

## Naked Bible Podcast Transcript

Episode 402

Revelation Q&A, Part 3

December 4, 2021

Teacher: Dr. Michael S. Heiser (MH)

Host: Trey Stricklin (TS)

### Episode Summary

Dr. Heiser answers your questions about Revelation:

- Why do you think there is no connection between John's use of 666 in Revelation 13 and the 666 units of gold that Solomon received in 1 Kings 10:14? [9:00]
- What do you think of the theory that the first beast of Revelation is a revived Islamic caliphate? [12:45]
- Is there a connection between earthquakes and resurrections? [18:25]
- When Jesus says that "this generation will not pass away until all these things take place" is he simply saying that the wicked will continue to exist along with the righteous until the final day of judgment? [20:40]
- If the woman in Revelation 12 is Israel, are you saying that she was never given wings or delivered, and that she perished? [35:20]
- What is the biblical basis the Jehovah's Witnesses use to argue that the prince in Daniel and Revelation is actually Jesus? [37:15]
- Did the writer of Revelation actually see and hear the Old Testament references, or were they added to supply context for the reader? [44:55]
- Is there evidence in the text that the language about believers ruling the angels is speaking of a new earth and not a millennium period? [47:40]

### Transcript

**TS:** Welcome to the Naked Bible Podcast, Episode 402: Revelation Q&A, Part 3. I'm the layman, Trey Stricklin, and he's the scholar, Dr. Michael Heiser. Hey, Mike! How are you doing?

**MH:** Pretty good. Pretty good. We are seven days removed from chemo. So I'm starting to feel normal—my "new normal."

**TS:** Yeah.

**MH:** But I'll take it.

**TS:** Yeah, and I can breathe a little bit better. So I'm sure you can hear it, my voice is, I think, back. So I feel good, too. I'm still not all the way, but... Hopefully by the time this airs.

**MH:** You don't sound like Trace Adkins anymore. [laughter]

**TS:** Oh, yeah? You listen to Trace?

**MH:** Well, I just remember him from the Apprentice. And now he's going to be on some show that I keep seeing commercials for. I don't know what the show is. Something about country music that I'll wind up not watching. Some mini-series—Dallas, I guess, for country music fans, or something.

**TS:** Yeah. That's good, yeah.

**MH:** One of these fictional dramas that I'll have no interest in. [laughs]

**TS:** Yeah. Well, Mike, we've got some exciting projects to announce. We've got some books that we could even talk about.

**MH:** Yeah. One is probably going to be pretty obvious. The notes that I've used for this whole Revelation series (the Old Testament in Revelation), I have simultaneously been putting into a book manuscript form. So I had a manuscript as soon as we were done with the series. All the notes and the sources that I utilized in some way for the Revelation series, that's going to be published in a book. And it's just real simple: *The Old Testament in the Book of Revelation: Notes from the Naked Bible Podcast*. So this is a lot different than transcripts. Transcripts you have chitchat with myself and Trey, and I rabbit trail here and there, and so on and so forth. This is a normal book with footnotes. So if you're into the book of Revelation and you like the content we've been doing here on the podcast, you're going to get all of that—all of the information and the sources, just like in a normal book format. So it's a substantial book to add to your library if you want to study the book of Revelation in the future. So that's one.

Another one is something I worked on off-and-on months ago and thought we would debut it at our conference, which of course didn't come to pass because of my cancer diagnosis. But we kept the book going and we finished it. It's what I'm calling a "prayer digest." I get emails a lot from people that ask me things like, "Hey, this prayer in Psalm 55, this verse here or this line, what would that sound like in Hebrew?" So what I've done is I've gone through Old and New Testament and I've pulled prayers that are either a few sentences, a paragraph, or even just a few words and put that all in a book, according to original language. So you get the prayer in the original language, and then on another line, I give you a transliteration of the whole prayer. And then on a third line, I give you a pronunciation. So what you have here in the prayer digest is if you want to

incorporate biblical prayers in your own prayer life and you want to be able to do it verbally, the way that you may have heard it back in ancient Israel or in the New Testament period, this is your bridge to doing that. So it's kind of a fun resource. But it's also one I think would be helpful in a devotional setting, maybe memorize a few of these prayers. Because some of them are real short, just a few words. Others are a few sentences long. But that's the second resource.

5:00

And then the third book, of course, is brought over from last year. We don't want to forget about our Advent book. I don't know if you want to say anything more about that, Trey. But we don't want to forget about *The Advent for the Cosmos*, our Advent book that really utilizes my content in Advent fashion. So you can have a little bit of a reading in the days leading up to December 25<sup>th</sup>, when we typically celebrate Christmas. So those are three things that we want to make you aware of—put on your radar. Two of them are brand new.

**TS:** Yeah, get them for Christmas! That *Prayers* book is a short book, and then the *Revelation* book is a bigger book, of course. And Mike, they'd make perfect Christmas gifts, as well as with the *Advent* book. Get it now. I know December is just now started. We forgot to mention that in our last few episodes, but we want to remind everybody.

**MH:** Yeah. The prayer book... We were shooting for a specific size of that. That would actually be a nice stocking stuffer. It's a small book, a little handbook kind of thing. But yeah, we still do this with our kids—we stuff the stockings with little things. And that's the first thing we have them open. But this would be ideal for the stocking stuffer.

**TS:** Absolutely, Mike. I can't wait for people's feedback on the books. And please, again, you can get those at Amazon. And please leave a review. And also, Mike, I forget to ask, it would help us out a lot if you could go subscribe to our podcast on Spotify or wherever you listen. Please leave us a review wherever you consume that podcast. It just... I enjoy reading it. Other readers—it helps them to decide to start listening to us. So forth and so on. I know it doesn't improve our rankings and things like that. But you know, it helps people to make a decision on whether to start listening to us or not. And we enjoy reading those. No matter what country you're in, I see them all. We appreciate the people who have. And go follow us on Spotify or wherever, even if you don't use that, to help our numbers, Mike. We need to puff our numbers up. This is the end of the year. We need to do a push here on some growth. So it'll help us out. [MH laughs] Wherever our podcast is, just go follow and subscribe to us, no matter what. Help us.

**MH:** Yeah, seriously. I mean, I know I've used those sorts of things, those little reviews, to decide whether I want to listen to something or not. So people do use

them. And it only takes you a minute to post a little review. And they're doing the stars thing. Yeah, it'll get used.

**TS:** Yeah. And for our superfans out there, go to ALL the places and do that, pretty please. [laughter] Well, Mike, we had so many questions for Revelation that we're going to push this to six parts, Mike. We appreciate you taking more time to answer our questions. But I think it's great, because our audience does have a lot of questions. So...

**MH:** This is entirely audience appreciation. I am not growing in my fondness for the book of Revelation. So let's be clear. This is audience loyalty. That's what's driving the bus here. [laughs]

**TS:** Well, that's perfect. We appreciate it. I know EVERYBODY out there appreciates it, too. And we're probably still not answering all the questions. But at least we're taking six episodes here to get through as many as we can. And with that, Mike, I still have a few comments left over from people saying nice things to us about our 400<sup>th</sup> episode. And a few more comments on the next episode, too. If you don't mind, I'd like to read a comment from Danny here. He says:

Mike Heiser has respected his audiences. He never underestimates us. Recommends and releases articles, ideas, highlights, Scripture texts, from layers of traditional or inaccurate exegesis. The Bride has never been so beautiful before. Thank you, Mike and Trey, and the unsung heroes doing the transcripts.

So thank you, Danny for that.

**MH:** Yep, that's well said.

**TS:** Alright. We'll, we've got two questions from Branson from Texas. And the first one is:

9:00

**Being that 666 is used in the Old Testament for the amount of gold Solomon received in 1 Kings 10:14, are we to really believe that this wouldn't have been in John's mind when writing Revelation 13 at all? It seems unlikely, out of all the numbers he could have used, that there would be no kind of connection with some future beast's kingdom. I don't want to mistake your position on this, but from what I gather, you don't buy that there is a connection at all. As adamant as you are about the Old Testament in the New Testament, could you elaborate more on why John *wouldn't* have been trying to connect in some way or fashion 1 Kings 10:14 to the number of the beast. And if I'm mistaken, and you think it's possible, then in what way can you imagine it does connect?**

10:00

**MH:** No, Branson was right the first time. I don't see any connection here. And the reason is, I can't find a reason to connect 666 in this Old Testament verse (the amount of Solomon's gold) with anything evil or sinister. The 666 in Solomon's earnings isn't condemned in any way. It's just an accounting document. It's a ledger report. So as such, it carried no evil connotations. I mean, if it was condemned in 1 Kings 10 (or thereabouts) in the context—that this is mentioned to take us sort of into some other chaos metaphor or the whole feeling of opposition to God's kingdom and opposition to Eden's restoration—well then you'd have something. But this is literally just a ledger number. So I see no reason to connect it to Revelation, because I don't see any connection to anything sinister in the Old Testament. And that, of course, is not true with other numbers and other things in the book of Revelation that do connect immediately back to sinister things in the Old Testament.

If I could illustrate it this way, what if in Daniel 7 this beast with seven heads and ten horns had no evil association at all? What if it was just sort of a throwaway reference or a comment on maybe how the king of Babylon had decorated something in his palace, or whatever? What if there was no evil connotation to a beast emerging from the sea, with the horns and the crowns? If there was no evil connotation, it wouldn't make any sense for John to use it later. But that fact that it is deeply embedded in sinister stuff—in chaos motifs in the Old Testament—in their worldview (Leviathan and such), the fact that it's so deeply embedded into these things that oppose God makes it really good fodder for John to use to explain something he saw. Or, in this case, he's pretty much given the messaging directly right out of Daniel, that in John's own day he's going to see some fulfillment of what's going on there in Daniel 7. But the fulfillment connectivity makes sense because it's evil on both sides, whereas in this reference to 666 talents of gold, big deal. In other words, nothing is said about it that would make us think that it's sinister. So there's no reason to connect it later on to something that is sinister. It doesn't contribute anything to the meaning of the number.

**TS:** Branson's second question is:

12:45

**I was wondering about your thoughts on the Islamic theory and the possibility of the first beast of Revelation 13 being a revived Islamic caliphate. I'm not trying to assume anything about Scripture, and I know you're not a systems guy, as I agree that no one system holds all the answers. But when comparing the fourth kingdom of Daniel's statue dream in Daniel 2 with the old Islamic Ottoman caliphate instead of Rome, in a revived Islamic caliphate that would be the feet of clay and iron, and the first beast in Revelation 13, it just seems to make more sense than Rome to me.**

**MH:** Yeah, at one time 20 or 25 years ago, I thought there was something to this—the Islamic connection. And I thought so at the time based purely on the Daniel geography—where these nations are that are mentioned in the book of Daniel. They're all Middle Eastern (that sort of thinking). So I based it purely on the Daniel geography and the loss of Hellenistic Jewish geography to the rise of Islam in these same geographical areas. But I came to the position that the trajectory is completely undermined by Daniel 2. So Daniel 2 is largely why I don't think this idea is worth considering at all anymore.

15:00

What do I mean by Daniel 2? Well in Daniel 2, it is absolutely clear that it is during the last kingdom symbolized by the image that the kingdom of God makes its entrance. This is the kingdom not created by human hands. That's the kingdom of God. That's why it's described as not being a human kingdom. And that kingdom appears and smashes into the feet, which is the fourth kingdom of the vision of Daniel 2. So the kingdom of God makes its entrance during the era of the fourth kingdom in Daniel 2. Now Daniel 7 parallels Daniel 2 and everyone who studies Daniel, no matter what their eschatological position is... Everybody knows and acknowledges that point—that Daniel 7 parallels Daniel 2. It's one of the few things in Daniel study that everybody agrees on.

Now if we look in Daniel, it is during the period of the fourth beast there. We have the fourth part of the image. Now we have a fourth beast in Daniel 7. It's during that period of the fourth beast that the son of man who inherits the kingdom appears. Now the beginning of the kingdom of God and the appearance of the son of man obviously happened during Jesus' ministry. Nothing could be more obvious in biblical studies. Jesus comes and he announces that the kingdom has come—the kingdom is among the people; this is going to be the start of the “already, but not yet” thing going on in eschatology. Again, there are a few things that are clear in eschatology. This is one of them. It's inescapable and crystal clear.

So the beginning of the kingdom of God and the appearance of the son of man happened during Jesus' ministry. Like, duh. It's something that is obvious. But we don't often think about the implications. Here are the implications: Well, this happens (Jesus appears during the Roman era—during the Roman empire). Islam wasn't even invented for another 500 years after Jesus—500 or 600 years is when you get the rise of Islam. So we have all of these clear indications. The fourth part of the image—the fourth beast—this is the Roman period. The empire is Rome because this is when the kingdom of God enters back into the world and begins the destruction of the beast, so on and so forth. This is why John, of course, locks onto it—because of the imagery of Daniel 7. Again, nothing could be clearer. The kingdom, the son of man, is inaugurated during the fourth beast or the fourth part of the image, and that is Rome. It is not Islam. Islam isn't going to happen for another 500 or 600 years. So unless you want to rewrite history, you will abandon this idea of fulfillment in the Islamic caliphate. It just doesn't... It



not only doesn't work for a range of reasons, but it doesn't displace the view that fits so well, that is so obvious. Who's in power when Jesus arrives—when he's incarnate? Rome! I mean, again, there are very few things that could be so clear as that.

And so once I realized the implications of the location, if you will, of the fourth part of the image (correlation with the fourth part of the beast, the fourth part of Daniel 7, the fourth beast), I gave up. I gave up on the Islamic connection. So yeah, 20-25 years ago, I would've had my head in this. I would've thought there was something to it. I don't think there's anything to it at all at this point.

**TS:** Joe and Melissa have a comment. They say:

One of my favorite podcasts! I love the different perspectives on things.

Thanks, Joe and Melissa, for listening. And Jade has our next question:

18:25

**Is there any relation in the Bible between earthquakes and resurrections? When Jesus rose from the dead, there was an earthquake. When the two witnesses rise, there is an earthquake. I've heard that the great earthquake in Revelation 6, after the opening of the sixth seal, could be evidence of the rapture of the Church. What are your thoughts on this?**

**MH:** Yeah, I don't think this has anything to do with a rapture or anything like that. So the short answer is no. I mean, there are scriptural earthquakes that have nothing to do with resurrections. There are New Testament earthquakes that just have nothing to do with it. Acts 4:31, Acts 16:26 (you know, the Philippian jailer episode). There's an earthquake that happens and we don't get resurrections from it, or even any talk about resurrection. So it is not axiomatic that when we have an earthquake (especially in the New Testament) that it has something to do with the resurrection. Some of them do; some of them don't. So the fact that you have occasions where you have earthquakes without resurrection should inform us that this is not a secure hermeneutical guide that should be directing our thought when it comes to eschatology or the last resurrection or something like that. Basically, what you want there is you want the writer to go back into the Old Testament to trace something to a passage that would make that connection secure. Maybe some prophecy, something from the Prophets, that would talk about the last days, or something like that. Well, then, you know, you have a connection that's reinforced by revelation—by prophecy—that has preceded it in the Old Testament. But again, since we have episodes in the New Testament where we have earthquakes that have nothing to do with resurrection, and that never loop back into the Old Testament in this regard, it can't be a hermeneutical guide for us.

20:00

**TS:** Ron says:

Hello, Mike and Trey! Congratulations on your 400<sup>th</sup> episode! I thank you. I've learned so much from the show and love to listen. Keep up the good work, and God bless!

Thanks, Ron. Alright, Colin from Georgia asks:

20:40

**In Matthew 24, Jesus states that “this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. This has become a source of contention with preterists claiming Jesus’ prophecy must be referring to an event in the audience’s lifetime, that is, the destruction of the Temple in 70 A.D. But it seems clear that Jesus is also referring to the eschaton in verses 29-31. Since Jesus says, “all these things will take place,” it’s problematic to treat “this generation” as a timestamp (within the next 40 years or so). Is it possible we’re missing some obvious context in the preceding chapter where Jesus refers to the Pharisees and scribes as a “brood of vipers,” sometimes translated as “generation of vipers?” The words used are etymologically similar. Also, in the end of chapter 23, Jesus likens himself to a mother hen, wanting to cover her brood and offspring. In chapter 25, Jesus goes on to tell parables about two groups (i.e., the faithful servant and the worthless servant, the sheep and the goats, etc.). Since “this generation” falls in the midst of this theme, Jesus seems to be developing around two broods’ lineages (offspring of God versus offspring of Satan). Should the phrase be understood this way rather than a timestamp? That is, is he saying the wicked will continue to exist along with the righteous until the final day of judgment?**

**MH:** Yeah, well, it took you long enough to get through that question to have my initial response make sense. This topic would be better handled in a full episode. And I almost deleted it, lest it impede getting to other people’s questions, but I thought that I could at least try and keep it under ten minutes as far as a reply. Yeah, I don't think that preterists have a good argument here. But that’s about [audio breaks up], and I’m going to use some commentaries for this question. That brings back some fond memories of past Evangelical Theological Society meetings for me. Years ago... Oh, gosh. I wish Ronn Johnson was with me because we’d have some really good stories here. But years ago (I’m talking 10-15 years ago), there was a guy at ETS. He wasn’t a trained biblical scholar. He was a lay person. But he got on this full preterist hobby horse, where everything in prophecy was fulfilled by 70 A.D., including the second coming. And the question, of course, gets into this (I think) pretty obvious contraction, this obvious problem. So the full preterist position is very rare, for this reason. You know, like, “Well, how could we all miss the second coming?” You know? Like, “What’s



going on? How did we miss that?” And this guy would have sessions at ETS. And it got to the point where they had to disinvite him because he was proposing other paper topics and then when you get in the room it would be about full preterism in this passage. And he had a little red book that explained everything. It explained the key to unlocking the mystery of the world here when it comes to the full preterist view.

25:00

So I remember going to a session that was ostensibly about something about speaking in tongues or whatever, and we get in there, and this guy... It's like when I see who the speaker is and then I connect the name with something I had heard before, I thought, “He's not really going to do this, is he? Oh, no. Did I just trap myself for the next 30 minutes uselessly?” And I had. Sure enough. He said, “Well, we're not really going to talk about the topic in your program today. We want to talk about why full preterism is the view to the whole.” It was just unbelievable. Now he couldn't think about anything else. And none of the arguments made any sense. And I'm going to try to illustrate why, as if you would really need any illustration. I mean, if full preterism is the case, then Jesus has already returned. And I don't know when that happened. But there you go.

So I would start off this way in trying to keep this under ten minutes. There's more ambiguity in the verse—in this passage—than meets the eye. For our purposes, I'm going to use Craig Blomberg's work on this and try to quote from him and distill this a little bit. And also R.T. France. Now France is one of my favorite commentators on Matthew. But with respect to the Matthew passage, France writes:

All these things of this verse can include no more than the same phrase in the preceding verse and thus cannot include the coming of the son of man.

Okay, we'll let that sink in. France continues:

The phrase refers not only to general marks of the interim period, such as tribulation, distress, pseudo-messiahs, and false prophets, but specifically and dramatically to the desecration of the temple and the destruction of Jerusalem. The attempt to explain “this generation” as the generation alive at the time of the parousia [MH: the second coming] or more generally as the human race or people of God goes against the natural meaning of the phrase and makes the words irrelevant both to Jesus' listeners and Matthew's readers.

And then he references Blomberg, which I have Blomberg's commentary. So Blomberg concurs with what France has just said. And he shows how the approach is not a validation of preterism per se, and certainly not full preterism. So if you go to Matthew 24 and you just look at real quickly (maybe you can come back to this point in the podcast—this is why I said it needs a full

episode)... If you're reading from verses 1-14, Blomberg writes this. There's a whole list of things that are going to be happening. And Blomberg writes:

All nine of these preliminary events, in fact, occurred before 70 A.D. Though most, if not all, have recurred many times since then as well. Various messianic pretenders arose, most notably Theudus, who is alluded to in Acts 5:36 and then Josephus. The war of Israel against Rome began in A.D. 66 and 67 and was preceded by growing hostility incited by the Zealots. Famine raged in Judea.

He's going through the list: false messiahs, we have famine, we have warfare. Okay.

So famine raged in Judea as predicted in Acts 11:27-30, in 45-47 A.D. Earthquakes shook Laodicea in A.D. 60 and 61, and Pompeii in A.D. 62. Persecution dogged believers footsteps throughout the book of Acts. Internal dissention so tore apart the Church at Corinth in 1 Corinthians 1-4, that God even caused some to die (1 Cor. 11:30). Numerous New Testament epistles were written primarily to warn against false teachers and perversions of Christianity, most notably Galatians, Colossians, 1 Timothy, 2 Peter, and Jude. Arguably the notion (the concept of love running cold) most aptly characterized the days of the Neronian persecution of Christians in the mid-60s. Paul finally (with whatever rationale) could claim that by at least the late 50s, the gospel had gone out to all the *oikoumene* (the known world or the empire) in Romans 10:18. It is crucial to observe the fulfillment of all these preliminary events prior to A.D. 70. This fulfillment will explain how Matthew 24:34 can also be true. It demonstrates that everything necessary for Christ's return was accomplished within the first generation of Christianity, so that every subsequent generation has been able to believe that Jesus could come back in their times. It should lead us to reject all views that claim to know for sure that Christ is returning in a given year, decade, or century, on the basis of some unique event that has never previously occurred in Christian history, such as the establishment of the state of Israel.

You know, I've often said that I don't know what Bible prophecy 1948 was supposed to fulfill. I literally don't. And if you look at the passages that are used, they're all passages about the New earth—the New Jerusalem. I'm sorry, but we don't have that. We haven't had it since 1948 either. We have Israel being a state. They have the right to be a state. Okay. And maybe that will form part of the stage for something else to happen prophetically, which of course it's going to have to, because we're still living in the end times. But there's no specific Old Testament passage that dates the reinstatement of the state of Israel to an Old Testament prophecy, that this would happen in 1948. There just isn't anything like that. But you often see it trucked out. And Blomberg, I think, his criticism here is on target. So if you keep reading in Matthew 24, and you get to 15-20 (those verses), Blomberg writes this:

30:00

Without having answered the second of the disciples' questions [MH: "what will be the sign?"], Jesus turns back to the first. "When will the destruction of the temple take place? Presumably after these preliminary events that do not actually herald the end.

### **Let me read that sentence again.**

Presumably [the temple will be destroyed] after these preliminary events that do not actually herald the end. But verse 15 does not begin with "then;" merely "when."

### **So it's not "then;" it's "when."**

The only specific advance notice Jesus gives involves an event that will profane the temple, fulfilling the prophecy of Daniel 9:27. The abomination that causes desolation might also be translated as "a desolating sacrilege." In the days of the Maccabees, the Jews wondered if this prophecy had been fulfilled when Antiochus Epiphanes slaughtered a pig on the temple altar and subsequently destroyed much of the temple precincts, the city of Jerusalem, and thousands of its inhabitants (1 Maccabees 1:54, 67, in 167 B.C.). Jesus does not dwell on any advance warning, but on the awfulness of this day. Destruction will arrive so quickly that believers must waste no time in their flight (verse 16-18).

**Then when you get to verses 29-31, which is what the question for our purposes was really focused on, this idea of "this generation." When you actually get to those verses, Blomberg writes this:**

At this time, Jesus will return in majesty with all authority to judge the world (verse 30). Clear echoes of Daniel 7:13-14 emerge here. The title son of man in this context must surely refer to a superhuman figure. Jesus' picture contrasts sharply with the suffering and humiliation on the cross, which he knew loomed large in his immediate future, even as he spoke. Attempts to take the coming on the clouds of the sky as Christ's coming spiritually in judgment against Israel at the time of the destruction of the temple [MH: this is the way that some preterists argue this—it's a spiritual coming] so that all of verse 15-35 refer only to first century events, must take the Parousia [MH: must take the second coming in verse 27] in a way that is otherwise entirely unparalleled in the New Testament. It is much more natural, therefore, to understand Christ's coming here to earth as in Revelation 19:11-16, when Jesus brings with him all the company of the redeemed already in heaven to join his faithful people yet on earth and still alive to meet him (Zechariah 2:6, Deuteronomy 30:4). All this is heralded by angelic trumpet blasts (1 Corinthians 15:52, 1 Thessalonians 4:16), perhaps based originally on Isaiah 27:13. Walvoord...

Now Blomberg's going to quote Walvoord, of course, who's familiar to dispensationalists. Walvoord was a big pre-mil, pre-trib rapture person—probably the biggest defender of that view, along with Charles Ryrie, in the last 50 years. Okay? So Blomberg points out:

Walvoord correctly observes that nothing in any of these verses in Matthew describes the rapture.

Now if Walvoord can see that, and Walvoord was the biggest defender of the pre-trib rapture in the last 50 years, easily, we probably ought to... Those who are arguing for the pre-trib rapture, you need to go elsewhere to do it. This has nothing to do with the rapture or even the larger rapture question. And Blomberg ends by saying:

Disputes about a pretribulation, midtribulation, or posttribulation rapture will have to be settled by other texts.

And that's where we'll finish here. So yeah, there are a number of reasons to push back on certainly a full preterist view, or even a more general, non-full preterist position, that wants to sort of angle along some of these lines in this passage, without of course arguing for a rapture. There are problems. There are problems for that view in here. It's certainly not a done deal. And the "this generation" doesn't really solve those problems.

**TS:** Mista says:

Huge thanks to the layman and the scholar for the countless hours of great work. The Naked Bible Podcast has been such a blessing in my journey of study in the Scriptures. Dr. Heiser is my go-to guy for difficult passages.

**MH:** Sweet.

**TS:** Mark from Forton, Colorado, says:

35:20

**I was listening to the Naked Bible Podcast, Episode 382, Revelation 12, and it sounded like Dr. Heiser was making the case that the woman was Israel, and Jesus was the child who later, after his death and resurrection, ascended on high. But that the woman was never given any wings, nor was delivered, and thus implying that she perished. I have probably misunderstood what he was saying.**

**MH:** Yeah, you have. [laughs] This one will make up for that long one we just had. I didn't say that Israel had perished. Israel obviously doesn't perish at the time of the birth of Jesus. And that's what Revelation 12 is about: the birth of the Christ child. So Israel obviously doesn't perish. The point was only about, the

woman is not... The mention of the wings there should not be used to argue that angels have wings. That was the only reason that I even segued onto that given trajectory. So no, the woman doesn't perish. So yeah, you did misunderstand that.

**TS:** Craig says:

Man, that is a lot of podcasts to listen to [TS laughs] and I have listened to all of them [MH: he's right], some of them multiple times. Mike and Trey, you're doing an awesome job. Thank you for freely providing an invaluable service to the body of Christ, and I can't thank you enough, for you guys have supplied me with the podcasts, which I have consumed to feed my addiction, transforming myself into a hardcore Naked Bible junkie.

Alright.

**MH:** Yeah, we appreciate it. And you're welcome.

**TS:** We're all about trying to make addicts here...

**MH:** [laughs] Yeah, addiction to the podcast is a welcome thing.

**TS:** That's exactly right. Anna says:

37:15

**I would like to know, what are biblical basis for the Jehovah Witnesses to argue that the prince in Daniel and Revelation is actually Jesus? How is that interpretation even possible?**

**MH:** Ooh! Let me just start by saying that there's very little of what Jehovah's Witnesses teach that has any biblical basis. So asking me to find the biblical basis for something they teach is a challenge. I mean, all I can basically do is to try to tell you how this linkage to Michael happens in their heads. But of course there are significant problems with it.

So... Let me just back up and say, first of all, the word "prince" doesn't occur in the book of Revelation. So the question really has to be about Michael himself because he is the connection point to Jesus. So even though we don't have prince terminology in Revelation, we do have Michael mentioned. And so that is typically what happens here. So I'm going to take that road to try to answer this question.

So if the question is about Michael in the book of Daniel, the point is usually argued that Michael is Jesus—that sort of thing. The point's usually argued from the perspective of Michael's role as prince of Israel, against the other nations being under the authority of other supernatural beings who are called princes.

40:00

So the reasoning sort of goes (and again, I'm not a Jehovah's Witness or a Jehovah's Witness expert, but I'm going to take a stab at it) something like this: Number 1, it makes sense that God himself is the head of Israel. Okay. Number 2, other nations are led by other patron deities called princes by Daniel. Okay. Third, if God is Israel's patron deity, then Michael must be full deity. Okay? Michael must be God. I hope you saw the problem there. Because God is not called Israel's patron deity in Daniel; Michael is. But they're operating on the assumption that it makes sense that God himself is Israel's patron deity. So they're sort of sidestepping God assigning this role to Michael, who is a lesser being, instead of just leaving it at that (which it should be left at that), we're going to insert our own thought, that, "Oh, it makes good sense that God would be the real patron leader of Israel. And so that must mean Michael is God. And if Michael's full deity in God, then number 4, Michael must be analogous to Jesus, since A, Jesus is God (or a god, if you're a Jehovah's Witness), and B, all authority is ultimately given to the son of man in Daniel, who is Jesus.

So there you go. This is how to try to align Michael and Jesus. And you know, there are those who accept the deity of Jesus—the full deity of Jesus—who do this. The Seventh Day Adventists have this position. And then there are those who don't accept the deity of Jesus. They would say Jesus is just a divine being like Michael, lesser and created. So you have different groups (Seventh Day Adventism and the Jehovah's Witnesses) that will make this alignment and do different things with it. So we also need to be clear on that as well. Both groups will try to argue for the one point, and then go completely different directions with them.

Now there are fundamental problems to this notion, other than just sort of inserting your own idea. A fuller explanation of the problems is available in my Angels book, specifically pages 68-73. But just to run through the bullet points here. Point #1, Michael has higher authority over him, certainly. That's God. God is over Michael. And you could say Jesus did too, because of Jesus' relationship with the Father, so on and so forth. But #2, Michael is one of several chief princes (that's a plural—chief princes). So Michael's one of a group of chief princes. So if you're going to say those are all equal to God, now you're bloating the Trinity. Now you don't have a Trinity, you have a what? Do you have eight of them? Ten of them? Twelve of them? You know, you're bloating the Trinity here. So that's a problem. If you want to make Michael equal to God and Michael's one of the chief princes, and say, you justify making Michael God because you want to say Jesus is God, too, well, you still have the chief princes problem. How many are there? Third, these chief princes are beneath (*beneath*) the Prince of the Host in Daniel. Here's the figure that is forgotten: the Prince of the Host. That figure has a clear counterpart in the Angel of Yahweh and the Captain or Prince (the *sar* in Hebrew) of the Lord's Army in Joshua 5. It's awkward, to say the least, to have Michael (we'll say, if you think he's Jesus, Jesus is Michael)... It's really awkward to have Michael or Jesus under the Angel of Yahweh in authority if the



Angel of Yahweh is the Prince of the Host, whom Michael is under. Now we have Jesus who's supposed to be full God underneath another figure, subordinate to him. And we know God isn't the Angel of Yahweh. I mean, he is, but he isn't. We have two and not just one.

So this actually creates a mess of things. It doesn't have to be this complicated. And then when you get to Daniel 8:11 and 25, which describe the prince of princes, and notice that that's paralleled by Daniel 11:36-37, where the counterpart phrase is "God of gods"... Prince of princes is parallel to God of gods. Michael cannot simultaneously be one of the chief princes and the God of gods. Okay, Michael is not the God of gods. He's under God.

So you have a number of obstacles within the book of Daniel to this equation. Of course, it doesn't stop anybody from doing it because they're just going to start with the idea that God must be (even though we're not told in the passage)... God must still be occupying this placeholder position. And not only this one, but also the Prince of the Host, and also the Angel of the Lord. And again, how do you get Michael to be one of a class of chief princes but yet distinct and above all of the other ones? I don't know. I don't see a biblical way to do that. But that's what you're confronted with if you take this position.

**TS:** Richard says:

You both have made a fundamental difference in my life. My understanding of Scripture and the way to go about studying it has helped not only me but my entire family. I am able to teach them and answer their questions with clarity and proof. My son, who is 11, is confident that if he asks me a question, I will answer him with the truth as best I know it. And if I don't know the answer, we both look it up together using the methods that Doctor and the layman have shown me. Thank you guys so much for everything you do.

**MH:** Oh, that's good.

**TS:** Fred asks:

44:55

**Numerous times in Revelation, the writer says he "saw," "looked," or "heard." Are we to understand that he recorded what he saw and heard? If so, are the Old Testament references what he saw and heard, or are they added to supply context to the reader, or for some other reason? Your presentation seems to assume that portions are taken from the writer's Old Testament knowledge.**

And I believe, Mike, you answered this. Because this confused a lot of people earlier on in Revelation. And you answered it, because I asked you, in one of the earlier Revelation episodes.

**MH:** Yeah, it was real early on, but I'll summarize it here. My view is that John is relaying what he saw and heard to his readers. After all, he's writing a lengthy letter about the apocalypse and he's intentionally connecting what he saw and heard to other prophetic voices that his audience would consider inspired. In other words, he's connecting it to the Old Testament. Why? So that they would know that John saw the fulfillment of the earlier revelation and the earlier prophecies. So John is in the same prophetic stream, and he connects the dots that have preceded him to what he is hearing and witnessing in his own lifetime. Now I also believe this is why the visions he has and the words he hears were communicated in specific ways to allow him (really, I would say, to *compel* him) to make those connections once he wrote them down in a book. I think he's presented material (information) by God or emissary angels in such a way that when he does go to write it down, it's going to be easy for him to hook into earlier prophecy, i.e., the Old Testament. So the believing community at the end of the day needs to know that John just isn't freestyling. He's not making stuff up. He's not having his own visions that don't connect to the prophetic tradition that they already embrace. The opposite is occurring. He is firmly in the stream of all that has preceded him. So he's seeing the next installment of what God has already previously revealed and expressing that in ways concretely connectable to the Old Testament—to that other inspired information.

**TS:** Toby says:

I'm a campus missionary, and started listening a few years ago. I've really benefited from this podcast. I love introducing students to the worldview and big story of the Bible, and the insights I hear on the Naked Bible help me to share more effectively with language that students can really understand. Thank you.

**MH:** That's great. That's great. That's a good audience for it.

**TS:** Anthony has our last question:

47:40

**Since we the believers have become the sons of God, according to Paul, and clearly we'll rule angels in heaven, is there more evidence in the text that show this ruling the nations language in Revelation 2 is speaking of a new earth and not a millennium period?**

**MH:** Yeah. If we presume the 1,000 years of Revelation 20 language is today (the present Church Age)... And I do. And this is part of Kline's argument—the recapitulation thing. I should back up and say, now that I've mentioned Kline, if you haven't listened to the three episodes on Revelation 19-20, what follows here is not going to make any sense to you. But I'm going to assume you have.

So if we presume, with Kline, that the 1,000 years of Revelation 20 is actually the present Church age, then what follows in Revelation 16-20... When we get the

first six verses, you get the 1,000-year language and then you get verses 7 and on. And the stuff in verses 7 and on is going to have a counterpart to material in Revelation 16-20. This is, again, all three of these episodes... You've got to listen to them. Because the issue is, you have the same things happening before and after the second coming. And John uses the same Old Testament passage on either side of that event, specifically Ezekiel 38-39. That's his major pool of information. So that when he does that, we know that the first six verses of Revelation 20 correspond to a time that precedes the second coming. This is the way you have to take it. So it is the present Church Age. So if have all this in your head, back from these three earlier episodes, there's literally no space for an in-between period of any length, much less another thousand years.

50:00

So if you go back to Revelation 2, which is spoken to churches in John's present age—his own lifetime, the churches of Asia Minor there... When he starts talking about this rulership (this shared messianic rulership language to churches in his own age), that's only going to come to fruition in the period after the beast and Satan and all the forces of chaos are done away with, which of course is after the second coming. But that puts you into the New Earth era. Note the positive language in Revelation 21-22 about "no uncleanness, no rebellion, no suffering ever being part of the human experience again." Revelation 21:2-4, Revelation 21:24-27 are good passages there. Okay? That is New Heaven, New Earth, New Jerusalem. Those are the conditions there, which tells you that that period (that description) that happens after the first six verses of Revelation 20 is not what's going on in Revelation 20. Because in between them, you have the destruction of the beast and Satan and all the forces of chaos. Again, it's like verses 6-7 in Revelation 20 is a point of demarcation. It's a dividing wall. The wall gets a lot more detail if you're reading Revelation 16-20 because the present age is going to be described, and then we're going to have the second coming and the destruction of the beast, and then we're going to have the new Jerusalem/the New Earth. This is the picture that's laid out.

Now we get confused when we [audio breaks up]...period is after Revelation 19. We think we're supposed to be reading it as strictly chronological manner. Again, the fact that John has the same set of events on both sides of the second coming and uses the Old Testament (Ezekiel 38-39) of both situations, before and after the second coming, tells you that what he's actually doing is not laying out a linear chronology. What he's doing is he's describing a before second coming, second coming, and then after second coming series of events. And he reiterates them in different ways. He reiterates the same series. He recapitulates the same series throughout Revelation 16-20. That's where it leads you. So if you're in Revelation 2 and you're looking at all these promises about ruling in the eschaton, that's after the second coming. So that's Revelation 21-22 territory.

I would say to be a bit playful here, for people in the audience that... And I understand how strange this sounds. Because most of us were trained (I was) to

assume that Revelation is supposed to be read as an unbroken linear chronology—a sequence of unbroken events—just one after the other, and that’s all we’re looking at. So to say that things repeat is quite a bit of a different approach. But I personally am driven there, really by the Armageddon episode. And again, we spent three episodes really talking about this, so I’m not going to reiterate it here.

But just to be a little bit playful, you know, why cling to your old premillennial understanding? Why do you even want it? [laughs] The New Earth is longer and better than a thousand-year millennium that is described in premillennial systems. If you’re in a traditional premillennial system, you’re waiting for another rebellion at the end of the thousand years. You know? There’s going to be an end to your millennial kingdom. Why cling to that? Why do you even want it, when the view that we have articulated here is that... And it’s not amillennialism. Again, I hate to disappoint people who can’t think outside their system boxes. But it’s not amillennialism. Because what we’re saying is that Jesus will return to earth, rule on earth, as the earthly messiah. And believers on the new earth are going to inherit messianic rule and rule the nations in real time. This is not floating in the clouds, some ethereal, off-planet existence.

55:00

And if you really want to have some fun sometime and ask some of these eschatological systems people what heaven is. It’s comical. This is where you get floating around strumming harps and doing other useless things. Okay? It just... Look. It’s a restoration of Eden. It’s going to happen in real time, just like the first one did. And we are going to enjoy it as it was meant to be enjoyed. And we are going to be partners with each other and with God in that enjoyment and in maintaining it, in whatever way God wants it done. Eden will be what it was supposed to be. That’s heaven. Okay? It’s not pearly gates and clouds. Like, “why don’t I go through the clouds?” All these ridiculous questions, like angels dancing on the head of a pin. You know. “Why opt for the systems view?” is my question—again, my playful question. I much prefer... Not only because I think it’s more biblically defensible, but I much prefer the idea that once the kingdom begins with the king here, it ain’t going to end. We don’t have an inner regnum rebellion. We don’t want to have to answer any awkward questions about death during the millennium. What’s Satan doing during the millennium? Where’s he hiding? Where’s he living at? He’s gone. There is no more sea. The sea is no more (Revelation 21:3). Chaos is gone. Period. I just think, why would you pick the other view over that? [laughs] Why? Of course, the answer is, “I like my system,” you know. And again, that’s no sin, but it just doesn’t make a whole lot of sense to me.

**TS:** Alright. Isaiah has the last comment. And he says:

Michael Heiser has been so influential to me. I can also personally relate to what he’s saying, and even more now, because I fought cancer last year, and went

through a bone marrow transplant. The podcast definitely gave me something to listen to during those long days of chemo and the hospital stays. I agree with Mike when he says the hospital beds were designed by Vlad the Impaler.

[laughter] Hey, I was just there, too, and I spent a week on the bed. But I jacked my bed way up. And it was alright. I didn't have a problem.

**MH:** Did you have one that changed positions?

**TS:** Yeah.

**MH:** Oh, man. I don't know... Why do we do this to people? Ship the beds to Guantanamo. Then everybody will talk because they have to spend another night in one of these beds.

**TS:** [laughs] Yeah, there you go. Alright. Isaiah says:

One last thing. I now have my own theology podcast, and it's definitely due to the inspiration from Mike and others like him. God bless you guys. Keep going, no matter the challenges. You are doing God's work.

Alright, awesome, Mike. Well, you know, we're halfway through the Revelation questions. That's the end of Part 3. And Mike, remind everybody the name of the two new books that are out.

**MH:** Yeah, the two new books are going to be the *Old Testament in the Book of Revelation: Notes from the Naked Bible Podcast*. The other little book, the prayer digest, is titled *Who is Like You Among the Gods: A Prayer Digest Based on the Original Biblical Languages*.

**TS:** Awesome. Perfect for Christmas gifts. Just in time for Christmas. Don't forget to go like us and subscribe to us. We need everybody. Every podcast app, Spotify, you name it. Everybody go follow us. Jack our numbers up. We need your help. That would be a good Christmas gift for us. It's the least you could do, right, Mike? For Christmas.

**MH:** [laughs] It would. It'd be nice. Why not?

**TS:** Absolutely. With that, we hope everybody's doing great, and we appreciate everybody listening to the Naked Bible Podcast! God bless.