

Prophecy1

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[0 : 00] Appreciate your presence for this initial session that has to do with the discernment, the understanding, the appreciation of Scripture, sometimes referred to as rightly dividing the word of truth.

We are going to cover this in a couple of different aspects, and this morning we will initiate the subject of prophecy and its content, and that will be countered with mystery and its content, which will follow for the 10-15 session.

And it is inevitable because there will be things that will, of course, interrupt our series, both the 9 o'clock and the 10-15, but we will do our best to maintain some semblance of connection and maintain being on track as much as we can, even though it will have some built-in flexibility to it. I would tell you how long this series would last if I knew, but I don't have any idea, and part of that will be determined by you and the kind of questions that you raise.

So what we are going to do in this initial session is just begin by some definitions, and the first one that we want to start with in connection with the kingdom and prophecy, or mystery and prophecy and mystery, is to simply get fixed in mind what we mean by the term kingdom.

[1 : 29] Now, one would think that everybody knows that and understands that, but you would be surprised. And I am confident that when it comes to talking to most Christians about the kingdom of heaven, it is very difficult for them to think in any other term other than dying and going there.

And that is the kingdom of heaven. That is where God is. And when believers check out of this life, they go to heaven where Christ is, and that's where they meet their maker, and that is the kingdom of heaven.

No, it isn't. That is heaven, and that is where God is dwelling, but that is to be distinguished between heaven, the place where the Lord is and where believers go when they die, and the kingdom of heaven.

So there is a huge difference. And I want to just give you a couple of different illustrations of that because it is commonly misunderstood, even by believers like myself who had been a Christian for probably 15 years, never saw the distinction, never made it, even though I preach from some of these texts.

And I don't mind telling you that's just a tad embarrassing to look back on that and say, well, how did I miss that? Why didn't I see that? I didn't understand that. And, you know, in part, that is the nature of the Word of God.

[2 : 57] It is inexhaustible. And I'm even embarrassed to tell you that there have been times when I've read over passages and come upon a verse and stopped and puzzled and read it and reread it and said to myself, where did that come from?

That wasn't there the last time I read this book. Well, it was too, but sometimes we just overlook those things. So the first thing we want to do is just give you a very simple definition of what we mean by the kingdom of heaven.

And the Bible uses this term kingdom in a number of different ways, and it is fatal to your understanding if you confuse them or if you make them to be the same.

The first one I want you to look at is 1 Chronicles 29. 1 Chronicles 29 and verse 11. And your King James Version renders it a little bit differently.

It uses the word kingdom. And my New American Standard talks about dominion, but the word will stand for either. In 1 Chronicles 29, 11, the text reads, Thine, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty.

[4 : 14] Indeed, everything that is in the heavens and the earth, thine is the dominion. And some translations render it, Thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou dost exalt thyself as head over all.

This is referred to as God's eternal kingdom. It always has been and it always will be, and there is nothing that will ever change it. It is the dominion or the sphere over which God has complete control and authority, and that's everything.

That the Bible refers to also as the kingdom of God, sometimes called the kingdom of heaven. Don't be confused by the distinction between the words.

They actually mean the same thing. Sometimes the word kingdom of heaven is used, as we will see many times in Matthew, but when you come to Luke's gospel, where you're talking about a parallel passage dealing with the same instance, and Luke doesn't use the term kingdom of heaven.

He uses the term kingdom of God. That has led some people to think, well, those are two different things. No, they aren't. They are both one and the same, and we can give you parallel passages that will adequately demonstrate that if you want.

[5 : 35] Then there is another that is in Psalm 145 and verse 13. If you would look at that, please. Psalm 145 and verse 13.

Same principle. Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endures throughout all generations.

This is nothing more than supportive of what we've just read in 1 Chronicles. But it isn't using that term all that much in the Bible, but what is used so much is a term that we will turn to just after we look at one more, and it's only used one time, and that is in Colossians.

This is an entirely different emphasis that needs to be kept separate from the others, and it's Colossians chapter 1. Colossians chapter 1 and verse 13.

The Apostle Paul is writing, and in verse 13 he says, For he, in reference to God the Father, For he delivered us, that is, believing Gentiles, the Colossians to whom he is writing, he delivered us from the domain of darkness and translated us to the kingdom of his beloved Son.

[7 : 07] That is a spiritual kingdom. That is a kingdom that is commensurate with the body of Christ. That kingdom is a kingdom to which all believers belong, and it has to do with being in union with Christ, referred to as the kingdom of Christ, and a synonym for that in this particular case could also be the body of Christ.

But what causes so much confusion is that which we're going to look at next, and it is found in Matthew's Gospel chapter 3. And there are several such instances in the Gospels because it is such a tremendously important concept.

You've heard me say in the past, and we've dealt with a couple of messages, that I have referred to and titled what everything is all about. Do you remember those? Well, that's what we're talking about now.

What everything is all about, in essence, is the end goal, the grand finale, that which God will have accomplished when everything is said and done, and everyone is positioned eternally wherever they're going to be, for whatever that is, and the earth has been completely redeemed, and then it has been purged of the final rebels in Revelation chapter 20, and we enter into the eternal state, and the earth that has been ruined and broken will have been completely redeemed, outfitted, equipped for all eternity.

That's the end game. Right now, the planet is in a mess. This is a fallen planet. It is occupied by fallen human beings.

[9 : 01] It is the basis for crime, for corruption, for death, for disease, for everything that's wrong with this world. It's a broken world. But what everything is all about is when everything that is broken is going to be fixed.

Call it heaven if you want, or call it utopia. The Greeks and the Jews had a word for it, and they called it the kingdom of heaven. It will be the time when everything that is broken is fixed and is made new, and God will wipe away all tears, and everything is going to be as it ought to be, not as man has messed it up.

And if you would look first at Matthew chapter 3, this is the very beginning of it, and it is something, something that God deposited in the heart and mind of the Jewish people before they were even recognized as the Jewish people.

And I'm talking about Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And if you want to go back further, you can do that. You can go to Noah and Noah's son Shem, and then you can look at the genealogy in Genesis 9 and 10, 11 and 12, and see where it filtered down to, and the line descended and came to the man, Abraham, and Abraham begat Isaac, and Isaac begat Jacob, and Jacob the 12 tribes.

And this turned out to be the world's smallest nation through whom God is going to fix the world.

[10 : 38] And you know, this is just, this is just like God to do something like that. He takes the tiniest nation, the most relatively insignificant people, and he uses them to reconstruct a broken world.

And it is going to be done through the Jewish nation because they will be the nation that will produce Yeshua HaMashiach, Jesus the Messiah.

That's God's fix-it man. He's also called the Redeemer, and he is going to redeem this broken world. The first time he came, when he was born as that baby in Bethlehem and grew to manhood, 30 years of age, when he was introduced to the nation of Israel by John the Baptist in John's Gospel, chapter 1, the message that electrified everybody was that which John started preaching and the Jewish ears perked up.

Do you hear what this man is saying? Look at it, if you will. Matthew's Gospel, chapter 3, and verse 1.

Now, in those days, John the Baptist, and let me just remind you that John the Baptist and Jesus were second cousins.

[12 : 11] Their respective mothers were first cousins, Mary and Elizabeth. So, John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, saying, repent.

Why? Why should they? And what does repent mean anyway? We've looked at the word before, and I'll just go through it again. Metanoia, compound Greek word, and it means through the mind. Meta, the word from which we get the word through, as in metastasize, metabolic, etc. If the doctor says the cancer has metastasized, that means it has spread.

That is not good news. The word metat means through, and the Greek word nous, or sometimes rendered noia, however the verb form is, literally means through the mind.

It means you process through the mind. The mind is working, and what the mind is working with is information. When you receive the gospel of Jesus Christ, you are getting information.

[13 : 28] What are you going to do with it? Well, you think about it, and you make a decision about it. You process it, and you come to a conclusion. That's the basis of your actions.

You act on what you conclude and understand to be true. So when John the Baptist came on the scene preaching this message, repent, listen, and he preached it, by the way, exclusively to Jews. Why just to Jews? Because it didn't make any sense to anybody else. Nobody else had the information. Nobody else had the message that God was going to bring a Redeemer into the world that would change everything.

Egyptians didn't know anything about that. Assyrians didn't know anything about that. Babylonians didn't know anything about it. This was a Jewish thing. So all of these people in Israel hear John making this message, and the word spreads like wildfire.

Do you know what this man's saying? And this, by the way, is prophesied. In the last book of the Old Testament, in the book of Malachi, we're told that one is going to arrive on the scene who will prepare the way of the Lord.

[14 : 40] That's John! And whose way he is preparing is Jesus. And the people understood that, and they knew that. So when this man arrives on the scene, John the Baptist, and begins preaching this message, repent for the kingdom of heaven, he's telling the people of Israel who were synced in idolatry and corruption and sin and evil of every kind, what John is telling them when he says repent is this.

Listen, people, get your act together. Change your mind about your sin. Get right with God because God's Redeemer is right around the corner.

that's the meaning of the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Right around the corner. It's very near. How so? Because the king is very near.

You can't have a kingdom without a king. And what John is saying is he's going to show up. It won't be long. And John is baptizing people and they are electrified by this message.

and they are turning out by the thousands. And then one day, lo and behold, someone different is showing up for the baptism.

[15 : 57] And John looks up and sees him and cries out, behold, the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world.

And here comes Jesus of Nazareth. So look at the text. Matthew chapter 3. In those days, John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea.

This is out nowhere. This is out in the boondocks. Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. That doesn't mean this is it, but it does mean it's really close.

I mean, you could almost reach out and touch it. It is at hand. For this is the one referred to by Isaiah the prophet. Now, how long ago was that when John is preaching this?

Isaiah spoke about this 700 years earlier. And for all of those years, every generation of Jewish people that came along thought, maybe theirs would be the one that would produce the Messiah.

[17:06] But that generation died off and another one came on. And they thought, well, maybe this will be just, and you know, this went on and on and on. And when Malachi lays down his pen, 300 years after Isaiah laid down his, then there's 400 years of no word from God at all.

The heavens are silent. No scripture revelation. No information. Just 400 silent years. Add those four to the three and you go back 700 years when Isaiah said that.

And now, now, after 700 years, this man arrives on the scene and he says to Israel, this is it! The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

And the people light up. Wow! Did you hear that? They knew exactly what he was talking about.

And let me ask you a question. Where is this kingdom of heaven that John is talking about?

where is it ever explained? It isn't. It isn't.

[18:15] It isn't. Neither John nor Jesus nor any of the twelve ever say anything like, now folks, what we mean by the kingdom of heaven is thus and so and thus.

No need to explain it. Everybody knew. Everybody understood. To explain it is like, it's like, it's like having to explain a baby crying.

You don't have to explain a baby crying. Everybody knows what a baby crying is. And that's the way it is with this kingdom of heaven. And when John began preaching this, the word spread like wildfire and the people were saying, did you hear this?

John, the Baptist, he's out there. this guy's got, he's wearing funny clothing. His diet is crazy. He's, some people think that he's a little bit touched, but he's got a message and it is electrifying and he is baptizing everybody that comes to him.

And there is no indication by the way that he's making any distinction with who he's baptizing. Now, what is all this baptizing about?

[19:26] What is this, what is this for? When a man, when a man, by the way, man, ladies, when a man who was of the tribe of Levi, had to be of the tribe of Levi, reached the age of 30, he was ceremonially cleansed, baptized, and he was baptized.

Hebrews chapter 6 uses the word washings and it's baptized in the original. It is a ceremonial purification and they did it several times.

But when a priest was inducted into the Jewish priesthood, he was baptized age 30.

that's when John began his message. Jesus is six months younger than John. Now Jesus comes on the scene and he's going to be baptized.

He comes to John for baptism and John says, I can't do this. I can't, I can't. He knew something about the identity of this one and he said, I can't, I have need to be baptized of you.

[20:46] And by the way, there is no indication, there is no indication that John was just baptizing men from the tribe of Levi.

He's baptizing everybody. What's that all about? These people, they aren't from the tribe of, they aren't priests. Oh, now wait a moment. We won't take time to go back there but you can research it if you wish at your leisure.

and in Exodus chapter 19, way back when God called Moses and Moses was leading the children of Israel, this is at Sinai, God told Moses, I'm going to make you a nation of priests.

What does that mean? A nation of priests? who were the priests up to then? Just the Levites and the Levites were the priestly nation for the other 11 tribes of Israel.

Now, John is baptizing everybody and there's no distinction. I don't know if he baptized ladies or not. My guess is probably not because of the culture of the day but he's making no distinction with the men.

[22:10] He's not asking by the way, are you from the tribe of Levi because I can't baptize you if you're not. No, no. He baptized everyone who came to him and that was their indication of their repentance.

When John said, listen, you people and he knew exactly what he was talking about and he knew what the problems were of his day and he says, you people need to confess your sin, acknowledge

your sin, get right before God and to demonstrate the validity of your act, you need to be ceremonially cleansed which would be an indication that you have done business with God and multitudes were baptized.

It was a get ready because the king is coming. You don't want to meet the king the condition that you're in, do you? Get your act together, repent of your sin, come to the Lord and they were doing that and when John saw Jesus coming and introduced him, Jesus is going to be back and how old is John now?

How old is Jesus? Now he's 30. John has probably been in his ministry for six months when Jesus arrives on the scene. Now he's old enough to be baptized but he's not from the tribe of Levi either for it is evident the writer of Hebrews says that our Lord sprang out of Judah so Jesus is going to be baptized after the order of Melchizedek a completely unique baptism that no one else would ever have so there are two priests in the order of Melchizedek one is the original Melchizedek the other is the type the Lord Jesus so this message is going to be delivered here about the kingdom of heaven make ready the way of the Lord and when Malachi closed out his book in chapter 4 3 and 4 he's talking about this very prophecy and John goes on and gives the indication here of who and then verse 13 Jesus is baptized this is all the kingdom of heaven now look if you will at chapter 4 we're just going to run through this quickly because we'll stay right here in Matthew chapter 4 and verse 17 from that time

Jesus began to preach and say repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand that sounds like the same thing that John's preaching well it is it's identical that's the message this is get ready because God is going to fix this broken world and he's going to redeem the whole globe and he's going to do it through one man the redeemer and this redeemer is going to present himself to Israel as their Messiah then Israel is going to be given the information about Jesus of Nazareth and they are going to process the information the common people who will hear him gladly process the information they see the miracles that Jesus is doing and they conclude this man has to be the real deal even one of the Pharisees

[25 : 33] Nicodemus says we know that no man can do these miracles that you do unless God is with him you have got to be the Messiah and the common people heard him gladly they got on board Jesus drew crowds of thousands but the common people were just the common people the shakers and movers the elite the ruling class said well yeah he does cast out demons you know how he does that don't you he does that through the power of Beelzebub he uses the devil to cast out demons it's all a scam don't you see it don't you get it poor common people couldn't understand anything and they consider the common people who believed and received Jesus as just being a bunch of country bumpkins who didn't understand anything truth be told there are some in Washington who consider you just to go to country country bumpkins too who don't know anything they are the elite they are the shakers you see every culture and every society has these elements it's always been that way there's the ruling class and then there are those who are ruled so it was the intelligentsia who turned thumbs down on Jesus the Messiah we will not have this man to rule over us and instead of welcoming him and embracing him as the Messiah they entered into a conspiracy with the chief priests and the elite and the shakers and movers to have him done away with so let's hasten through some more of these chapter 5 verse 3 blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven now again he's not talking about people who are dying and going to heaven therein lies one of the greatest misunderstandings in all of

Christendom they make the kingdom of heaven and the heaven where God dwells is being the same and they are not they are radically different never lose sight of this one fact the kingdom of heaven is on earth it's on this planet it's on this sphere this is the kingdom of heaven and the reason it is referred to as heaven while it is on earth is in fact it will be the kingdom of heaven come to earth we sometimes talk about heaven on earth well that's what it will be only it'll be literally it will be the kingdom of heaven on earth and right here in Matthew a very familiar passage come over if you with a chapter 7 I'm sorry chapter 6 very familiar passage verse 8 Jesus is addressing the crowd and he says therefore do not be like them for your father knows what you need before you ask him pray then in this way our father who art in heaven okay that is the location that's a sphere of where God is he's in heaven and by the way none of us know where that is all we know is out there somewhere because remember remember in Acts chapter 1 when the disciples were standing there and Jesus ascended right before them and he went up into heaven he went up into heaven and finally he was out of sight they just couldn't see him anymore so the tendency I guess is to think

that heaven is up but heaven up from Jerusalem is different from heaven up in Springfield Ohio isn't it the last I heard it was it's different so exactly where is this I don't know I don't know out there up there whatever all I know is this it is where the father is it is where he is and this is what makes heaven heaven is where he is so heaven on earth is going to be heaven because of who makes it what it is which is of course the son of God so our father who art in heaven hallowed be thy name thy kingdom come that's a prayer it is a prayer for what is realized in heaven and what is it that's realized in heaven it is the will of the father being done in heaven and the prayer is for the will of the father being done in heaven come to earth so that the will of the father in heaven will be done on earth as it is in heaven and folks this isn't it this isn't it we don't need to spend any time on that do we this is certainly not heaven on earth this is what the prayer is for and if you will come over to chapter 6 and verse 1

I'm sorry I've got too many references here and this again well 6:1 is before practicing your righteousness before men to be noted by them otherwise you have no reward with your father who is in heaven so heaven and where the father is is not to be confused with the kingdom of heaven which is here on earth but it is a common misunderstanding most people have even most Christians and boy once you get that error fixed in your mind it is hard to make sense of what the kingdom program is really all about in chapter 7 and verse 21 we've got an interesting expression here not everyone Jesus says not everyone who says to me Lord Lord will enter the kingdom of heaven but he who does the will of my father who is in heaven and the tendency is to think same thing nope two different things here two different heavens one's on earth and one is in heaven and once that distinction is made it is just well it was really eye opening well

I want to have some time for Q&A; so I'm going to have to eliminate some of these things in chapter chapter 10 verses 5 through 8 these 12 this is when Jesus chose the 12 disciples these 12 Jesus sent out after instructing them saying do not go in the way of the Gentiles and let me for the record just insert here who are the Gentiles any people who are not Jews so what he's saying is this is an exclusive message not to be preached to everyone because not everyone even has an appreciation for it anticipation of it or even has an awareness of what you're talking about but the Jews do those who are Israelites they know exactly what you're talking about when you talk about the kingdom of heaven so here's what we read where am

[33 : 49] I chapter 10 verse 5 okay do not go in the way of the Gentiles and do not enter any city of the Samaritans but rather go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel confine your ministry to them why because Jesus didn't come to them now hear me well very important distinction Jesus did not come to the world he came to Israel for the world Israel is to be the target nation Israel is to be the catalyst for all the rest of the world getting on board that's the message that's being preached and what they are saying what

John is saying and what Jesus is saying is Israel here is your long awaited opportunity this is what you've been dreaming of and thinking of and praying of praying for for years and years and years and now this is it no wonder these people were excited these people were living with corruption they were living with death disease blindness cripple cancer palsy you name it they were living with all these things that's part and parcel of a broken world and we do the best we can with medical science to try to fix all of those things and do you realize do you realize how many things how many things our doctors cure not much they treat everything everything is treatable I don't care what it is everything is treatable but not very much is curable

Jesus didn't treat anybody he cured everybody whatever it was they were made whole that's incredible how can he do that the only way he could do that was because of who he was that's what made him so special because of who he was Jesus was able to do what he did because he was who he was and it was because he was who he was that he was willing to do what he did amazing nobody has ever lived like this before so he tells them go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel and as you preach saying the kingdom of heaven is at hand now question why should anybody believe you anybody can go about preaching anything they want what have you got to back it up why should anyone believe you well look at the next verse heal the sick raise the dead cleanse the lepers cast out demons that'll make believers out of them they'll be persuaded then that was

Jesus calling card that was how he authenticated his claims to be the Messiah no man can do these miracles that thou doest except God be with him this is one of the most not one of the most folks this is the most electrifying time in the history of the planet amazing what Joe you've got to

give the makers the shakers and the tire-ups at the time some you can't put them down so much because they're just like the ones are today okay back then the Romans had a law that when they came to power old religions could be and go ahead and practice their practices and so forth like the Jews could have their temple and do their worshipping but new religions came up no that was illegal that was against the Romans you can't have no more new religions are going to get started and so forth so these makers and shakers all the time they were concerned now that Jesus of course came in and people were starting to drift over to a you know believe something else and there were crowds here things were being stirred up the peace wasn't being kept the Romans meant for the Jews to keep the peace and you take control of your people we want you to regulate your people and long as you do that you can just live there happily ever after just like you are we won't bother you but these makers and shakers were so worried that this was going to disturb the peace and so forth and then the Romans were going to come down on them and if you read Lazarus the episode of Lazarus right there and then I figured which priest it was or which one of the higher shakers and shakers talked right when Lazarus was raised from the dead by Jesus they said oh man we got we got to do something about this because if we don't all men will believe in him and the Romans will come and take away our place and our position yeah absolutely that played in that was one of the items of drama that had to be contended with no question about it that's what they were so concerned about you know they were doing fine now everything was kind of life was good for them so here comes Jesus along to disrupt things and so they were making the flesh or themselves rather than spiritual are you suggesting that the shakers and movers constituted the deep state of

[39 : 29] Israel at the time yeah well it kind of looks that way doesn't it I mean they were entrenched they were insolid and Jesus among other things was a big interrupter and he didn't play according to the rules that had been established Terry okay yeah okay yeah okay with the Romans, you know.

That's why he went to prison and so forth because here he is, you know, stirring up things and doing things that's not right, not according to the law. So, not only the Judaizers. Joe, I'm sorry. I'm going to have to cut you off because you're not on the mic.

We didn't get a pickup. So, Terry's got a mic back here now. Was water baptism ever required for salvation? Water baptism was not required for salvation, but it was required as a...in fact, salvation is a very dubious term when you're talking about the Old Testament. It was obvious that the water baptism was essential for those who claimed to have repented of their sin and that was the evidence of it. And for someone, for instance, for a Jew to have said, well, in accordance with what you've said, John, about repent, I've done that.

But I'm not going to be baptized. Forget that. I'm not going to do that. I ask that question because you previously mentioned that you didn't know for sure that women were baptized by John the Baptist because of the culture.

Yeah. And I just wondered, if it was required for salvation, then no woman would ever go to heaven. Yeah, well, yeah, I see your thinking there. But the tendency is to take what is most often passed off today as Christian baptism and read it back into the Jewish rite of baptism, such as John the Baptist was performing, is a big, big mistake.

[41 : 45] But most people do that. And I speak as one from experience because that's what I did for a number of years. Many of you know that I was, the whole nine yards, saved in a Baptist church, married in a Baptist church, ordained in a Baptist church, baptized in a Baptist church, and knew the Baptist party line frontwards and backwards.

And the first time I heard what I am going to be teaching you, my response was, well, that's crazy. That can't be. But as I came to discover, it not only was, but it had to be that way.

And anything else is a clear contradiction. So we'll get to that eventually too. Did somebody else have a comment? A young man here with a microphone. Come up here. What's your name, son? Logan. Pardon? Logan. Logan. Thank you, Logan, for your young legs. So back to the question of the kingdom of God versus the kingdom of heaven.

I, this was years ago, read this book that tried to make a distinction saying that they were two different things. And it became really odd at points where he basically compared two verses, one in Matthew and one in Luke, for example, where he's talking about the exact same thing almost, except one would use kingdom of God and kingdom of heaven.

[43 : 03] But I was reading through, E.W. Bollinger has a book on figures of speech. Yeah. And he was talking about the use of that phrase. And there's a figure of speech called a metonymy where we use things like ideas or locations to reference other things.

Right. And one example is the White House, for example. Right. Word from the White House was received. Yeah. And so we can talk about word from the White House or a word from Trump, let's say, today.

And it's talking about the exact same thing, but it's a figure of speech. Yeah, absolutely. That really helped me a lot. Thank you. And along that line, dealing with those things, Jason Lou Baxter, my privilege to hear him at the Park of the Pines in Seattle, Washington, probably in the 1970s.

He was a consummate English clergyman, Baptist clergyman, one of the best Bible scholars that I've ever read after. And he's got a volume, marvelous volume, called Explore the Book.

And he pretty much reaches these same conclusions that we're sharing with you. And he's from the Baptist denomination, too, by the way.

[44 : 16] That was the first buzzer. Another question up here. Would you bring the mic up here, please? Thank you, Logan, for being on the job. Thanks, Logan. This question has been on my mind for a long time.

What do you think would have happened if Jesus had been accepted then? If the shakers and the movers had seen him as the Messiah, did he have to be rejected?

Did he have to be killed? Or do you think God had a plan B that would provide salvation for the world?

Okay. Good thinking question. And let me just begin by saying God doesn't have any plan B's. And what has turned out to appear to be plan B, which is the amalgamation of Jew and Gentile together in one body, was something that was in the mind and heart of God from time immemorial, but it was just not revealed, as Paul says in Ephesians.

And it was absolutely essential in order for salvation for a ruined world to be provided, that Christ had to make that sacrificial payment to balance the moral scales of heaven in order for God to be able to forgive us.

[45 : 43] And that way, God's justice was satisfied. He didn't look the other way. Full payment was made. Now the question is, what if they had received him as their Messiah, which is in effect a hypothetical, and there is no way that that could have happened for the simple reason that it was prophesied that they would not receive him.

He was despised and rejected of men, a man acquainted with sorrows. We hid our faces from him, et cetera. So let me put it this way. Okay. Now, God knew full well in advance, as is evidenced by the various prophets, what the outcome was going to be when Jesus was presented as the Messiah.

And the fact that something was prophesied, predicted, which God knew was going to come to pass, doesn't make God responsible for it having been done.

There's an important distinction to be made there. In other words, we have another example where Judas is referred to as the friend who will betray him, who has eaten bread with him.

And it was known by the Lord from time past that Judas was going to betray Jesus. In fact, he even said that early on. Jesus said, have not I chosen you 12 and one of you is a traitor, is going to betray me.

[47 : 13] To prophesy that one is going to betray him and to prophesy that it will be one like Judas doesn't mean that Judas was pre-programmed, had no choice but to disobey.

The same way, it doesn't mean that the shakers and movers of Israel were pre-programmed and they had no choice but to reject Jesus as their Messiah so that he would then go to the cross and pay for the sins of the world.

Predicting something that is going to transpire does not make the one who predicts it responsible for it happening. Huge difference. Do you see what I'm saying? No.

You don't see what I'm saying? No. Okay. It seems to me that they were on the plan and that they were supposed to do that.

Otherwise... They weren't supposed to do that and they are going to be held accountable for having done it. But the prophecy simply recorded what was going to transpire when they were confronted with the choices.

[48 : 21] That doesn't mean that God made them make those choices. There is human responsibility on the one hand for which man is culpable and there is divine...

There is divine... Insight as to what the future holds that is going to transpire. But that doesn't mean that God made them do...

In other words, I'm saying God knew and it was prophesied that Judas was going to betray Jesus. But Judas wasn't in the position of where he says, You know, I really don't want to do this but I'm doing it against my will.

I have no choice because I've been set up for this and I have to do it. No, he didn't have to do it. But suppose he hadn't. Then, well, I mean, who would have done it? Now you're supposing a hypothetical which is an impossible situation to deal with.

Joe? I give an analogy type of thing. My kids, I could predict, I'm not God of course, but I could predict they will not eat their vegetables.

[49 : 20] They will not eat their vegetables when I put it on their plate. Okay. So we put vegetables on their plate. Now they have a choice to eat them or not eat them.

They're not going to eat them. I know that as God, they're not going to eat them but they still make that choice of eating those vegetables or not. And you did not prevent them hovering over them saying, Don't you eat those vegetables?

That's right. They have a choice but I knew they weren't going to eat them ahead of time. Yeah. And when you try to deal with hypotheticals and the outcome of that, that's an impossible situation because there are too many unknowns and variables.

I mean, you can't go through life saying, What if? What if? What if? We try to do that with those who have passed on.

We have regrets and we say, What if? What if I had done thus and so? What if I had required thus and so? What if I had come earlier? What if I had come later?

[50 : 24] What if? What if? Don't get your life entangled with what ifs. It's a maddening thing and there's no way out of it. So, that's a common fallacy. And by the way, we haven't scratched the surface on this but we have scratched the scratch on the surface.

So, we will continue and in the morning session that will follow, we'll be off of, we'll be off of prophecy on to mystery which is the counterpart. Almost the exact opposite of what we're talking about and I think you'll see that when we develop it.

Alright, the Lord bless you and enjoy your coffee break.