

Christ in Prophecy
Pre-Tribulation 11: “Q&A with Prophecy Experts: Part 1”

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Opening

Dr. Reagan: Will the Antichrist be a Jew or a Gentile? And is there any possibility that he could be a Muslim? For a fascinating discussion of these issues with 11 different Bible prophecy experts. Stay tuned.

Program

Dr. Reagan: Greetings in the name of Jesus our blessed hope, and welcome to Christ in Prophecy. Recently I attended a major Bible Prophecy conference in the Dallas area where I had the opportunity to interview a number of Bible Prophecy experts about some very controversial issues. Most Christian are aware of the fact that there is a lot of disagreement about the interpretation of Bible prophecy between those who have completely different viewpoints. You know like the arguments between those who are Premillennial and Amillennial. But what many people are not aware of is that there are some strong points of disagreement between those that take a literal viewpoint of end time prophecies. Over the next three weeks we are going to take a look at some of those disagreements concerning the Antichrist. Specifically we are going to ask: Will the Antichrist be a Jew or a Gentile? Could he possibly be a Muslim? Will the Antichrist be killed and then resurrected from the dead? Where will the Antichrist capital be located? Could it be here in the United States, or will it be in Rome, or Babylon, or even Jerusalem? Let's go now to a hotel at the DFW Airport for the first set of interviews about whether or not the Antichrist will be a Jew. Out of 11 Bible prophecy experts I interviewed, only 3 said they felt like the Antichrist would be a Jew or that he could possibly be one. Here are their responses to my question, “Will the Antichrist be a Jew?”

Phillip Goodman: I do, I believe that he could, but I don't think the Bible tells us. The evidence is not strong enough. There is a passage in Daniel chapter 11, verse 37 that

says he will reject the god or the gods of his fathers and the language is not strong enough in there from the original language to let us know whether it is a plural or a singular. And that is the primary passage that most people go to say that perhaps he is a Jew. Because if it is the god of his father, it is a very similar phrase we find all over the Old Testament it is used of the Jews. But yet that also could be a Muslim so the evidence is not strong enough in the Bible really to tell us what his origination is in terms of a religious origin. So we have to look to the geographic, geopolitical evidence in the Bible to find out where he comes from. He could be a Jew I am not convinced of it. I think he is a Gentile, because he will be ruling over the time of the Gentiles, according to Daniel chapter 2 and also in Revelation. There is stronger evidence that he will be a Gentile.

Don Perkins: He could be and my reasons for that is Second Thessalonians chapter 2, where the Scripture tells us that when the Antichrist comes into the temple he will literally go into the temple as god. Which the temple would be in Jerusalem and he would be worshipped there as god, now for that fact I believe that the Antichrist could be a Jew. I believe that Israel could literally worship him as a Jewish Messiah. Now I know that goes a little different, against other people's views or whatever. But I do believe that could very well be the case, he could be a Jew.

Todd Strandberg: I think he probably will be a Jew or it is highly likely, because the Antichrist he is going to be a replacement for Christ, so he probably will be very much a mirror of Christ. Maybe the same age, he will be, he will probably have to be Jewish, because the Jews won't accept someone who is not Jewish as Messiah, so I believe it is very strongly. You know they are going to make lots of mistakes by accepting him as their Messiah. So they might go beyond accepting someone who is not, they should accept him, the only reason they should accept him is because he is a Jew.

Dr. Reagan: Okay so in response to my question will the Antichrist be a Jew. We have one yes, one could be, and one maybe. Now let's hear the responses of the 7 people who gave a negative reply. Once again my question is, "Will the Antichrist be a Jew?"

Daymond Duck: No, I don't think the Antichrist will be a Jew. And first all let me deal with a couple controversial passages on this issue concerning the Antichrist in Daniel

11:37. You can go to the King James Version of the Bible and there you will read that it says, "Neither shall he regard the god of his father. You can go to the New International Version or other translations and they will read neither shall he regard the gods, plural, of his fathers. Now those who think the word is god singular they say the Antichrist will come out of a monotheistic religion and he will probably be a Jew. Those who think the correct translation is gods, plural, say he will come out of a polytheistic religion and he will be a Gentile. Now I am not enough an expert to settle whether it should be god or gods. That has gone on for a long time. And I don't know anyone that has ever settled it, okay. Another controversial passage is John 5 verse 43 and Jesus said, "I have come in my Father's name and you have received me not. If another shall come in his own name, him will you receive." And now you get into what Jesus meant by the word receive some say well that means that the Jews would receive him as Messiah and they reason that the Antichrist will be a Jew because the Jews wouldn't receive someone as their Messiah who wasn't a Jew. And then there are others who say when Jesus said receive that meant that the Jews will receive him as a great leader who would guarantee the seven year covenant for peace in the Middle East. So you got those two views, and those think the Jews will receive him as a great leader then they will believe that he will be a Gentile. And I don't guess I could settle this issue on either one of those passages of Scripture. But I do think we have other passages of Scripture on this issue and here now I am talking about Daniel 7:3 and Revelation 13:1 where the Antichrist is described as a beast coming up out of the sea. And of course we know the sea is a symbol for multitudes, nations, peoples, tongues, in other words for Gentiles. And so I believe that those passages teach that the Antichrist will be a Gentile.

Don McGee: I do not believe that he will be a Jew. Um, basically for some of the same reasons he will not be a Muslim. Antichrist is going to be a man that is going to demand or command world wide attention. For a Jew to be in that position would be a very, very long shot. But if you take someone who comes from the European community, specifically with the credentials that a lot of those people have he will be a position automatically to be accepted by the entire world. Just like the Antichrist will probably not be a Muslim because of a religious connotation so too will the Antichrist not be a person associated with any type of religion except the one he is going to institute for himself.

Nathan Jones: I don't. If you go into Revelation 13, it talks about the Beast that comes out of the sea. And typically, throughout the Bible, anything that is related to the sea is an outside nation from Israel, it is a Gentile nation. And, if you go to Revelation 13, it talks about a second beast, and I think this is the one we are talking about in that the false prophet very well could be a Jew because he is the beast that comes from the land and the land is always a reference for Israel. So, no, I do not think the Antichrist will be a Jew.

Arnold Fruchtenbaum: Now again the passages in the Daniel passage in chapter 9 verse 26 and 27 specifies that he will be of the same ethnic identity as the people who destroyed the city and the temple. And in AD 70 it was the Romans that did so which is why he has to be not only a Gentile but a Gentile specifically of Roman origin.

Al Gist: No, I don't believe that he will be a Jew. I believe that when he makes his covenant with Israel that he will be speaking to a Jewish leader probably the man who will end up being the false prophet, and I do not believe that he will be a Jew. Some people believe this because they think he will claim to be the Jewish Messiah. But I don't, again, I don't find enough biblical support to accept that, I believe that he will be an apostate Gentile, just like the Caesars of the Roman Empire. He will claim to be god but he will be an apostate Gentile, I don't think he will be a Jew.

Mark Hitchcock: I think the biblical evidence is that the Antichrist will be a Gentile. He is going to according to Daniel he is going to lead the final great Gentile world empire which seems inconsistent for a Jew to be the leader of the final great Gentile world empire all the other empires in Daniel 2 and Daniel 7 the leaders of those were all Gentiles. Also he is going to mercilessly persecute the Jewish people, which seems strange to me for a Jewish person to be persecuting his own people. Also in Daniel 8 the only clear type of Antichrist in the Bible is Antiochus Epiphanes who was a Gentile, Syrian and also in the book of Revelation in Revelation chapter 13 this beast this Antichrist figure rises out of the sea. And in Revelation 17:15 it tells us the sea is representative of the nations. So for those reasons to me it seems clear that the Antichrist is going to be a Gentile.

Ed Hinson: No, absolutely not I don't think the Antichrist is Jewish. I think the Antichrist first of all is a person who makes a treaty with the Jews. It isn't likely a Jew would make a treaty with the Jews. He is a leader of Gentile nations if we can understand the prophecy in Daniel chapter 9 correctly if he is the leader of the revived Roman Empire the leader that comes out of Europe, it is not likely that he is Jewish. He is first of all an unbeliever so it doesn't matter what his nationality is he, he is not a believer he does not regard the gods of his fathers or the gods of any faith system at all. He is what we call an Atheist and an unbeliever who really ultimately thinks he is god and he will go to the temple in Israel claiming to be god and demand the world worship him as god. So in a sense he is theocentric in the wrong sense in that he thinks he is god and everybody should worship him.

Dr. Reagan: Okay in response to my question, "Will the Antichrist be a Jew?" We now have 7 no's, one yes', one could be, and one maybe, that is a total of 10 votes, but I mentioned that I interviewed a total of 11 Bible prophecy experts. So we have one more to go, his answer will surprise you.

Ray Gano: I actually believe that the Antichrist will be of Hebrew descent, Hebrew blood but also practice the Muslim religion and I use Daniel 11:37 to illustrate this. It talks in there he shall not regard the god of his fathers in this phrase, "god of his fathers" is always associated to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. In fact this statement, "god of his fathers" is only used 5 times in Scripture. And in every time it is associated to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. So I look at that, another thing that I look at is that we learn in Genesis 49:17 the tribe of Dan, these are last day prophecies that Jacob gave to his sons and it says in Genesis 49:17, "That a serpent shall cause the rider to fall backwards." So there is possibility that he actually may come out of the tribe of Dan. I also use Revelation 7:1-8 to back this up because this, the chapter where it talks about the 144,000 Dan is not named in the 144,000. So there is speculation here or there is Scriptural evidence here I believe that shows that he will have Hebrew ancestry. Yet on the other side he will also practice the Muslim religion because we go to Daniel 11:38 and it says, "He shall honor the god of forces; and the god whom his fathers knew not." And so the god neither, neither the god of his fathers so he will not regard the god of his fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, he will honor the god of forces or a god of war which I believe is Allah and it is a god that his fathers knew not. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob did not know about

Allah, did not have any conception of Allah. Um, another verse that people point to often is showing that he is, he comes from the people, the people of the prince is the verse they use, Daniel 9:26. And in this it, people often say that he comes from Rome and um, I believe that he comes from the Roman Empire but I don't believe that he is Italian in descent which a lot of people are pointing to. There's the Roman Empire the eastern leg of the Roman Empire comes out of Constantinople and Constantinople ruled for a 1,000 years after Rome seceded and the reason they point to this is the tenth legion of Rome that Titus invaded Israel, Jerusalem and overthrew that area in 70 AD. Titus was the only person who was pretty much of Roman descent but he was a individual, not people plural, there was another individual his associate his name was Tiberius Julius Alexander and he was actually the general that did all the work. Titus took the glory, Tiberius Julius did the work. Now the interesting thing is, is Tiberius Julius was actually an Egyptian Jew born in Alexandria. And then, so again both of these people are individuals it's the people of the prince. Well history tells us the Tenth legion was basically hired mercenaries people from the area. That is what Rome always did any of the legions that Rome created they usually pulled from the local people right there. So the Tenth legion, who comprised of the Tenth legion? They were Middle Eastern Arabs, Syrian, Moabites, Edomites basically the enemies of Israel. Garrisons of the Tenth legion were stationed in Judea, Samaria, Jerusalem, so forth, at no time were they ever stationed in Rome. It was only when Titus came back in victory when he entered Rome, and so it was the people of the prince, and I am saying that it is the people who invaded Israel and that was the Tenth legion the soldiers and not the individuals. One more point is, is if he is of Roman or European descent, Italian descent I question his names in Scripture he is clearly called the Assyrian he is called the Prince of Tyre, he is called King of Babylon he is called the King Pharaoh of Egypt. These are all Middle Eastern titles, Middle Eastern names and Middle Eastern places. If he was from either like Italy or Europe or something why isn't he called the King of Italy, or the Duke of Germany, or the Prince of Rome or something like that? I tend to read Scripture literally and maintain a basics in literalness and the golden rule of interpretation and I don't just dig into more and so with these names these names point to a Middle Eastern side.

Dr. Reagan: That unique answer by Ray Gano to the question, "Will the Antichrist be a Jew?" gives us a final total of 7 no's, 1 yes, 1 could be, 1 maybe be, and 1 yes or no.

Well in just a few minutes I will give you my answer to the question. But first here is a message about how you can get a very helpful Bible prophecy study resource.

Dr. Reagan: Welcome back to Christ in Prophecy. We are discussing whether or not the Antichrist will be a Jew and before I share my viewpoint with you I would like to take a moment to thank the 11 Bible prophecy experts we have just interviewed for taking the time to share their viewpoints with us. Now until fairly recently I would say that the majority viewpoint among those who interpret Bible prophecy literally was that the Antichrist will be a Jew. That was primarily due to a statement of Jesus that is recorded in John 5:43, where Jesus is quoted as saying, "I have come in my Father's name and you do not receive me if another shall come in his own name you will receive him." Now the argument drawn from this statement was that the Antichrist would have to be a Jew in order for the Jews to accept him as their Messiah. It's a very logical argument but it ignores the fact that other passages in the Bible make it very clear that the Jews will never accept the Antichrist as their messiah. In fact we are specifically told that when the Antichrist reveals himself in the middle of the Tribulation and claims to be god the Jews will be horrified and will totally reject him causing him to turn on them in fury and launch an attempt to annihilate them. So what did Jesus mean when he said, "That if another shall come in his own name the Jews will receive him?" Well those who argue that the Antichrist will be a Gentile responded by saying that the Antichrist will be accepted by the Jewish people as their political savior when he implements a treaty at the beginning of the tribulation that will guarantee their security and enable them to rebuild their temple. But the Jews will never receive the Antichrist as their spiritual Savior, thus when he declares himself as god they will reject him. My conclusion is there is no Biblical reason that the Antichrist must be a Jew. And there is some very strong Biblical evidence that he will be a Gentile. For example, Revelation 13:1 pictures him as a beast arising out of the sea. This is of course is symbolic language but it is significant because in the Bible and in Bible prophecy the sea is used to symbolize Gentile nations. For example in Daniel 7 where there is a prophecy about 4 great Gentile empires it refers to them as coming up from the sea. In contrast the Antichrist's right hand man and spiritual leader is pictured in Revelation 13:11 as rising up out of the land or the earth in some translations. This reference to the land is an indication that the false prophet will be a Jew who will rise out of the promise land of Israel. Now there is a logical reason we can assume that the Antichrist will be a Gentile, it is one that Mark Hitchcock mentioned in

his interview. And that is the fact that the book of Daniel reveals that the Antichrist is going to be the leader of the last great Gentile empire. It is simply not logical to assume that such an empire would be headed up by a Jew. Also it is not logical to assume that a Jew would attempt to annihilate the Jewish people as the Antichrist will try to do. Finally the clearest type of the Antichrist in the Scriptures is Antiochus Epiphanes was a Greek tyrant. As to Ray Gano contention that the Antichrist will be both a Jew and a Muslim, well I find that beyond my comprehension. But what about the idea that he might be a Gentile who is a Muslim? That is concept that has been endorsed by several Bible prophecy teachers in recent years and next week the Lord willing we will take a look at that idea by interviewing once again the same 11 person we interviewed for this program.

End of Program