

The Naked Bible Podcast 2.0

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“Q&A 3”

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With

**Residential Layman
Trey Stricklin**

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TS: Welcome to the Naked Bible Podcast, Episode 53, Q&A 3. I'm your layman, Trey Stricklin, and he's the scholar, Dr. Michael Heiser. Hey Mike, how are you doing?

MSH: Very good. Hope you're doing well Trey.

TS: I'm doing pretty good. This episode we have about eight questions and thereabouts so that's pretty exciting. I just want to remind everybody who sent in your questions last week and this week, I'm saving those so please continue to send me your questions. We probably have enough questions for another one or two shows so we will certainly get to them in time. So feel free to e-mail me at treystricklin@gmail.com. You can get that e-mail on the website [Naked Bible podcast.com](http://NakedBiblePodcast.com), and with that Mike, you just want to jump into these questions?

MSH: Sure, let's just get it going.

TS: Ok. Well, the first one is from Mike, and with all of the books on Revelation, what are some good textually accurate sources for study you might suggest. He finds it difficult to find books that don't lock into a single view.

MSH: Well that's pretty normal. I presume by textually accurate that the questioner means something like something that engages the original text. In other words, something that sticks to the original text, not just a translation. If he's talking about textual criticism stuff, what the right text is, part of what I'll answer here will deal with that, but I'm assuming that he means commentaries that engage the original text as opposed to English. And I'm sympathetic here because it's basically impossible to find a commentary on Revelation that doesn't take or least favor one particular eschatological view. So my advice on a question like this is always have more than one and have more than one that is seriously engaging the original text. So you have to realize interpreting Revelation is driven by presuppositions, and nobody can really sort of avoid that.

And so you can have various commentators, various scholars engage the text real seriously and come out at different places because where you come out in revelation is really driven by presuppositions. Is there a hard and fast distinction between Israel and the church, for instance. That's one of them. How should we interpret Old Testament prophecy? Do we have this idea of sort of rigid literalism one-to-one correspondences or don't we? Questions like that. When was the book written? Is it pre-70 or is it after 70 A.D.? None of those things are self-evident on the surface and so scholars have had to make decisions about the text before they even look at it, before they even get there. And so that's why you can have serious people come out at different places when comes to interpreting the book of Revelation, often more so than practically any other book.

Here's one of them. Should I read the book as a linear chronology of events or should I read it as a series of events that are repeated four or five times throughout the book in different language? Again, depending on how you answer that question, what you think the right answer is there, you're going to come out with totally different end times scenes, end times scenarios. So before you even get into the nuts and bolts of exegesis, you have these higher-level

presuppositional things to deal with. Now with that in mind, telling listeners and me to have more than one my preference here, even though I'm not where this guy's at eschatologically, at least not totally. I've said before I don't like any of the views, any of the systems I should say, of eschatology because they all have, I think they all are on target on some things and they're all I think off target on some things.

They all have something to contribute but I don't I don't feel compelled to follow any of them. So when I recommend, my first choice would be Greg Beale's New International Greek Text Commentary. This is a massive Revelation commentary. I think it's like 1200 pages. It's a huge volume and you have to have some facility in Greek to even use this at all because the Greek is not transliterated. It's going to be Greek texts. What's great about Beale though, even if you don't have Greek, what's great about his commentary that distances it from any other commentary on Revelation is that he has thoroughly engaged the Second Temple Jewish literature, in other words, the Intertestamental Jewish literature leading up to the New Testament and up to the writing of the book of Revelation. So all of that stuff in apocryphal literature, pseudepigrapha like Enoch or Jubilees, the Testaments of the 12 patriarchs, or whatever, Qumran material, Beale has been through all of it and where it can be brought to bear on analysis, he makes an attempt to do that.

So Beale teaches at Wheaton. I think that he's actually in the New Testament department. Most of his work has been on the relationship of the New Testament and the Old Testament. So this is sort of his bread-and-butter, this kind of analysis, really taking Second Temple literature seriously and trying to bring it to bear on the book of Revelation. So even if you don't know, you can't read the Greek in there, he'll discuss lots of other texts from this period, the way Jewish thinkers Jewish writers were thinking about, things that get discussed in the book Revelation, themes and motifs and phrases and all the way back in the Daniel and other stuff that's like Daniel and Enoch and all that kind of stuff. So Beale is worth having just for that reason alone. Beale, he describes himself as an idealist amillennialist. So he's not going to believe in a rapture or anything like this.

He's going to be obviously affirm the second coming. He's not a full preterist or anything like that. So he'll tell you what he is and what he isn't. he discusses, in sort of an introduction, he discusses the different approaches to the book and he tells you where he's at. But he's definitely worth having just because of the grunt work that he's done. If you want something that is pretty much dyed in the wool, pre-trib and pre-millennial rapture kind of position, probably the best you can do here is Bob Thomas' book, Robert Thomas. I think it's published by Moody and I also think it's two volumes on the book of Revelation but it's is pretty much straight down the line pre-trib pre-millennial rapture kind of stuff. Thomas rarely engages Second Temple literature or anything like that, which I view as is deeply flawed. But if you're just looking sort of for a defense of that view that has some exegetical grounding, I don't know if you can do better than Thomas.

For years the old standard was John Walverdt's commentary on Revelation, but Thomas' far exceeds that in sort of textual level detail, that kind of thing. So I think if you had both of those unless you're really just turned off by the pre-trib pre-mil view then I wouldn't necessarily bother with Thomas. You could probably just get by with Beale or maybe something in the New International Commentary series or the New American Commentary series. That's actually sort of a Southern Baptist publication or series, and so I'm not sure that that's pre-trib pre-mil. It might be but it's probably going to be at least a pre-millennial, the New American Commentary series, whoever did that volume. But series like that, New International Commentary, New

American Commentary, Word Biblical Commentary, that's actually in three volumes, David Aune, AUNE. That one is not going to be pre-trib pre-mil. It's also going to be very deeply informed by Second Temple literature, Greco-Roman stuff. That's very much worth getting. But that one too, it's going to be like Beale. You have to be able to do read some things in Greek because it's not transliterated.

New International it will be. New American Commentary the Greek will be transliterated into English characters. But there are some good ones but if you're looking for something that doesn't take a view, good luck with that. You just not going to find it. What you could do is there's a book Zondervan puts it out on the book of Revelation, four views, Zondervan has this four view series, and so it will give you overviews and defenses of four particular approaches and then the other three writers in the book respond to each of the other positions that they don't hold. So it's kind of an interactive discussion. So if you wanted something that sort of can take you down all the roads but it's not actually a commentary, that would be a good choice, Revelation four views is a book you can get.

TS: Our next question is from Cory. What is the clearest understanding of the appropriate use of force to defend oneself or family that harmonizes scenarios from the Old Testament up through the early church and how it relates to or differs from the threat of harm for simply being Christian?

MSH: I don't know of any command that makes self-defense a sin, even self defense by the use of force a sin. People probably would think of the 'turn the other cheek' passage. The context for that is largely self-preservation and I think you can take that choice. But what I'm trying to say is that any kind of self-defense doesn't have to be a sort of first resort, and so I look at the turn the other cheek man as leaving the door open to not defending yourself at all or at the very least not having it be sort of a reflex, first response kind of thing. When it pertains to other people, the text doesn't say turn everybody else's cheek, especially if it's someone in your family. There's the whole biblical principle of when it's in your power to do good for someone you ought to do it from the book of James.

I would suggest that saving somebody's life is probably a good thing to do for them and if that requires the use of force then I don't see anything that forbids that. So I don't see the turn the other cheek thing as sort of this cut and dried, no nuancing possible sort of statement. I think there is some nuancing there. I don't of any principle that says you Christians must be willing to be abused at all times, places and manners as well. But what I think the point of the command is that you're not combative. You're not the aggressor. This isn't the first response kind of thing. You're not looking for a fight, that sort of thing. Jesus did say, and I think this command largely gets misunderstood. I've not come to bring peace. I've come to bring a sword. He tells the disciples at one point to go out and take a sword with them. Those are not offenses weapon sort of endorsements.

In other words, Jesus doesn't say, well, I'm here to pick a fight and I want you guys to go out and pick fights as well. The whole idea behind those things is that Jesus knew that when he came, when he started preaching who he was, and he knew where it was going to lead, he knew it would result in upheaval and persecution. He knew the early church what was going to be targeted. And so he actually advocates in those examples having something with you to defend yourself. But what I don't want to see is I don't want to see statements like that taken out of

context is as far as this is our first response. Somebody comes after us because we're Christians we're going to go beat the crap out of them. That isn't the point at all. It's a very defensive posture.

It's not the first response. And these things do have a context and I don't think that the point of them is either be the aggressor or \be the doormat unto death. If it's just you, you can make that decision. I don't think you're committing suicide necessarily or something like that. But I certainly think there is good reason to believe, from the Gospels and some of the statements I've just alluded to, that you are allowed to defend yourself. Think back in the Old Testament. There are plenty of examples where God expected his people to defend themselves against their enemies when they were threatened with attack or serious bodily harm or death. You're not forbidden from building fences. You're not forbidden from having standing armies. I mean you even have the avenger of blood kind of thing, which is a little bit different. But it's this notion that God isn't repulsed by using physical force for some appropriate purpose. So the idea of physical force itself is not repugnant to God.

So I think the point of a lot of this language is it can't be used to support aggression or a first response kind of reaction as opposed to defending yourself as kind of a last resort or to protect others. Another problem is that Christians somehow think the use of force might be okay for less than severe bodily threat. When I think use of force, when I see it discussed in Scripture, it is not just a defense against, oh, my city government made another regulation and I don't like it so I'm going to go down there and beat the tar out of somebody, or I'm going to threaten their family and say you can't do that. This is a terrible law. This is persecuting my church so I'm going to threaten you with bodily harm. This is absurd but I mention it because we do have some of this thinking in the church.

The church has somehow been conflated with the Sons of liberty or something in the revolutionary period that were being oppressed by the King, so let's go burn somebody house down, destroy their property or something like that. These are absurd conflations and I do see them in places in the church. We have to see them for what they are. They're conflating two different things. They're combining two different things that shouldn't be combined. So I think we have to guard against that. What I'm talking about, what I think the intent of the question is, is this situation where you have severe bodily harm, perhaps threat of death kind of thing, can you defend yourself, and I think, yeah, you can certainly defend yourself. This whole idea about authority, Romans 13, we're quick to quote that. But Romans 13, of course, presupposes that the government is doing good things. It's punishing the wicked and rewarding the person who's obedient.

We often aren't in those situations and I'm not going to say that, I'm not going to contradict Paul and say those powers that be aren't really ordained by God. I think they are ordained by God. No government authority, let's just go back and think about the book of Daniel. Daniel actually has these discussions when he's interpreting Nebuchadnezzar's dream. No governing authority gets to where it is unless God allows it. God sets up kings and tears them down. So it's true that every governing authority is where it is because God has allowed that. That doesn't mean that God endorses it. It doesn't mean he's happy with it. It doesn't even mean that it's not under wrath. In the Old Testament, God used Assyria. He used Babylon to punish his own people. But they were also under wrath. Their judgment was pending and it was going to be even worse than what he was using them for. So think we need a contextualize Romans 13 a little bit.

The Apostles themselves said we ought to obey God rather than man. Go back in the Old Testament, you have the Egyptian midwives. They were blessed by God because they didn't kill the babies. Daniel's friends, they didn't bow down to the image of Nebuchadnezzar and the Lord saved them when their own lives were in peril. Obadiah, he sort of a forgotten figure, not the one the prophetic books named after but during the time of Elijah, Obadiah was the guy who hid the prophets of the Lord from right under Ahab's nose. God rewarded him for that. These are all resistances to governing authority. And what I'm saying is that they're not contradictory to Romans 13. The rule of thumb is when a governing authority mandates or tries to force you to sin against the higher authority, the highest authority, which be God, you're under no obligation to obey that.

I'm sorry Lord I had to go worship Baal because the King said so. That's not acceptable. God isn't going to say, oh well, I'm going to give you a pass for that one. No, that's not acceptable. And so I do think in Scripture we have the principle that there is a time when Christians are not only allowed to resist that sort of authority but they are sort of expected to resist that authority. And you might be in a context where you can defend yourself. I a lot of these contexts of course you can't. And you should be willing to suffer if you're suffering for the right things, as to Peter so often said in his writings because Jesus suffered. But you may also be in the context where you can protect yourself. And I see glimpses of this and in the Gospels where Jesus warns his followers that this is what it would come to, so take a sword with you. Be able to defend yourself, to fight off your enemies. He didn't just go out and say when somebody comes at you with the sword, just lay down there and say stab me somewhere and make it quick, that kind of thing.

We don't see that but we never see the use of the sword or the use of force as a first response or in aggressive mode where something less than life and limb is at stake. So I think you can look at Scriptural examples and put together a picture of how it's appropriate to respond in certain situations. We can sit here and theorize and do the philosophizing about how it's best to stay out of harm's way, and sure, that's good. But you're not always going to be able to do that. I used to tell my kids, and they're older now, they're basically grown. But I would still tell them look, I want you to know that if there is a guy come into the room or through the window in your road and you start yelling and dad comes into the room and he's trying to get you, I want you to know that dad will kill that guy before he lets him take you.

I want you to know that your life is more important than that guy's life, that I won't stop and say I could probably protect my daughter here if I kill this guy but I can't figure out a way to do it. Oh well it's just too bad. I wish I could have found a less violent way to protect my kids. I wanted my kids to know that dad was their defender and he would do whatever it took. And I think we're obligated to do that in extreme circumstances, because if it's in the power of your hand to do good that I think is a pretty easy definition of doing good, not allowing my daughter to get abducted, that would be good to her. I'm going to do it, so that that's how I think about that whole subject. And I now that was a round robin kind of thing but hopefully in there you found an answer, some direction.

TS: Mike, when you're defending them, are you going full-blown MMA or old school boxer?

MSH: I'm doing whatever is necessary to disable the person as fast as possible.

TS: The next question is from Slash and he says in Acts, we have visions, dreams and appearances of messengers or Jesus. In the Bible Study Magazine, we had Beth Moore who claims God has personally shown her via direct revelation “visions”. Slash also gets Voice of the Martyrs magazine and he’s read of Muslims coming to salvation by direct revelation of the appearance of Christ, who states he is the way. Other testimony through dreams and lastly, he’s had a personal messenger by dream vision appearance declaring Christ as Messiah. As good as the salvation story sounds today, he doesn't see them as possible for today. Not that God can't, and Beth Moore, her visions for new revelation, can you help his understanding of all of this?

MSH: Well, I don't see how you could not see them as possible and then in the same sort of breath turn around and say you can't say God can't. If you can't say God can't then he can, and therefore, it would be possible for today. I don't know if that's just not worded really well because it is sort of mutually contradictory there. And that actually reflects my own thoughts on this. So the short answer is God or Jesus can basically do what he wants. He can do what he wants to guide people. I try not to put the words God and can't into too many sentences. I mean there are some that I could think of that could do that but I try not to put them into too many sentences.

I think God is free to do what he wants to communicate what he wants communicated in any given point. If he does that, he’s not going to contradict this thing that he spent literally centuries using people to record and preserve for us, namely this thing we call the Bible. He’s not going to be in the business of, well, I spent all that time producing that Bible thing but now I’m going to give Joe Schmo over here a vision that contradicts that totally. We’ll just see what he does with that. I mean God isn’t impish. He's not going to be self-contradictory. The messaging is going to be consistent. Now what I hear in this question, and I'll be honest, what I feel in a lot of this, is this notion of opening Pandora's box, you know like, everybody has visions and everybody can just say God led me to do XYZ and all that other stuff. And I'm real sensitive to that because I have very low view of that kind of thing. I would say, longer answer, I can't really think of any Scriptural passage I could produce and actually whip it out to God and tell God he's violated his own word by sending a messenger to someone or appearing to someone.

However, I think the line that needs to be drawn is that binding revelation, that's a key thought, binding revelation on the entire church is no longer happening today. Apostolic authority ended with the 12, the original 12 disciples. Even when they had to replace Judas, it was always, hey, is there somebody here with us that's been with us from the very beginning who walked around with us and listened to the Lord. There's all this connection to incarnation, the period of incarnation and that ended when the last of those people, John as far as we know, the last of them died. You'll see the word apostle used elsewhere in the New Testament. It just means people who are sent, whether they're missionaries or pastors or whatever, that kind of thing. But even the Apostles, this collective, they're still the 12 that are singled out because they were different.

And the reason they were different is because they lived and listened and were taught by Jesus himself, even Paul. Paul sort of refers to himself as one born out of due time. When he defends his apostleship, that is always the basis. The Lord came to me. The Lord appeared to me. The Lord taught me personally over the course of the X number of years. He has to connect what he's saying with the incarnation. There was just this nonnegotiable sense that that was the crucial element. We don't have that today. So frankly, I'm not listening to anybody that claims to

have received any binding revelation for me in one of their dreams, or in some experience or whatnot.

I'm not going to say God can't do that for the individual, provide some direction, but as soon as that individual starts pretending to be an apostle or you're pretending to be some for prophetic figure with binding information for all believers everywhere, that's how we review the Bible, I think there's no scriptural basis for that at all. Apostolic authority ended with the 12. Old Testament prophets and apostles, they had these sorts of visitations, but they were divine revelation that was binding for the whole people of God, which eventually winds up in our Bibles. So I'm not going to pick on Beth Moore here. I don't put a lot of stock in somebody like Beth Moore telling me she's had a vision but I wouldn't insist that she didn't either. What I want to hear from her is that this was personal.

I got a blessing from it. I felt directed in some way. I felt that it was guidance and I felt like I needed to obey and I did and the Lord blessed it. I'm fine with that because she's not telling me she's a prophet for our time and she now has information binding on the entire believing community that somehow escaped notice when God produced this thing we call the Bible. At that point, I'm just going to tune her out. The Muslim example as I recall this is part of the question. I have heard about these things and there are some YouTube videos of it. And I know people who've traveled with certain groups in Muslim countries that have gone to visit one or two of the people who are now pastoring churches in these places who had such encounters. I don't really have any problem with that either. If God or the Lord wants to sort of invade that person's life, and I think a lot of those kind of situations are actually what you see you sort of mimics what you had in the first century where you have sort of a divine encounter that steps into a person's life to call them to ministry or to validate the message of the gospel. We're in the book of Acts.

We see this all the time. They're not claiming that I have some new information outside of the Bible that we need to append to the Bible. Now I'm God's prophet here of the believing community everywhere. We have people saying, look, I was a Muslim. I was this. I was that. I was an unbeliever. The Lord showed up and said basically repent and believe. I'm the way and they obey. They go start a church. They put themselves at terrible personal risk to do so. They now understand the gospel. They know what it is. They preach it. I'm not going to say God couldn't have done that or Jesus couldn't have done that. I think that would be way beyond the line for me to say. So I'm very open to these sorts of things. I would classify myself sort of as cautiously open and the cautious part is, I what to know, I want to hear from the person relating this incident to me, this experience. I want to know that they're processing it in such a way that they're not presenting themselves as an apostolic authority. If this is something personal, fine. I can't whip out a verse that would say, God, you shouldn't have done that or God, if you did that, we're going to have talk about that later because there this verse over here.

That's absurd. God can do what he wants, but when he does act, he's not going to act in a manner contrary to this thing that he invested so many lives in to produce for us that we call Scripture. So it's not going to be any sort of contradicting message. And by the way, people might be wondering, Mike, what if you had an experience? I would process it exactly the same way. If I had my own experience, I'd keep it to myself. The Lord already knows because he and I have had these conversations. The Lord already knows I'd need like like repetition for me to be convinced of anything that this just wasn't a random dream or something like that because I don't know if I process any experience correctly. I'm not saying that these things are about

intelligence or intuition or anything like this. I'm just being honest with God honest and honest with listeners here.

If I had some experience tonight, tomorrow, today, whatever, I'm not going to go claim any authority for it because I don't know that I'm processing it correctly. I really don't. I'd have to be omniscient to know. I would try to discern some personal direction from it, some reason for it. But I wouldn't go out, write a book, and get on Oprah to promote myself as some super apostle now or something like that. I'm not going to go and claim I have access to divine knowledge. Those things are silly, they're absurd. I think they can be really sinister too. So if it was me, I'm just telling you, this is not going to be a shingle I hang out because I don't know if I can process it correctly.

TS: Okay, the next question is from Travis. Can you clarify your view of the timing of the events related to the fallen sons of God? They are not in prison at the time of Babel clearly because Psalm 92 references their corrupt administration of the nations.

MSH: that should be Psalm 82.

TS: But they are imprisoned by the time of the resurrection. If Christ is sent to proclaim victory references them, does Daniel's "Prince of Persia" reference indicate that they are not yet imprisoned by the time of exile?

MSH: The question is conflating two different but related things. The original offending sons of God, Genesis 6, were imprisoned in all biblical or Second Temple Jewish traditions that I know of. Second Temple literature, Peter and Jude presuppose that. So the original offenders in the Genesis 6 incident are imprisoned in the abyss. There are different terms for it but they're in jail so to speak, and that's one group. The other group, the sons of God who were allotted to the nations and vice versa in Deuteronomy 32, and their judgment is referred to in Psalm 82, that's a different group. These are not the same groups. You get the same terminology, sons of God are used in both, but the sons of God of the Babel event, the Deuteronomy 32 worldview, are different sons of God than the ones Genesis 6.

Just because the same title is used doesn't mean we're talking about the same entities. So these are the ones, the ones that are set over the nations, these, the ones under eschatological judgment in Psalm 82. They will lose their dominion, something I place on the day the Lord before the consummation of the kingdom and a new earth. The original offenders are apparently released sometime prior to the day of the Lord, consummation. I personally think that's the point of Revelation 9, the description of the abyss there and what's left out of it. And that isn't unique to Revelation 9. You'll have other passages and Second Temple literature talk about the release of the original offending Genesis 6 sons of God. The language there will vary among the text.

It will say something like they're in the abyss until the end of the age or the time of the end or something like that. And that's language that specifically relates to the day the Lord, this sort of final climactic confrontation where all that's wrong is set right. The righteous are vindicated. That we know is from the New Testament precipitates is a precursor to the new heavens and new earth. And that would make sense because what happens in the new earth according to the book of Revelation, to him that overcomes, believers who are the reconstituted

sons and daughters of God, the reconstituted children of God in the Council, the reconstituted Council, they are put over the nations. They displace the corrupt sons of God that were under judgment that have been dealt with at the Day of the Lord. They take their place under God's authority, under God's rule.

So this is part of the sharing of the kingdom between the risen and returned Christ and his people. This is this joint rulership idea but it actually says they will be put over the nations. That language is supposed to take us mentally back to, well, who's over the nations now? It's these guys. This is there eschatological judgment. So to wrap it up this question, these are two different groups. So when we conflate them it creates a kind of confusion that's sort of part and parcel of the way that question was worded. So in the end, all human and divine enemies of God are judged at the Day of the Lord regardless of the chronology of their rebellions, regardless of when they screwed up.

Genesis 6, that's pretty clear, but the corruption of the sons of God over the nations, we're just told that they go astray. They seduce the Israelites, whatnot, all this sort of language. We're not given a very precise chronology of that. It's after the first group but no matter when they screwed up, no matter when they went into rebellion, the rebellious posture against God, they will be dealt with at the Day of the Lord.

TS: The next question's from Carleton. One of the documents linked in the last Q&A, it gives a date for the writing of Daniel as 167-164 BC. This is problematic in that the book itself seems to claim that it should be dated much earlier, somewhere around 600 BC. He wants to know what you believe about the dating of the book, and then he has a follow-up saying that if it's the former, it's problematic that Jesus would have actually referred to Daniel as a prophet as it would seem that much of what is claimed is prophecy what had actually occurred in the past. If it's the latter, what would you make of criticism of the book that claims that it doesn't seem Daniel knew the period well?

MSH: Well, the 167-164 BC, let's just say second century BC date for Daniel, that is the dominant view. Most people who hold that view, it's fair to say, would be theologically liberal. And when I use the L Word there, I'm referring to people who would not put any stock in something like predictive prophecy. There are evangelicals who do put stock in predictive prophecy, that take the late view, again, the second century BC view. My personal position is that I don't really care. I'll try to unravel why then tell the questioner sort of where I'm at. Broadly speaking, I don't really care because the events of the book, when you read the book, the events of the book as the book is written are situated in the sixth century BC, and nobody doubts that.

That's the setting of the book. But that doesn't mean that that's when the book was written. They're two entirely different things. It's like you have the same thing going on with the book of Job. People want to make these arguments about Job predates Moses and the patriarchs and all this. Well, there's no mention of the law, no mention of the covenant. Well, so what? If I were writing a book today, I could easily set it up in the pre-patriarchal period and avoid those things. But the fact of the matter is I'd be writing it today. And in antiquity, you have the same thing. People were capable of writing books set in different time periods than the one in which they were living. In Job's case, there's lots of other reasons why the law or the covenant might not be mentioned.

Job itself is actually not set in Canaan. It's in the Transjordan. That could be a reason because we're not really living in the "holy land proper" where the rest of the Israelites are. Job is not an Israelite. He's from the land of Uz. Again, he's Transjordanian, doesn't mean he's not related to the Israelites because you get Edomites over there and whatnot. There's all sorts of factors that could explain why the arguments really undermine the arguments people use for a book like Job. My whole point in using that as an analogy is you can write a book in one period and situate it in terms of its content in other. That's easy. I could do it now. So, on one level, everybody sort of recognizes and agrees on the setting of the book. What they don't agree on, obviously, is when the thing was written.

So you have an early date, 6th century BC, that is sort of the traditional debate or excuse me, traditional date, what people would refer to pejoratively as the pre-critical date, like anybody who accepts a 6th century date for the date that it was written can't be thinking critically. Well, that's just ridiculous because there are lots of scholars who do, who take the 6th century date as the date of writing. And there are other scholars who take the later date, 2nd century BC. This whole debate really focuses on several things. It's not just about predictive prophecy. If you're theologically liberal, you're going to naturally be biased against that. And so you're going to pretty much gravitate toward the late date anyway. But there are other things going on.

There are linguistic issues in the book. For instance, in the Aramaic of the book, you will get features, either vocabulary, grammatical points, syntactical points, that are typical of late Aramaic, later Aramaic than Imperial Aramaic. Imperial Aramaic would be the period in which the book is set so you would think if the book was written in that period, in the period in which the events are set, that the Aramaic used would conform to Imperial Aramaic that is known from lots of other material outside the Aramaic portions of the Bible. But that isn't always the case. And, in fact, in some cases it's clearly not. You have late Aramaic features in the book. And so the question arises, well, how do they get there? Does that mean that the book was written later, because if it was written later, somebody can be very easily use old Aramaic because that exists already.

You would just sort of look up how an old Aramaic writer put this and then you put that in your book and makes it look in authentic in terms of if you were trying to convince someone it was written during a certain period is what you would do, to give it that flavor. So the style would actually match what the events of the book. I'm not talking about a deception here. I'm talking about technique when you're writing to just give it that older flavor. Is that the way we account for the differences? Well, who knows? You can go either way. There are whole books, whole monographs written on the Aramaic of Daniel, comparing the Aramaic of Daniel with Aramaic of other periods. And frankly, the linguistic arguments in both directions have produced a stalemate.

There are ways to explain late features and early features in the book. There are ways to explain late features if you think the book was written early. There are ways to explain early features if you think the book was written late, so it has really gone nowhere. For someone who's interested in this, probably the best survey you can get on this would be either John Collins's more recent Daniel commentary, in the Hermeneia series. It goes into this a little bit. Delbert Hillers in the Anchors. I think it's in the Anchors. No that's a journal article. Hillers, who was a professor for a number of years at Johns Hopkins, actually wrote a good bit in defense of the Aramaic of the book being situatable in the early date. So I don't know that he actually took the

early date but he has a lot of good work there showing that, hey, the Aramaic itself doesn't invalidate the idea of an early composition. So you get to get defenses on both sides, but in my judgment, the whole thing's a stalemate.

Another issue is apocalyptic genre. Now this one to me is actually more substantive than the Aramaic, the linguistic issues. Apocalyptic literature is a known genre and a widely known genre. Now try to follow what I'm going to say here because if you've. I'm going to try to say this well. I may goof it up, who knows. We're just winging it here. But apocalyptic genre has to do with, as you would think, as you would suspect, the end times, the end of the world, the end of all things. Within that kind of literature in the ancient world, there are certain features of it like divine messengers, where angels come and they give someone information about the future. Typically, this angelic message is going to talk about human history being divided into periods, specific periods, and there will be symbols attached to those periods.

If you're thinking, well, that kind of sounds like what Daniel's doing, Daniel 2, Daniel 7. Yeah, it does. But the problem is, is that overwhelmingly, and some would say exclusively, but overwhelmingly those specific features, angelic mediators, the division appears in history, the dramatic ending where you have sort of cosmic celestial events that are associated with the end of the world, overwhelmingly the examples of that genre are late, second century and later. And so lots of scholars feel compelled to look at Daniel and say this just fits so well in the second century BC or later that it is sort of a no-brainer. This is where belongs. This is where it should go. You have other apocalyptic literature from that period that really builds off Daniel, parallels Daniel in significant ways.

That actually introduces a little mini debate. Well, if Daniel was written at the same time with this other person who wrote this other book, would they have had access to Daniel? If it was written early, they certainly would have access to Daniel. But if they're sort of contemporaries, would one guy really have access to this material so that they could sort of sound alike and look-alike, and he could borrow from Daniel, and how would that work if they only lived like five or ten years apart from each other? How would that work? Whereas, if it was much older, you go to the library of Alexandria, you're probably going to pull out the Daniel scroll there. You could access the material a little more easily. At least it seems to make more sense.

But in terms of the genre, overwhelmingly the clear examples of this are late. Now the problem with that is there's a good bit of material in Daniel related to apocalyptic themes that has its roots in Mesopotamian literature. The Mesopotamian literature's a lot older than the second century BC. So then that raises the question, how would the writer have access to this because if he's running in the second century, where would he get that? Just go to a library, just go to Babylon, just go to Alexandria. There it is so that explains that. Well, it really doesn't because what it shows, even if you could make that argument, it shows that that the kind of ideas that go into that genre predated the second century BC. And so in theory at least, it's very possible that the book could have been composed earlier than the second century BC. There are whole books written on this, too.

So I hold the whole Daniel issue as something of a stalemate. Now, before I sort of land somewhere here, this notion of well, if it's the early date or, excuse me, if it's the later date then it's problematic because how could Jesus call Daniel a prophet, and what about Daniel knowing the period well? Well frankly, lots of people, even conservative evangelicals, have problems with the way Daniel knows the period. And the crux of the matter is Daniel 11. Because if you're a

second century dater, everything that Daniel's writing you acknowledge openly. He's just on the button. When you get to Daniel 11, it's like well, he's living right here at this time and he screws this up. It just doesn't fit, and they're right. The stuff in Daniel 11 doesn't conform to the stuff that's happening in the second century. And so the critic, who takes the later date and who has no time for predictive prophecy, would say something like Daniel just messed up here. He did a good job but he just messed up.

Well, for someone who has a higher view of Scripture than that, what do evangelicals typically, and most of these take the early date, what do they do with it when you get to Daniel 11? You're going to say, well, Daniel's prophecy quits tracking on the events intertestamentally, and projects into the future period of the Antichrist. Now I'm not saying that's an escape valve but it sort of is. And I'm not saying it's not legitimate because there are things in Daniel 11 that do point to the future, namely Jesus, who lives later than the second century BC, quotes Daniel and says hey, this abomination of desolation thing and some of this other stuff, this is still yet to happen. So it has to point beyond the second century but evangelical sort of get off the hook by saying well, right here Daniel 11 verse 30, well now we've jumped into the future. We don't have to worry that what Daniel's written here doesn't conform to the history of the second century because Daniel's talking about something that's hundreds of thousands years later. We're off the hook there.

A lot of people just don't feel that you should do that. And they're going to use that as an argument to argue for a later date and then they more or less have to say that Daniel messed up. And some of them are quite willing to say that because they don't have any theological predilections against it. Well, let's back up a little bit. You have Jesus referring to things in Daniel as yet future. That alone, even if it's only Daniel 9, even if it's only one verse, you have the book of Revelation doing it, too. So even if it's just Daniel 9, Daniel 11 and a few of the things in the book of Revelation alludes to, that alone tells you that there are some portions of Daniel that are yet future. And even if they were fulfilled in the past, there's going to be some mirroring, some second round of fulfillment come later. Even if you take the late date, I have friends who have genuine testimonies. They're real believers, not like fake believers. They take the late view of Daniel.

Even they have to admit that this doesn't rule out predictive prophecy because of what Jesus said, because of what the book of Revelation did. It doesn't get predictive prophecy off the table for them. They take the second century date because of things like literary genre that they feel it is just a compelling argument to put Daniel in the second century. But they'll very freely say some of this is still yet future. So I know this is a long involved question but here's the thing. If you meet someone who takes a late view of Daniel, do not assume they're a liberal. You need to ask them. You need to actually ask them where they're at theologically. Do not assume anything because you're going to run into evangelicals that put it in that period for different reasons than you're thinking. Because typically what people get exposed to in church is that if anybody who doesn't believe this 6th century date for the composition, they don't believe in prophecy.

They're a liberal. Maybe, it'd be nice to ask them first because they'll probably tell you. But don't draw that conclusion. My opinion here is I think the whole thing is basically argued to a stalemate. I think the best argument for a late date is the genre but it's not conclusive. I've tried to explain a little but why. So I don't really care on one level. I lean to the early date because I don't really see a reason to reject it. I don't see a good reason to reject it. And since I

have no problem with predictive prophecy, I'm comfortable there. But if I woke up tomorrow and somebody discovered something that compels a second century date, okay, well now we know because it doesn't take predictive prophecy off the table. I should mention one other thing. This whole notion of prophecy after-the-fact, that also is a known genre. It's called prophecy ex eventu by scholars.

Well you will have books, books written in the Second Temple period where you have the writer, who elsewhere in the book, it's pretty clear, they're writing at the time, or they're living at the time they're writing. They write certain things and they cast it as predictive prophecy, something predicted earlier but now happening in their time. That's not quite what we see in Daniel, but there are people who try to argue for prophecy ex eventu as what's happening in Daniel. But be that as it may, I want to talk about this phenomenon. Here's the way it would work for an evangelical because it is a known genre. So let's just say that tomorrow we wake up and there's something that's discovered that just conclusively says Daniel was doing this in at least one or two places.

Is that a crime? Is that a theological crime? Is it a literary crime? Well, the answer is no, because here is how it works. Here's how it would be going on in the person's head. Daniel would be looking around at political events or some other event and say wow, this stuff that's happening, we're transitioning from one empire to the next. And this is just like what God said would happen and it's happening now. And so I'm going to write about it but I'm to make sure that people know that this was predicted earlier. And so I'm going to write it that way so people know that God gets credit for this, for the these movements in human history, and so I'm going to write it this way so they know I'm not just getting lucky, or I'm not the authority here. But God knew this was going to happen so I'm going to write it this way, even though I'm living at the time where this stuff is happening right now. Because I hate to tell you this, but a lot of this stuff, most of the stuff really, that's in Daniel is not new.

Daniel's not the only one that wrote about the passage of human empires. He's not the only one that wrote about Assyrians are going to get their butts kicked, and the Babylonians are going to get their butts kicked, and the Medes and the Persians are going to get their butts kicked. Other prophets write about that that are contemporary with or earlier than Daniel. It's not all new original material, and so it's conceivable, at least in theory, I'm not advocating the position but I'm just saying, it's conceivable this could happen. This actually does happen in other ways in the Bible, where you have a Psalm, for instance. I think it's fair to say Psalm 51 might have some of this sentiment where it's a Psalm of David and you have this allusion to David's new personal sin, but at the end of the Psalm, the psalmist says something like, Lord, rebuild the walls of Jerusalem or rebuild the city or something like that. I don't have in front of me, but it's a thing that would be appropriate to say well after the time of David. And you say why would the psalmist do that? It doesn't make any sense during the time of David. It's like the exile.

It's like this stuff, it's later. Well, who wrote the psalm? What you have happening, and I think Psalm 51 is just a convenient example, is either someone amending the Psalm or adding to the end of it or doing something like that where they're saying look, just like David sinned and God forgave him after he repented, we, as a nation now, are in this situation where we are under God's wrath because of our sin and we nationally, just like David personally, we are repenting and we're asking God to rebuild the walls of the city. So the psalmist sort of inserts the nation into the Psalm and uses David as a springboard or as an analogy for a communal lament, a

communal repentance, a communal plea that God would forgive them corporately, just like he forgave David. You'll actually have instances in Scripture where material is sort of edited or reworked like this, and that was okay because in the Jewish mindset, the mindset of the Old Testament people, biblical prophetic voices weren't just the ones that you and I know their names to.

Most Old Testament books, in fact, the author isn't even named. The date of the book certainly isn't even given. There was this sense that God would raise up people and would continue to raise up people who were prophetic voices who were his official spokespeople and they would make sure that not only was the older material preserved, but they would keep adding to the material that eventually the community, the community at large, the people of God at large, would deem sacred, would deem canonical, would deem inspired. You have lots of unnamed people in the process of inspiration. This is why I say inspiration is a process. It's not an event. There are indications of this smattered all throughout the text of deliberate arrangement, deliberate changing this or that so it conforms now to something else, something else in the canon where it's the work of not only the grand mind of God, but the of collective minds of the people that God is using. All of this stuff works symbiotically together over the course of time.

This is how we got the Bible we got or we have. These aren't just paranormal zapping events, and out spits a book of the Bible. That is not the way it happened. So Daniel, this whole prophetic prophecy after-the-fact, you can have some of that happening in Daniel, which is why I say ultimately I don't really care about the question, but I know why people ask it. They want validity in predictive prophecy. And what I'm saying is Evangelicals who take the late date, they now. They understand because what Jesus says, because what the book of Revelation does. Even if you take a second century date for Daniel, predictive prophecy is still on the table. It's not on the table in certain passages because they could've been after-the-fact, but they're still inspired.

For them, it's not a reason to deny inspiration at all. For the liberal, they don't really need any other reason to deny inspiration other than the fact that they don't believe God acts. They don't need any scholarly justification. That's just what they think. So they're going to naturally gravitate toward the second century date. It's the one that fits best for them. But there are still going to be Evangelicals who will take that, so don't assume anything. Ask some questions before you start calling some people liberals before they deserve it. Try not to jump to any conclusions there.

TS: Our next question's from Joel. What are we to make of the Apostles Creed? In particular, he's curious about the statement declaring that Christ descended into hell. Where does this information come from? The two contexts he's wondering about are Luke 23:42, 'truly I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise,' and 1 Peter 3:18-19, 'made alive in the spirit in which he would proclaim to the spirits in prison.' He's also interested in your thoughts, just in general, about the Apostles Creed as a whole, and is the Apostles Creed alien to the context of the Bible?

MSH: Well, I would say descending into hell language comes from 1 Peter 3. If this person read the old draft of The Myth That Is True, you'd be able to find it in there. So if you have that, you can search through it for an explanation of it. But I think it certainly comes from 1 Peter 3 where Christ descends to the underworld, the realm of the dead, specifically here, to the imprisoned spirits associated with the flood, that is, the offending sons of God. And I think that is clear. In

other words, the spirits of the dead aren't the dead humans kill the flood because of the Enochian typology that goes with the whole chapter there in 1 Peter 3. Now, it took so long on the Daniel thing, I'm wondering how far to go into this. But basically, if you have the old Myth That Is True draft, you can read this. I'm going to try to do this real quickly. 1 Peter 3 is really only decipherable if you understand that Peter is using Enoch, specifically a scene in the book of Enoch and Enoch the person, as his typological referent. Now what I mean by that is think of Romans 5.

Paul uses Adam as a type of Christ. Type, the word type of typology is something listeners have probably heard a bit. But all typology is, is nonverbal prophecy. We're familiar with prophecy, verbal utterances the prophets go around saying this or that. They predict things and we get that. Typology is nonverbal prophecy and what that means is that you have an event in the Old Testament or an institution let's say like Passover, or even a person, something a person does, an event, an institution or a person that prefigures something that will happen later. It's nonverbal. It's not spelled out in writing. It's just something associated with a person, an event, a place, that prefigures something that's going to come later. That's what a type is. So Paul uses Adam as a type of Christ, an analogy, a precursor analogy of Jesus. Peter does the same thing here with Enoch. Now that's hard for us to see because we're not familiar with Enochian literature.

Peter was, and so was Jude. We know this from 1 and 2 Peter and then in Jude. And there's this whole scene in Enoch where the patriarchal figure Enoch is with God and we're not really told how, but when God decides to punish the offending sons of God, he puts them in a prison. And the offenders there somehow contact Enoch and they say Enoch, God likes you. Will you go talk to God and see if he'll let us out of here? We're sorry. And Enoch's, okay, I'll go do that. And so Enoch goes to God. If you read like 1 Enoch 6-15 or something, you're going to get the whole story, and they're not long chapters so I just recommend doing that. But so Enoch goes to God and says, hey, God, I'm here to speak on behalf of the watchers back there. They're sorry. They know they did wrong. They'd like you to relent a little bit. And God says forget it. Just go back there and tell them that they're toast. They're going to be there until the time of the end. I'm not rethinking this.

This is what they deserve. So Enoch, now catch what I'm saying here. Enoch goes and descends to the underworld and he goes to these spirits that are imprisoned in the book of Enoch and says to them, well, God says no. He gives them bad news. He gives them news about, you're going to be here until the time of the end. You're still under wrath. That's just the end of the story. Peter uses that as an analogy to Jesus, a type, precursor, so when Jesus dies and he goes into the underworld, the realm of the dead, that's where the dead go, they go to the realm of the dead, and he goes and he preaches, speaks to the spirits in prison. And this is why in 1 Peter 3 you have the flood, you have the angels that sinned, you have the ark, you have the flood narrative connecting somehow with Jesus dying and going into the realm of the dead. It's like, Peter, what in the world are you thinking?

Well, here's what he's thinking. Jesus gives them the message this time. And the message, we can gather from other parts of the New Testament, other parts of what Peter writes, especially at the end of 1 Peter 3, where has Jesus above all principalities and powers, and all this other stuff, Jesus essentially goes to the spirits in prison and says, you all know who I am. You're probably surprised to see me here because it means I'm dead. But guess what? You and your other rebellious colleagues that are doing their thing either on the world or in here with you

or whatever, think that this was the way to defeat God's plan. Well, guess what? I'm not going to be here very long.

I'm going to rise again from the dead and you'll still be here. You will still be toast. You are still under wrath. You are not getting out of here until God says so, and then you only get out for a short time, and then he's just going to destroy you anyway. So it's bad news, again. So Peter uses this story from Enoch as a vehicle to talk about an otherworldly spirit realm conversation confrontation between the dead Jesus, who is going to rise again, and those divine beings, who at one time had rebelled against his father. You tie them in with all the other stuff in the unseen realm about if the spirits or the rulers of this world would've known what was the result, they never would've destroyed, never killed the Lord of glory. This is one piece that fits into a much bigger picture in the unseen realm, which is why I wrote the book, Unseen Realm. If you don't understand what Peter's thinking, that he's thinking of the story in Enoch, you're never going to be able to decipher what's going on in 1 Peter 3.

And the early church understood this. This is why not only do you have this language in the Apostles Creed, but you also in the early church used to have in baptismal formulas, remember 1 Peter 3 is also about baptism, you also have in baptismal formulas renunciation of the devil and his angels to commemorate the content of 1 Peter 3. We don't do that anymore. This is why I have a whole chapter in the book where I basically say baptism is holy war. That's the meaning of it. That's the symbology behind it, this confrontation, this picking of sides, this choosing of sides. It's really what's sort of cloaked in this act of baptism, so the language there that's where it comes from.

The second part of the question about, just generally, the Apostles Creed by definition, since it's so late, it's after the New Testament Era, by definition is not the context that informs the Bible or the biblical material. It can't because it's later. It's the other way around. The biblical material is what informed the Apostles Creed. So I don't see anything in the Creed itself that is contrary to biblical theology. Some people get bent out of shape over the Catholic Church line in there. This is before we had a Catholic church. Catholic just means universal, so believers everywhere it's all the line means.

We don't have a Catholic Church until centuries later after the apostles Creed, so it's not an endorsement of Rome or anything like that. So with that caveat, I don't see anything in the Creed that's contrary to the biblical theology. And I think, really, that's not a surprise because the Apostles Creed is really a minimalistic Creed. It's very, the points in in are sort of the highlights of New Testament theology. So I think that's why you don't really have anything really in there that you can't trace somewhere in the New Testament including this line.

TS: The next question's from Seth. He's actually got three questions. First one, is there any complementary overlap of the warfare worldview as Dr. Boyd teaches and the Divine Council worldview that you're presenting?

MSH: I can't be real precise here. I'm not completely sure how to answer the question because I haven't read God at War. I know Greg, and Greg and I've talked about the Divine Council several times. He came to hear a couple of my papers at the Evangelical Theological Society meetings, so I would imagine that there's a good deal of positive connection between my book and Greg's. Greg's training is in philosophical theology, that's what his focus was in Princeton, so he's not going to be familiar with a number of things that would derive from specific points of exegesis in

the context of comparative Ancient Near East stuff and semantics. That's not where he drilled down in his doctoral work. He was doing something altogether different, philosophical theology.

So consequently, a lot of what he's doing is primarily with English Bible and following rabbit trails, the journal literature some other source might lead him along. And that's part of the reason why he was interested in coming to my papers. He had come across Divine Council stuff and knew it had an Ancient Near Eastern context, and so we had lots to talk about at the conferences. So I would imagine, that's the best word I could use, I would imagine that there's going to be a high degree of workable overlap between that particular book, at least that part of the book and what I'm saying. But I can't really be sure as far as specific statements because I haven't read it. What I just said about his background versus mine is not a put down. So I don't want anybody to think that's a put down.

Greg has seen more of this stuff than most, even people who have their PhD's in Old Testament that got their PhD's from seminary somewhere. Boyd is more in tune with certain things they ought to be in tune with than they are because he's just read enough outside the normal, at least at the time God of War was written. At least what he was tapping into wasn't the kind of thing you'd run into in Evangelical journal literature. Now that has changed basically because of stuff I've written in journals, what John Walton has published, not only journals but published more widely. You're getting a lot more stuff from Old Testament scholars in the evangelical world that is permeating the literature.

So if Boyd was writing his book today, it would have a lot more detail to it in these respects. So that just is what it is but as far as, especially taken the context of when he wrote it. He sees tracking on more things that are important than some of the Old Testament guys who just don't get exposed outside their little sort of theological orbit. And Greg is not afraid to do that. So I thought he should be commended for what he did in that book and other things.

TS: Now Seth doesn't totally buy into open theism but he does see some aspects of it being true as we co-labor, co-create with God through prayer and preaching of the gospel. Can you share some thoughts on that?

MSH: Yeah, Greg and I would agree, for instance that foreknowledge doesn't necessitate predestination. But somehow Greg takes that and feels that he needs to have God surprised by things or that he has to redefine omniscience so that God doesn't know all things. But that doesn't make much sense to me. What's the harm in God knowing all things, real and possible, if neither requires predestination? God can regret things. He can relent on something he said he was going to do. That doesn't mean God didn't foreknow it. There's no necessary connection here. If the fact that God knows something doesn't require it to be predestinated, there's no theological problem with saying God foreknew something that didn't happen and just didn't do it.

And so I don't know why Greg feels that he has to redefine omniscience or say God is surprised by things. I don't think God is surprised by things at all. Greg has his whole philosophical argument, something that a human's going to do hasn't even popped into the human's mind and then it does, how can God know that? Well, how come God knows something that you're going to do five years from now? Greg will not say that God doesn't foreknow anything the people are going to do. He'll just allow for this sense of God being surprised or not

knowing something. He's more nuanced than that sort of simplistic kind of, if God is surprised, that means he doesn't know anything in the future.

Greg is not going to say that, but he is going to hold the door open for God not knowing certain things. And I just don't see the necessity of it. So if you're going to define open theism by a point like that, I'm not going to agree with him, but we would agree on the other point. It just depends what the statement is, and I don't have any problem with a high view of sovereignty, God invading somebody's life and making something happen. But frankly, I haven't read all of Greg's stuff. I've listened to a lot of his papers. We've had discussions. I've looked at his blog a few times. And he's told me, I'm not opposed to God making something happen, whereas a lot of sort of armchair open theists would not expect him to say that.

So he's somewhere in the middle of the two extremes but his enemies sort of put him on one extreme and his fans put them at the other. He's actually more nuanced than that, but we're going to have things we just disagree on. Listeners should know I don't view Greg as an adversary in all the stuff or any of this stuff. I view him as a friend, despite the fact that I'm not going to buy some things he says about open theism or conclusions he draws from it. I think he has questions that need to be asked and I think that's a good thing.

TS: Seth also wonders if the systems of thought on providence and free will are similar in amalgamation as systems of eschatology that you were describing in some earlier podcasts, in that they each have some element of truth but don't fully describe what the Scripture holds together intention. Can you comment on that?

MSH: I think there's something to that. It seems that systems sort of gravitate to one side or one aspect of a subject over another, and then they try to seek to explain away the things they don't want to gravitate to. So I think there's something to that. So while it's true, systems typically try to find a balance or maybe try to make things work, some people just end up redefining things they don't like so badly and that they don't really resemble plain statements in the text anymore. You'll have people who deny just any sense of human freedom at all. They typically do that to defend this position that they prefer. That's just what happens in systems.

People like enough about a system that they get married to it mentally or emotionally, and then they just have to do whatever it takes to keep the system preserved or to make it work in their head. And I think that's when you get people that jump the shark and go off onto tangents and it really becomes about the system as opposed to about the text. And I would say even more simpler than that, feel free to tweak the system. Why do you need to tweak the Scripture or deny something that's pretty obvious in Scripture just to make your system work? Change the system or abandon it or married it to a second system. Try to look at all of them and pullout what's helpful. I don't have any problem doing that but I've met other people that that's just a thought.

Well if I don't affirm this, then Calvin was wrong. Well, so what? He's wrong, he's human. Big deal, who cares? You're not going to get to heaven and meet Calvin someday and he's going to say thanks for defending me over against this and that even though you just destroyed that verse. But I just felt good about the way you defended me. Calvin would probably slap you upside the head and say I was wrong there and you should have recognized it. We just elevate these systems I think in some cases to just unreasonable levels. That's just what makes some people tick. But what can you do? But I do think broadly speaking like the question said,

that all the systems make good observations and they have things in them that are worth thinking about and wrestling with. And they latch onto something and then they make missteps in other places to defend this other thing over here that they really love, and that's just human nature.

So I don't think there's anything sinister about it necessarily. Some people get carried away with it, but I think it's just human nature, just happens. Listeners are going to know it's my own view that we fundamentally have misunderstood Old Testament election. I think that's part of the problem. New Testament election I think needs to be consistent with the Old Testament that I'm saying and suggesting that has been fundamentally misunderstood. And I think New Testament election also need to be related to remnant theology, which like it or not, is a sovereign act. But I think these components can be better contextualized and better articulated and then put back together again. That's sort of where I would leave that question.

TS: Speaking of remnant theology, our last question's from Greg. In Acts 13, you briefly discussed Old Testament remnant theology and how it fits into the predestination election debate. He'd love to hear more on this, the Old Testament idea, not so much how it fits in the New Testament and also appreciates any resources you could suggest on this topic.

MSH: There are a couple of things that I will make sure Trey has, and Trey will make sure gets up. The websites deal with remnant theology, a couple of articles so you could look for those. I think to sort of try to summarize an answer here, remnant theology in the Old Testament and sort of broadly speaking is that God will never, he'll never let his plan for a kingdom die entirely. And therefore, he will never let his people be entirely exterminated by evil. He's not going to let evil win. As bad as it gets, it's never as bad as that because God will intervene. He'll intervene when needed but he won't eradicate evil because that would mean eradicating humanity. He will not get rid of evil and free will because then that's an admission that would be an admission God's part, that this is just a bad idea. God's not going to do that. He's committed to humanity.

He loves the idea of humanity. He created humanity like to be like himself, which includes communicable attributes, one of which is freedom. On the surface, these are the most obvious things theologically in the world that just jump out at you from the text. I think we need to affirm what's there in the text and then come up with our best understanding of how to handle it, and sometimes people just get married to system's someone's attempt and then love it so much they'll defend it at all costs, even if one of the costs is coherence. But remnant theology, just this idea that does not want this thing to die and if he needs to intervene, he will. And he does that in the Old Testament. Noah, he doesn't wipe everyone out. He saves Noah. Noah finds grace in the eyes of the Lord. He saved Noah and his family. He does it with his people. He does it with the tribes of Israel.

There are 700 that have not bowed the knee to Baal. He uses Obadiah to hide them. He's never going to let the thing die. But he will not erase humanity to get it done. He will not erase the image to get it done. He has chosen to use people and use people he will. There is no plan B. There is only plan A. In the New Testament, you have God acting to ensure, really consistent with the old, he's going to act to ensure a remnant of believing Israel, the true Israel, will not be exterminated. He's not just going to forever forget the Jews now, and the Jews can all be exterminated and whatnot. No, they're going to be believers among the tribes of Israel who

embrace the Messiah, their Messiah, and become part of the people of God. But there will also be Gentiles.

They'll also be people among the nations who are not of the 12 tribes of Israel. And he is going to lay claim to those nations as well as his own through them. He's going to make sure that he's going to preserve a remnant. He's going to make sure that there are people from the nations who embrace the gospel and that it never dies. There's never a single nation that doesn't have a witness. There's never a single nation that doesn't have God's people in it infiltrating it to multiply that situation, to take the gospel to every nation, to every corner of the world and get the job done. If God needs to intervene, he will. He will not let it die. So that's essentially the overarching idea of remnant theology. Just think about what the New Testament is, the people of God, its circumcision neutral.

It's the tribes plus the non-tribes. It goes all the way back. We're trying to restore an Edenic vision, God's rule over the entire planet, and originally, there were no nations. There was no Israel, but now there are. But the plan is the same. God is going to win the whole planet. It's his. There's not going to be this little cracker crevice or a little portion of it that he does not own at the end. And his vehicle for doing that are believers, people, and he's just not going to let it die anywhere at any point.