**“Hot Button Questions”**

**Part 1**

**3/13/19**

**I got to as many of the questions as I could. They were all good and I will try to hit the others next time.**

**Q: When Jesus says in Luke 24:39, “Look at my hands, look at my feet. You can see that it's really me. Touch me and make sure that I am not a ghost. Because ghosts don't have bodies, as you see that I do.”**

**There are people in my family that say they have ghost living within their homes, explain to me what a ghost is?**

**A: The term “ghost” is translated from the Greek word “pneuma” which means *spirit or breath*. So yes, there are spirit beings—angels and demons.**

**If by ghost you mean “spirits of people who have died,” the answer is no. The Bible negates the idea that the spirits of deceased human beings can remain on earth and “haunt” the living.**

**Hebrews 9:27 declares, “Man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment.”**

**That is what happens to a person’s soul/spirit after death—either heaven if a Christian, or the judgment. There is no in-between. There is no possibility of remaining on earth in spirit form as a “ghost.”**

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**Q: Who are the two witnesses in Revelation 11:3-12? They were dead for 3 days and the people where glad. And did the rapture of the church already happen (at this point)?**

**A: Okay, let’s read about the two witnesses: “And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will be clothed in burlap and will prophesy during those 1,260 days...5 If anyone tries to harm them, fire flashes from their mouths and consumes their enemies. This is how anyone who tries to harm them must die. 6 They have power to shut the sky so that no rain will fall for as long as they prophesy. And they have the power to turn the rivers and oceans into blood, and to strike the earth with every kind of plague as often as they wish.” (11:3; 5-6)**

**The Bible says that after 3.5 years of ministry, the two witnesses will be killed by the antichrist (the beast). Then, “But after three and a half days, God breathed life into them, and they stood up! Terror struck all who were staring at them. 12 Then a loud voice from heaven called to the two prophets, “Come up here!” And they rose to heaven in a cloud as their enemies watched.” (11:11-12)**

**Most believe that Moses and Elijah are the strongest possibilities for the two witnesses due to 1.) the witnesses' power to turn water into blood ([Revelation 11:6](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Rev%2011.6)), which Moses is known for, and 2.) their power to destroy people with fire ([Revelation 11:5](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Rev%2011.5)), which Elijah is known for.**

**Also giving strength to this view is the fact that Moses and Elijah appeared with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration ([Matthew 17:3-4](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matt%2017.3-4)).**

**And yes, I believe the rapture of the church has happened prior to this event, since the 2 witnesses minister during the Great Tribulation.**

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**Q: I believe that Israel is a sort of countdown clock we can biblically look at in reference to end times events. With everything happening between Israel, Russia, Syria, Iran etc., it certainly looks as though the stage is being definitively set for Ezekiel 38 to take place SOON! My question is, does this battle take place during the tribulation period?**

**A: Ezekiel 38 is the prediction of an end time coalition of 6 nations that will unite to attack Israel in the last days. They are named as:**

***Magog—*Modern day Russia,**

***Persia*—Modern day Iran,**

***Cush—*Modern day Ethiopia,**

***Put*—Modern day Libya,**

***Gomer*—Modern day Eastern Europe, and**

**Beth *Togarmah*—Modern day Turkey.**

**Ezekiel prophesies that these nations will come down “like a storm, covering the land like a cloud” (38:9).**

**And he is clear that it will take place “In the latter years...you will come into the land of those brought back from the sword *and* gathered from many people on the mountains of Israel, which had long been desolate; they were brought out of the nations, and now all of them dwell safely.” (38:8)**

**So it will be in the last days and Israel will have experienced a return of the Jewish people to their homeland. This has already happened!**

**It seems that this war (the Ezekiel war) could serve as the fuse to Armageddon. It is distinctly NOT Armageddon itself as the players are different, the location of battle is different, and the outcome is different.**

**But it could very well be that Ezekiel’s war is the opening event of the Great Tribulation. When Russia attacks with this coalition of enemy nations, it could signify that the "first angel" who blows the first Trumpet of the tribulation period has sounded.**

**Rev.8:7 “The first angel sounded: And hail and fire followed, mingled with blood, and they were thrown to the earth. And a third of the trees were burned up, and all green grass was burned up.”**

**The hail and fire mingled with blood, and the ecological destruction of a third of the planet is identical to what Ezekiel describes in 38-39.**

**It’s interesting to note that each of the 6 nations that Ezekiel mentioned 600 years before the birth of Christ, and 2,700 years ago from our vantage point, are alive and well today. And ALL of them except Russia are virulently anti-Semitic, anti-Israel, pro Islamic, and long for the destruction of Israel!**

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**Q: I’ve heard many ideas on the following passage (quoting Jesus):**

**“But when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION standing where it should not be (let the reader understand), then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains. The one who is on the housetop must not go down, or go in to get anything out of his house; and the one who is in the field must not turn back to get his coat. But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! But pray that it may not happen in the winter. For those days will be a time of tribulation such as has not occurred since the beginning of the creation which God created until now, and never will. Unless the Lord had shortened those days, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect, whom He chose, He shortened the days.” (Mark [13:14-20](x-apple-data-detectors://13) NASB)**

**Some say parts of Jesus’s prediction refer to the destruction of the first temple and the Masada slaughter, while some speak to the time of Antichrist. What do you say?**

**A: These are the words of Jesus in answer to the disciple’s question regarding the destruction of the Temple He had just predicted. They asked, “Tell us, when will these things be? And what *will be* the sign when all these things will be fulfilled?” (Mk. 13:4).**

**Now, the “abomination of desolation” is mentioned 3 times by Daniel in chapters 9-11. The word “abomination” refers to a great sin, commonly worthy of death, where God’s covenants are trampled on.**

**The “abomination of desolation” refers directly to Daniel’s prophecies that someone would defile the holy place in the temple. Such an act would trigger God’s judgment bringing desolation.**

**We know that a man named Antiochus Epiphanes was the first to fulfill Daniel’s prediction. Antiochus was a king in Palestine in the years 175-64 B.C. He hated the Jewish people and showed it by invading the Temple, sacrificing a pig on the altar, and erecting a statue of Zeus in the holy place.**

**But this happened BEFORE Jesus’ prediction of another Abomination of Desolation yet to come.**

**The immediate fulfillment of His prediction took place in 70 AD when the Romans surrounded Jerusalem, and finally invaded it, killing over 1 million Jews and taking 95,000 prisoners.**

**When they had destroyed the city, the commander entered the Temple. Now, the Romans always carried with them idolatrous images of the Emperor and of Zeus. Jesus had specified, when you see the Abomination that makes desolate “standing in the holy place.” So it would seem that when the commander stood there with idolatrous artifacts on his person, this was a partial fulfillment of Jesus’ prediction.**

**But there will be one more abomination of desolation in the days of the antichrist. For Daniel predicted that another person who would commit the abomination of desolation will have made a 7 year peace treaty with Israel, which the Romans of Jesus’ day never did.**

**This will be the antichrist. Halfway through the Great Tribulation period, he will enter a rebuilt Temple and declare himself to be God. This will be the final fulfillment of Jesus’ prediction regarding the Abomination of Desolation.**

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**Q: What is the gap theory?**

**A: The gap theory is the view that God created a fully functional earth with all animals, including the dinosaurs and other creatures we know only from the fossil record.**

**Then, the theory goes, something happened to destroy the earth completely between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2, hence “the gap.”**

**“1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. 2 Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.”**

**The event that the proponents of the Gap Theory claim happened between the two verses is most likely the fall of Satan to earth, so that the planet came under God’s judgment and everything on it was destroyed, leaving it “without form and void.”**

**At this point, God started all over again, recreating the earth in its paradise form as further described in Genesis. But the time that passed between verses one and two was a “gap” of millions of years.**

**This is how Gap theorists account for the earth being, as evolutionists claim, hundreds of millions of years old. It is also their way of explaining the sudden disappearance of the dinosaurs, and so forth.**

**The problem with the gap theory is first, it requires that creation suffer death and destruction *before* Adam’s fall, when Satan was judged.**

**But the Bible says that it was *after* Adam’s fall that the creation suffered. After discussing all the negative effects sin brought on our world, Paul goes on to say:**

**“19 For all creation is waiting patiently and hopefully for that future day when God will resurrect his children. 20-21 For on that day thorns and thistles, sin, death, and decay—the things that overcame the world against its will at God’s command—will all disappear, and the world around us will share in the glorious freedom from sin which God’s children enjoy. 22 For we know that even the things of nature, like animals and plants, suffer in sickness and death as they await this great event” (Ro. 8:19-22 LB).**

**A second problem with the gap theory is the idea that, if something important had occurred between [Genesis 1:1](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Gen%201.1) and [2](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Genesis%201.2), God would have told us so, rather than leave us to speculate in ignorance.**

**Also, [Genesis 1:31](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Gen%201.31) says God declared His creation to be “very good”—a statement difficult to square with the theory that evil already existed because of Satan’s fall in the “gap.”**

**Last question:**

**Q: What is the land of “Nod?”**

**A: Dead churches on Sunday morning!**

**No, the land of Nod is the land of Nod is a place mentioned in the [Book of Genesis](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Book_of_Genesis), located “on the east of Eden.” It is the place where [Cain](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cain) was exiled by God after murdering his brother [Abel](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abel).**

**Genesis 4:16: “And Cain went out from the presence of the LORD, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden.”**

**"Nod" is the Hebrew root of the verb "to wander.” So to dwell in the land of Nod is usually taken to mean that one takes up a wandering life.**

**I think it can also represent the life of sin, separated from God, where one wanders in spiritual lostness until turning to Christ.**

**LET’S STAND!!**