

Matthew 22-06-05b

It's a wonderful reminder that God in his mighty power is looking out for us. We have nothing to fear. We can watch with interest.

As from the safety of the bleachers, it's like watching hockey and you're behind the plexiglass. You can be very close to the action, but you're not going to get hit by the puck. And it is because of not just the mighty power of God, but his power exercised on our behalf.

Let's resume our study now. We're looking at Matthew chapter 24 and the gospel is preached to the whole world. There shall be a time of tribulation, unprecedented.

Verse 15, when you see the abomination of desolation, we saw this in Daniel 9, 27. The last time we were in our study, we saw it in the chapter 11. But when you get to Daniel chapter 12, at that time, Michael shall stand up, the great prince who stands over the sons of your people.

Who is the guardian angel for the nation of Israel? It is Michael. He is one of the named cherubim in scripture. And Michael is the national guardian angel who stands over.

You have stands watch in your New King James, but watches in italics. He stands over for all kinds of purposes. He is watching.

He is intervening. He is interposing himself in interest of God's people, Israel, when there is a spiritual conflict. And we see this in other passages.

Who is it that stands up because he stands over the church? Do we have a guardian angel like unto Michael? No. Who stands over us? Who is the head of all things to the church? It is the Lord Jesus Christ himself. What a privilege.

What a comfort. There is not even an intermediate angel between us and the Lord God in heaven. Jesus Christ himself represents us, intercedes on our behalf.

He stands over us. He has walked in our flesh. We do not have a high priest unacquainted with our struggles and our challenges and the opposition that we face.

He has been there and done that. And he has got the white robe stained with blood to prove it. Blood, of course, is a symbol of physical life on this earth, isn't it? Animal blood, human blood, most of all.

But the lamb as it had been slain is a reminder that the Lord Jesus has been here and he knows exactly what it is like to be me. He knows exactly what it is like to be you and then some. It is an a fortiori principle.

If he has experienced even worse than anything we are ever going to face, he can

certainly understand our struggles, our challenges, opposition to us from outside as well as from within and from the devil himself. But at that time, Michael shall stand up, the great prince who stands over the sons of your people, and there shall be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation. This is conflict.

It does not say at that time Satan is going to stand up or at that time the principalities, powers and rulers of the darkness of this age are going to stand up. At that time Michael stands up and when he stands up there is going to be a time of trouble. Why? Because that last seven years is going to be Satan's effort to ultimately and forever extinguish the Israelite people of God.

You have the 144,000, 12,000 from each tribe and you have Michael, the great prince archangel assigned to watch over God's people. He is going to have to stand up because there is going to be... Why has he been sitting down by the way? We're in Daniel 12. At that time Michael shall stand up.

Why has he been sitting down? Why is the Lord Jesus sitting down? The Lord Jesus is currently sitting down. Why? Because he has a ministry at the Father's right hand and his work is complete. I can take you to scriptures, Paul talking about when his work was complete he sat down at the Father's right hand because his work was finished.

Now he's not going to remain seated forever. When will he stand up? Does he remain seated at the Father's right hand and call us and we fly through the air into the third heaven and appear before his throne? The Lord Jesus is going to stand up on our behalf with a shout, the voice of the archangel and the trump of God and the dead are going to rise. We who are alive and remain will be caught up together to meet the Lord in the air.

He's not seated in the air. He comes for us. He stands up.

He leaves his Father's throne room and comes to stand up for us and to stand us up. Those who are asleep in the grave will stand up. Standing up means it is time for action on behalf of God's people when you're talking about the representative.

So Michael, why is he sitting down? Because for at least two millennia it has not been the age of Israel and there is no Israel to stand up for. Jewish people who come to faith are entered into the roles of the body of Christ. There is no Israel.

So Michael is taking a break. He stood up for Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and the 12 tribes and all through those years of the monarchy and the divided monarchy and the captivity and the post-exilic period and the intervening period, the intertestamental period of the Maccabees and so on. And during the childhood of the Lord Jesus Christ and the early years of his ministry, Michael is standing up because there is a nation of Israel.

But at the point that the Lord Jesus ascends and goes to glory and the Holy Spirit is sent down to this earth, the Holy Spirit stands up for God's people and the Lord Jesus is

seated. The Holy back and forth, making Scripture clear to us, conveying our prayers to heaven. Jesus said, when I go, I will send another comforter.

He will lead you. He will guide you. He will transfer your prayers with groanings that cannot be uttered.

And he will suppress the evil one until he is taken out of the way. Then the man of sin will be revealed. And when the Holy Spirit leaves in and with us at the rapture, now Michael's got to stand up because there's going to be a time of trouble and the Holy Spirit is not the one suppressing the wicked one.

Michael is going to stand up. Very fascinating. 12.1 here of Daniel.

Michael shall stand up, the great prince who stands over the sons of your people. This is the children of your people. And there shall be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation.

Notice, nation. And at that time, your people shall be delivered who? What's the last phrase in 12.1 there? Everyone who is found written in the book. The book of remembrance is written in Malachi and that book is open.

God knows them that are his. The Lord Jesus knows them that are his. But there is a book of remembrance and people will be delivered.

Delivered from death, from the grave, from oppression and suppression and attack in the tribulation. Whether they are asleep or whether they are awake, they will be delivered if they are written in the book. Who's written in the book? What we find out in Malachi this past Wednesday.

Who's written in the book? Those who fear the Lord, those who are fearing the Lord as an ongoing condition and who reflect in a meaningful and actionable way upon his name. His name makes a difference. What's the third commandment? What's the first commandment on the tables of the law? Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image. What's number three? Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord your God in vain. Instead of taking it in you reflect on it.

It makes a difference. It's the agape action. If agape means actionable love, that word we saw, I think it's shakav, means to take action based on your reverence and your honor and your love for God's name.

Those people are written in the book. So the book will be open. Everyone who is found written in the book will be delivered.

They will be raised from the grave. They will be rescued from the tribulation and they will enter in an enhanced form with enhanced mortality. Mortality like unto the Lord Jesus.

Can you imagine how long the Lord Jesus might have lived if he had not been crucified under a completely imaginary plan of God? Sinless. Remember the pre-flood days when people lived for centuries? Methuselah 969 years. Noah was 600 when it was time to build the ark and the flood came and so on.

Great length of days because sin will be removed. God will pour his spirit out on their flesh. This is his new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah.

He will take out their heart of stone and give them a heart of flesh. He will put his law in their hearts and in their minds and he will pour his spirit out. They will have the word and the spirit.

Who's got the word and the spirit already? That would be you and me. That would be us. That would be we.

We have the opportunity to have his name make a difference and ensure that we are written in the book of life and it is life not just assigned in terms of not being cast into the lake of fire, but life in its quality, life in its opportunity, life in its potential. When you bend those branches and they are green and spring is near, what's going to happen when spring comes and when early summer comes? There is going to be the flower, the bud, the fruit. Life yields fruit.

That's why we have fruit trees. That's why we have grain crops. That's why we have livestock.

They reproduce. There is fruitfulness. Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth.

To be fruitful and multiply spiritually is an individual response to the opportunity to do so. So very fascinating there in Daniel 12.1. We saw that this abomination of desolation is both a literal fulfillment before the time of Christ and in the future seven years, the latter part of that 70th week of Daniel. And it is spiritually true in the latter days of the intervening period, which is now, which is us.

This is also talked about in Luke 19.43. If you don't have that parallel in your Bible or in your notes, be sure and put it in because this is the parallel condition to Matthew 24.15 and Mark 13.14, which both say when you see the abomination of desolation, this is when you take action. The parallel in Luke 19.43, days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side. This is a concomitant.

This accompanies, this travels with the abomination of desolation. Do you as a believer with your Christian views, with your biblical morality, do you feel that society has been building embankments around you and is surrounding you and hemming you in on every side, restricting your freedom, restricting your opportunities, restricting what you can say in a classroom, restricting what you can say in a public forum, restricting what you

can say on social media? The embankment, spiritually speaking, is up. We are surrounded by a majority of people who think we are benighted.

We are a relic of prehistoric Neolithic days. We are Neanderthals. We are backward.

We're unscientific and we need to be contained. We need to be controlled. We need to be limited.

Our ideas and our speech and our Bible need to be purged from the conversation. We're a dangerous, benighted group. There is an embankment.

We are surrounded. But like the Marines in Korea, you know the advantage of being surrounded? You can charge in any direction. You can advance in any direction.

That's how Marines look at being surrounded, at least how they used to. And that's how we look. I sing the mighty power of God.

If God be for us, who can be against us? Greater is He that is in you than He that is in the world. And it's kind of like, you know, surrounding believers is kind of like jumping on a grenade. I've got it surrounded.

Yeah, just wait. We have someone even more powerful than Michael that is standing up on our behalf in the very near future. So, Luke 19.43 and 21.20 in Luke, the sign will be Jerusalem surrounded by armies.

Know that its desolation is near. When you see Jerusalem surrounded by army, know that its desolation is near. Jerusalem, once again, just as we saw Judea, is the center of organized religion.

And if you did not heed the Lord's words, that as soon as you see the abomination, get out of Jerusalem. Don't prize your possessions, your opportunities, your standing. Don't run in to get your coat.

Don't go back to get your clothing. As soon as you see the abomination, flee. You will be in the hills when Jerusalem is surrounded and organized religion is destroyed.

Do you remember the red, white, and blue-robed woman riding the beast with the seven heads and ten horns? What happens to that woman? Drunk with the contents of that cup she holds in her hand, which is the blood of the saints. Exploitation of the people of God, up to and including martyrdom of them over time and over the centuries. Organized religion, that beast turns around and gores her to death, right? Destruction of Jerusalem.

In our picture, in our day, you know, it reminds me of, I can't remember if it was Will Rogers, I think it was Will Rogers that said, I'm not a member of any organized political party. I'm a Democrat. You can be a and not be a party to organized religion.

But that's what is spoken of here. Turn with me to 2 Thessalonians chapter 2. 2 Thessalonians chapter 2. After the standing away in 2 Thessalonians 2, 3, and the man of sin is revealed, here is his description. He opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped.

Is that not what we just saw in our first session? Is that not what's happening today? Those who count themselves to be thought leaders and proponents and talking heads and influencers in our current day, do they not oppose themselves against everything that is called God or that is worshiped, that is valued as holy, as sanctified, as proper, as true, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, in the place of God, where God's presence ought to be. This presence occupies it. Occupy Wall Street.

How about occupy the temple? How about occupy the city? How about declare this to be my space and you can't enter and your police can't come in? We saw this in recent months. People declaring a patch of a city to be their own and you stay out. My body is my own.

You stay out. I can do what I want with my body and anything therein. Sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.

I will dictate morality. I will dispense the law from Sinai. I will tell you what is right and what is wrong.

You will obey me or you will be destroyed. This caricature of God is what this individual becomes. This is the beast.

So this abomination of desolation, you find a continuation of this description in Revelation chapter 13 verses 14 through 17. This individual who sets himself up in the place of God deceives those who dwell on the earth. This is Revelation 13, 14.

How does he deceive them? By signs, which he was granted to do in the sight of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who was wounded by the sword and lived. There is a false death and resurrection. And so the second beast is going to demand worship of the first beast and he deceives those who dwell on the earth.

He is granted to perform signs in the sight of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who was wounded by the sword and lived. He was granted to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed. You get the idea that this in our day, one possible implementation, one possible way that this could be fulfilled is that you have an AI that is given life in the sense that it goes forth as a very sophisticated machine with intelligence gathering capabilities.

It can gather data on everyone. Everybody listening to the sound of my voice has freely

given away many gigabytes of data. If someone were to take an interest in you and if they have access to the data, they can tell where you have been ever since you've owned a cell phone.

They can tell every purchase that you've made from Amazon, including whatever aches and pains you might have or whatever braces or helps you might need for your physical inabilities. They know the products you buy. They know your likes and dislikes for food.

They see your purchases online. They know what car you drive, what parts you've purchased for it. They know whether you run a Windows machine or an Apple.

They know what software you're interested in. They know if you're interested in genealogy or flowers. Everything that you've ever googled and searched on because you had an interest or wanted more information, it's all up there.

You cannot retrieve it. You cannot delete it. It is all up there.

Everyone you have ever called, every word of text you have ever typed, every email you have ever sent or received, every group you are a part of, every license you have renewed, every part of your medical history. And don't kid yourself, HIPAA notwithstanding, privacy rules notwithstanding. If somebody wants to know your health situation, it is trivially easy to get into your medical records and find out everything about you.

Every blood test, every CT scan, every x-ray, it is all outside your control. At best, you are trusting someone over whom you have no leverage to respect your privacy. Every credit card purchase, every time you've used a gas pump, the location, the time, the amount, which fuel you bought.

Does Sam own a diesel? Obviously he does. Think about that level of detail. Think about someone who is granted the power to access every one of those details, all of it, going back decades.

Who do you know? It's not just your Facebook friends. It's not just your co-members of a forum or a group online. GPS tracking will put you in the same house, on the same property, in the same church, at the same gathering, going back more than a decade, at least a decade and a half.

Your location can be triangulated with others. When were you at the store? Okay, that was just a store. When were you at a restaurant? Who else was at the restaurant? When did you go to a movie? Who else was at that movie? Any place you go, any place you've been, anybody you met, were you at the zoo? Were you at the museum? Anybody else that you are associated with can be tracked down.

It is so overwhelming, the amount of data that's available. You remember when they

were trying to do contact tracing for COVID, but so many people interact with so many people. At that time, the ability to collate that data was overwhelming because there were so many people and there was no discriminator.

Well, were you exposed? There's just too many people. Did you walk down a street in New York City and you pass 597 people? We've got to find all of them and see if they breathed any of your infected droplets. But if you have a target, if you have a rationale, if you say, well, I'm just interested in this particular place and this particular time, who was there? So could you become paranoid? Of course.

Just remember, this is the hockey game. You are behind God's perfect plexiglass. The Lord Jesus Christ is on our side and His infinite power is implemented on our behalf.

God knows even more than technology knows because His Holy Spirit dwells with us. And let your moderation be known unto all. The Lord is near.

The Lord is at hand. Not only does God know all of the aforementioned details, but He knows the thoughts and intents of our hearts. He knows every word we have spoken, whether there was an Alexa in the room or not.

If you have voice control on your phone or in your house for any reason, every word you say is potentially recorded and stored. Every word. Honey, what's for supper? Chicken.

It's up there in a Google server. Because it is listening to everything waiting for you to say, hey, Alexa, or hey, Bixby, or hey, Siri. And it has to listen to everything waiting for those catchphrases.

So it listens to everything. Do you think it dispenses with everything that doesn't activate its response? It is passively listening all the time. I turn mine off, but it's not a big deal.

They can activate it even if you turn it off. The software has been reverse engineered and law enforcement can turn the microphone on in your phone anytime they want under the Patriot Act, quote unquote. If you're a person of interest, they can sit a mile and a half away and aim a dish at the windows in your house and the vibrations of your voice can be picked up by the equivalent of sonar and listened to.

Satellite imagery, since 40 years ago, when I was a yonker, could read Titleist on a golf ball from space. What do you think they can do now? There's a thousand fold satellites in the air that there ever were then, GPS tracking and the rest of it. So those who are on the earth at that time, I can confidently tell you that when the Lord Jesus comes and takes us to himself, all our technology will be left behind.

If GPS tries to figure out where we go when Jesus comes to get us, they're going to be at a complete loss. Only those who are still on the earth will be susceptible to the power

and control of the first and the second beast. Who are spoken of here? Those signs which he is granted to do in the sight of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast, wounded by the sword and so on.

False trinity, false death and resurrection, false omniscience, signs and wonders to deceive many. Now, do you remember that Jesus said up above in Matthew 24 that those who are going to deceive are going to use signs and wonders to do so? A wicked and adulterous generation seeks a sign. How will a wicked and adulterous generation be deceived? By signs.

Jesus said, I'm not going to give you a sign because your faith, your belief doesn't depend on demonstration. Those who depend on signs can be deceived by lying signs and wonders. Lying signs and wonders.

That's how the Antichrist is going to succeed. That's how he's going to carry away the world. The second beast is going to deceive them with signs.

So, if you look at 2 Thessalonians 2, verse 9, the man of sin, his coming is according to the working of Satan in all power and signs and lying wonders. How are people being deceived today when you have science making cell phones, making technology, flying us around the world, giving us instant access to information and so on? It's power. Well, I don't see your God curing diseases, but doctors are doing it.

I don't see your prayers making a difference, but this medicine is doing it. This technology is doing it. Man by man's efforts is solving his problems.

It's a lying sign and wonder. All you have to do is watch late night commercials for medicines. Side effects may include, for every problem we fix, we create 8 or 10 more.

The one that scares me is, yeah, take this drug. Side effects may include involuntary muscle contractions, which may be permanent. Seriously? I don't know if it's going to happen to me or not, but once I take this drug, I could have involuntary muscle jerking and it's permanent.

This is the way you, with your signs and wonders, are going to solve my problem is with this thing that can cause me to bleed out my orifices and, you know, heart attacks and strokes have occurred. So what are you saying? I'm just going to roll the dice. The promises of God are not a dice roll.

John 4, 48 is the verse I was looking for. Jesus said, unless you people see signs and wonders, you will never believe. John 4, 48.

Listen closely. Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will never believe. What does that mean? There is no sign sufficient to get them to believe in the Lord Jesus, but they will believe signs and wonders that point to a false conclusion.

You can't believe the truth, but you'll believe signs and wonders, any signs and wonders. So when the beast supplies signs and wonders, then they'll believe. Belief based on signs is not the kind of belief God is looking for.

God is looking for belief that comes from asking and seeking and knocking, that has a heart that wants to find God, not a heart that wants to be impressed by signs and wonders, not being convinced by evidence, well, the evidence is overwhelming that fill in the blank. Evidence convinces me. God's not going to give evidence.

We live in an age of lack of tangible evidence for God, and yet hundreds of millions of us down through the centuries have believed. Why? Jesus said, Thomas, you see these holes in my hands and you believe. Blessed are those who not having seen believe.

Faith is the substance of what we're looking for, what we're hoping for. It is the evidence of things not seen. God fulfills the desire of my heart, which is for a loving creator who will rescue me from my lost and hopeless condition and with the same creative power that brought me into existence, sanctify me, cleanse me, promote me, and bring me into his own family of fellowship and function.

My heart is looking for that. God is the only communicated idea in the world that fulfills that. There is no other belief system that provides it.

There is no other place to go but God. Many can offer miracles. Many can offer miraculous power, but it's a lying sign.

It's a lying wonder. And if you are someone who will not believe unless you see signs and wonders, you're in trouble because the Egyptian magicians had signs and wonders. The two beasts of the tribulation are going to have signs and wonders, but they are a lie because they promise what they cannot deliver.

Only God grants eternal life. Only God grants relationship with himself. Who is it that gets written into the book? Those who look for God, those who respect God, who render him the honor and the worship that is his due, who love him.

That's who's written in the book. When the books are open at any given judgment, at any given resurrection, those are the ones who will be raised. Those are the ones who will have the hope fulfilled, the hope of the glory of God.

Much more to say about this. There are many, many passages, but beware signs and wonders. Beware those who point and say he is here or he is there.

Remember the fig tree. You can see the tree with your own two eyes. You can spot life.

You know what life is when you see it. You know what potential is when you see it. Trust God to give us the answer to our request.

When we ask, we receive. When we seek, we find. When we knock, the door is open.

You don't need to rely on any intermediary human beings. You will know the truth when you hear it, when you see it. It's a wonderful thing to be an intermediary of truth, but you don't depend on the intermediary.

It is the truth that sets you free, not the person hauling the water. It is the water that slakes your thirst, not the bucket. Let's close here in a word of prayer.

Father, thank you for the reassurance, the confidence, the clarity that comes from your word. Thank you for the comfort of your Holy Spirit. Thank you for the presence of your Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, representing us before your throne, who will one day soon stand up on our behalf, just as Michael will for your people Israel, and will come and gather us to himself to present us before your throne.

We pray that we can be qualified for that day, that we can be ready, that we will have produce from our lives that will survive the fire of judgment and be pleasing in your sight and will reflect your glory. We pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen.