we have to ask, what is it saying and why? Why is there a heaven singular and now we have a heaven plural? What happened? Why is there an expanse? Why is there a division? Why is it not called good? Do you all see all the questions that come up out of this? Now do you understand why the book of Genesis is exhaustive but at the same time it causes issues because one of the biggest problems with Genesis is we see things that we did not grow up learning and we struggle with changing how we see it because every one of us was taught something. We were taught something and when we read and see something that's different than we were taught, we struggle with it. That's just natural.

But the water's below. I would not call the lake of fire the water's below, because fire, water, not much but there is a lake of fire, which eventually shows up as the ultimate place of the damned. I hope that helps a little bit with that. We're going all over the place, and that's a good problem.

Yes, sir. Why not? Chris, just take the screen and get out of here. Yes, sir.

[unintelligible]

Are we going back to the dinosaurs? So the dinosaur question. He asked about verse 2 the possibility of the fall of Satan. When we speak of the great dinosaur question, okay, you have multiple options. Option A, to your point, sir, is if verse 2 is applicable to the fall of Satan, if it is then you have an opportunity for what we might call the dinosaur creation to be a part what some theologians would refer to as a pre-Adamic world meaning a world of life prior to Adam's existence, and that God judged Satan on his fall and therefore what we know as dinosaurs expired with that. That's option A. Option B, which I kind of alluded to earlier, is the concept that what we know as dinosaurs are part of that animal kingdom that when God destroyed the earth in Genesis 6-9 in Noah's flood, they were a part of those entities that we know animals go extinct all the time on this side. Here's the reality, and I'm not avoiding your question, the reality is whether you choose A or B, God created and God destroyed. I mean I'm not trying to be overly simplistic but going back to when we go to Genesis 1 and 1:2, I know there are people who like to put great chasms of time between those two verses. I'm not interested in the time element, I'm interested in the theological element because you do realize that Satan is called the great deceiver, the old serpent, he didn't start that way but he ends that way, and we have to discover when and where did that happen because there are more questions between Genesis 1:3 and Genesis 1:25 than we could ever imagine.

I'll go ahead and throw some out. Y'all ready? I'll go ahead. I'm going to give you fodder. Why did God give them a garden? Why didn't he give him the whole place? I mean, seriously. If everything's perfect, give them the whole thing. Why did Cain say, "I'm scared somebody's going to hurt me?" Who's he talking about if we don't have fallen

entities? Does that make sense? Now, I'm not being condescending, I'm just being... I could give y'all about 1,200 questions about Genesis 1 and we'd never leave the chapter because there are that many questions. Why singular in verse 1 and not further on? Why do we have formless and void in verse 2 and it alludes to Jeremiah 4 and a judgment? Speaking of Jeremiah 4, why does it say the cities were destroyed? Why does it say that man was destroyed when in Noah's context, man was not destroyed? It can't be the destruction of Noah because the humanity lived, they didn't live in Jeremiah 4.

Yes sir?

[unintelligible]

The very what? The earth is old, I believe you. You can Google it, we'll believe you. I'm just being honest, I'm not doubting you, I just... that was not in my chapter to memorize, I've got Ezra 2. But I can tell you how many descendants Zatu and Zaccai had. Doesn't that just speak to your heart?

[unintelligible]

Why does the Lord do things in threes? Good answer or question. I believe it goes back to the question of humanity in Genesis 1:27, 28, "Let us make him in our own image, after our own likeness." God is one God, three persons, Father, Son, Holy Spirit, right? So therefore, three is a critical thing. It's kind of the nature of who he is. He is one but expressed in three persons. I don't know you would be shocked. We would all, I am amazed at how many things come in threes. Whether it's the three heavens, whether it's the three waters, whether it's, I'll go ahead and just get real nerdy on you, do you know that your Old Testament is divided into law, writings, prophets, your New Testament, gospels, specific, general letters. We even divide the Bible into threes. There were three languages to write the Bible, Hebrew, Aramaic, and English. Do you notice how often this happens? It occurs all the time. What did Jesus say, "On the," oh, I don't know, "third day I'm going to raise from the dead." You do realize it could have been four, could have been five. Why'd he pick three? In other words, we keep seeing this context over and over and over again. If you get into the weeds of science, again, I'm not a scientist, but you'll discover how much scientific observation is expressed in threes. It's all over the place. It's almost as if God created it with purpose. I'm just saying.

Yes ma'am.

[unintelligible]

Genesis 3. The serpent, we are introduced to the serpent. Great question. Now let me repeat it, soft spoken. In Genesis 3:1, we're introduced to the serpent, that's our first introduction to him, and he is described as one who is more deceptive than any other. We get to verse 14 of the same chapter, and God condemns him to being upon his belly, right, in all the earth. Why is it, your question, why is it we interpret he is a quote snake, if that makes sense? The reason we interpret that he is a snake is because of verse 14, but we

forgot to read verse 1. Okay, in verse 14 it says he's gonna crawl in his belly. We've all seen snakes, right? Only good snake is a dead one. Can we all, y'all may not agree with that, but I'm gonna agree with that one, all right? That being said, we have interpreted that way. Here's the issue that we've got, you go back into chapter 3 verse 1 and we have an entity that has a conversation with a woman and she's got no problem entertaining this conversation. Now, by the way, this is not as Disney portrayed in the famous movies of the snakes talking. I would say, because we look at verse 14 apart from verse 1, we mess it up because when you get to 2 Corinthians chapter 11, beginning verse 14, it says "Marvel not that Satan transforms himself," he transforms himself, "into an angel of light." Okay, that's interesting. So Satan can disguise himself as an angel, right? Every angel in your Bible is described in the form of a man. An angel of light which means a good one, a positive one. And I'm going to, I'm gonna come to the defense of all the ladies in the place out there. In Genesis chapter 3, it is Eve who dialogues with the serpent, okay? It is. That's the one having the dialogue. Eve was not talking to a snake. I think, based on scripture, she was talking to what appeared to be a glorious, beautiful, angelic creation because last time I checked, the Bible says we've entertained angels unaware, have we not? We didn't know we were even talking to them. Every angel appears as a man in the Bible. If he can transform himself into an angel of light, a serpent, by the way, I call this my square rectangle analogy, did you know that a square is a rectangle but a rectangle is not always a square. A snake is always a serpent, a serpent is not always a snake. And when you get to later in the book of Revelation chapter 12, it calls Satan that old serpent. That's his description that's given.

So I think, and this goes back to the whole Genesis, let's not just ask the what questions, let's ask the why questions. So go back to verse 14, so why would he be on his belly? We take that as a snake, right? We go to verse 15. What does verse 15 say? That the seed of the woman whom we know as Jesus Christ the Messiah will crush his head. Basically the Bible is telling us for the rest of time, no matter what happens, no matter what it looks like, Jesus is always above him, more powerful than him, and will crush him. He's always on his belly. So again it goes back to serpent not always a snake, but is a serpent, on the belly, what is the picture that we have there in light of verse 1, if that helps. So at the end of the day, I'm gonna be honest, I really think it does women a disservice to say that they got tricked by a snake talking to them I'm sorry ladies. To me it just sounds awful, right?

Now here's the thing, the Bible says in 1 Timothy chapter 2, the woman was deceived. She was deceived. What is Satan's title? The great deceiver. Hello, it all matches, right? The woman was deceived. Guys, can I tell you what happened with us? We stupid. I'm serious. The Bible does not say man was deceived. It says the woman was deceived. And so again that's a whole other Pandora. I don't know if that helps a little bit with all that. But again what we're doing here is we're looking at Genesis maybe different than we were taught Genesis because most of the quote pictures, cartoons show a snake. I mean, I've never seen... Now, you know, I like to make fun of flannel boards. I grew up on flannel boards. Y'all remember flannel boards? Please tell me y'all remember flannel boards. Alright. You remember when you took all the little Bible characters and you arranged them up on the flannel board? I've never seen a flannel board, nor have I ever seen a cartoon of the Genesis account with anything but a snake talking to Eve. Every

one of them is a snake, right? And then, he slithers off on his belly. Alright? If that... I struggle with that because it doesn't line up with the Bible. It lines up with tradition and history but I know and you know, if Satan transforms himself into an angel of light, there's been a whole lot of us that have been deceived by Satan because of how he presented the information, not the information itself.

And if he showed up in that garden, by the way, which goes back to all these questions we have about Genesis, why did God give him a garden, not the whole place? At the same time, why did he have access? Have you ever thought about that one? Why did he have access? Okay, that's a great question. I don't know if I know the answer to it, but it's a great question. Why could he even get in? Right? Oh, I know why. Because in Luke chapter 9, Jesus says when Satan fell, he was condemned to the earth. He was there. If he fell before chapter 3, then he's on the earth beforehand. You do realize in the book of Job when God asks, "Hey, where have you been?" What does he say? "Going to and fro in all the earth." That is why in 2 Corinthians chapter 4 verse 4 it says that Satan is the god of this world. I got news for Satan. I doubt he's actually watching tonight, but I got news for him. All that he's in charge of is going to burn up one day. Everything he's fighting for is going to be gone because I've read the last chapter and what has God done? New heaven, new earth, new Jerusalem. And by the way, going full circle, in Genesis chapter 21, when it talks about the new heaven, it doesn't say new heavens. Isn't that interesting? It says new heaven which means, if the new creation is singular, why would not the original one be? Just a question. Have we created more questions than we should?

Yes, sir. In the back, then in the front.

[unintelligible]

Ah, yes. So to the question that in Ezekiel chapter 28, by the way, somebody took Ezekiel 28 in the Bible memorization plan. Kudos to you. Kudos, kudos. Anybody who took Ezekiel, you're good. Thank you. Ezekiel chapter 28, whom we know as Satan, he is described as the cherubim, which by the way is an angelic class, for lack of better terms, over the throne of God. And when you read Ezekiel chapter 1, Ezekiel chapter 2, you'll discover that there's different animals that are used to describe the cherubim. Correct? And the animal that is described in context there is the reptile class. Absolutely. And so therefore it gives cause to the serpent, but not necessarily a snake because guess what? Both would be reptilian, if that makes sense.

Yes sir.

[unintelligible]

Most cosmologists today, they do believe it began with the Big Bang. Here's the question. It's a great question. The majority of cosmologists today believe in a 13, 14, multi-billion year creative narrative, correct? Yet many of them say that God initiated or started the project. His question was, why do theologians struggle with this so much? Go to Mark chapter 13. Let's read the words of Jesus. Mark chapter 13, Jesus is talking about the end

times as he often does. Mark 13 kind of is a parallel to Matthew 24, Luke 21, all of it discourse, etc. He's talking about that time period, you know, we talked about in Revelation the great tribulation this horrible time period that is coming I want you to hear the words of Jesus, okay? God, not a theologian, not Abraham, this is God. Verse 19, "For in those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be." Jesus Christ twice in one verse used a word which means to bring something from nothing instantaneously. So the reason theologians have a problem is, if you claim this multi-billion year creative narrative, you discount the accuracy of Jesus' analysis.

[unintelligible]

What do you mean, why? Great. If the Big Bang was initiated by God, it's instant. Great. So Genesis 1:1 was the Big Bang. Same word is used in verse 27, and it wasn't a 13-year billion process in that one. Do you see the inconsistencies? We want it to be long in this verse, but we want it to be short in this verse. We want it to be long in this chapter, we want it to be short in this chapter. The reason, and by the way, I hate to use the word us here, but us theologians, okay, we have a famous analogy that says all the scientists are trying to get their heads in the clouds, and one day when they get there, they're gonna find we've been there the whole time. Y'all let that settle for just a moment, all right?

Again, at the end of the day, I understand, there's all these perspectives. We can go look at the telescopes. We can go look at the microscopes. We can go look at all these different things. The reason why you see such a staunch stance from theologians really isn't about time, it's about the nature of Jesus. If God doesn't know what God did, then how can we trust him only when he promises what he's going to do with us? That's the problem. It's about Jesus. By the way, at the end of the day, it should really all be about him anyway. And I got news for y'all. Okay, even though I've said what I've said and defended what I've defended, if I get to heaven one day, and God says, "Meyers, got news for you. I took 70 billion years." I'm gonna go, "That's okay, can I see Jesus?" It's gonna be okay.

[unintelligible]

Yeah, I know that. But again, it goes back to, again, I know I'm not a cosmologist. I get all this. The reason you have such strong stances from theological perspectives, it's not about time, it's about the nature of Jesus and how these descriptions can conflict with what he said. Jesus used a word which means to bring something from nothing instantaneously twice. So last time I checked, something from 14 billion years is not instantaneous. So was Jesus confused? Was Jesus ignorant? I don't think so. I think Jesus is a better cosmologist than Stephen Hawking. I'm just going on record there because one's God and one's not.

We got 53 seconds, make it quick. It opens up, we just read it earlier in 2 Peter 3 about the earth being in and out of the water. It does open up the possibility to our friend's

previous question that it was actually created with the age, but yet instantaneously. It opens up that window.

I heard a female voice, we're down to 23 seconds. Great question that we don't have time to answer. We'll lead off with it next week. Here's your lead off, you ready? If Satan was thrown down here first, why were we created in the mix of all that mess? We're gonna be in Genesis until Jesus comes back.

All right, here we go. Let's pray.

Lord Jesus, on a very sincere, humble, serious note, Lord, I know, God, you have given us all we need to know. We confess that on our best days, we don't know half of what we should know and God, I pray that in the midst of all the questions, all the differences, which are rightfully defended, God, I pray that you would keep our eyes on you, the author and the finisher of our faith. It is in the name of Jesus we pray. Amen.