

Christ in Prophecy

Prophecy 53: Reagan on Victory in Jesus

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Opening

Dr. Reagan: Do you find Bible prophecy scary? Are you afraid to read the book of Revelation? Have you decided to put God's Prophetic Word on the shelf? Well, if you have received Jesus as your Lord and Savior, I have some incredibly good news for you, and folks, that good news comes right out of God's Prophetic Word. Stay tuned.

Part 1

Dr. Reagan: Greetings in the name of Jesus, our Blessed Hope, and welcome to Christ in Prophecy! I want to talk to you today about Victory in Jesus. I've selected this topic because so many people have told me over the years that they are afraid of Bible prophecy because it is full of gloom and doom. And that is true with regard to those who reject Jesus as their Lord and Savior.

But folks, there is only good news for believers. In fact, the message of Bible prophecy is that "We Win in the End!" That's why the great pastor, Adrian Rogers, once said, "The world is growing gloriously dark."

What did he mean by that enigmatic statement? He was pointing to the fact that Jesus said He would return at a time when the world was as immoral and violent as it was in the days of Noah.

This prophecy of Jesus is what has prompted Jan Markell of Olive Tree Ministries to say over and over again, "The world is not falling to pieces. Rather, all the pieces are falling into place."

The point is that the increasingly miserable state of society worldwide is a sign that Jesus is at the very gate of Heaven waiting for the Father's command to return.

Part 2

Dr. Reagan: Folks, as I watch the evening news on television and read news stories from around the world, I am reminded of Charles Dickens' great novel, *A Tale of Two Cities* a story about the French Revolution. Dickens began his story with some of the most memorable words in all of the English literature. He wrote: "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair."

These words have never been truer than they are today. Everywhere we look, in every direction, the world appears to be falling apart. We are racked by wars and rumors of wars. Immorality and violence are rampant. Our money is being devalued and debased. Our educational systems

have been hijacked by Humanists and Atheists. Our political systems are gridlocked by value wars and political corruption. All of nature seems to be reeling out of control, producing one calamity after another. And our churches are being destroyed by rampant apostasy. True Christianity is under attack from all sides, and Christians are being marginalized as intolerant bigots.

Yet, despite all this economic, social and political chaos, it is the best of times because all these developments are a fulfillment of end time prophecies that point to the imminent return of Jesus.

Jesus Himself said that society would become as immoral and violent as in the days of Noah. And He said that when we see that happening, we are to "Look up, be watchful, for our Redemption will be drawing near."

Those of us who have committed our lives to Jesus, may see all that is dear to us disintegrate before our very eyes, but we are going to win in the end. We may suffer terrible persecution, but we are going to win in the end. We may see the collapse of the dollar and the fall of the United States as a world power, but we are going to win in the end.

How can I be so confident? Because the Bible promises us ultimate victory, and I know for certain the Bible is true.

Part 3

Dr. Reagan: So, my friends, what is our promised victory? Let me summarize it for you: We are promised that at any moment now we will be taken out of this world in the Rapture of the Church. We are promised that God will then pour out His wrath on the wicked world leaders who currently thumb their noses at Him. We are promised that Jesus will then return to reign over all the world in glory and majesty from Mount Zion in Jerusalem, and all the earth will be flooded with peace, righteousness, and justice. We are promised that we will ultimately be given an eternal home on this planet after it has been refreshed and perfected by God. We are promised that we will live eternally in a New Jerusalem on that new planet in glorified, immortal bodies in the presence of our Creator and Savior.

Again, how can I be certain of these victorious promises? Because the Bible tells me so. And the Bible can be trusted as the infallible Word of God. And how do I know that? Because it is the only book in the world that contains fulfilled prophecies.

And, because all the prophecies concerning the First Coming of the Messiah were literally and precisely fulfilled, we can also be confident that all the prophecies about the Messiah's return and triumph will be literally and precisely fulfilled.

Let's take a quick, overview look at God's Plan for the Ages. There are four major prophesied triumphal events on the horizon that we as born again children of God can look forward to. They are: The Rapture, The Second Coming, The Millennium, and Heaven.

Part 4

Dr. Reagan: Okay folks, let's get specific about the glorious promises that are made to believers in God's Prophetic Word.

Our first promise of victory is the Rapture of the Church. This is an event that is often confused with the Second Coming but they are not the same. A careful study of the Scriptures reveals that the return of Jesus is going to be in two stages; first, the Rapture, and then later, the Second Coming.

The fact that these are two separate events can be easily demonstrated. There are only two detailed descriptions of the Lord's return in the New Testament. The first is found in 1 Thessalonians 4 and the second, in Revelation 19. And folks, these two passages are as different as night and day. The two passages have absolutely nothing in common except that they both focus on Jesus.

Let me show you how different they are. In 1 Thessalonians 4 Jesus appears in the heavens, He does not return to earth; whereas in Revelation 19 Jesus returns to this earth. In 1 Thessalonians 4 Jesus appears for His Church; whereas in Revelation 19 Jesus returns with His Church. In 1 Thessalonians 4 Jesus appears as a Deliverer; in Revelation 19 Jesus returns as a Warrior. In 1 Thessalonians 4 Jesus appears in Grace; whereas in Revelation 19 Jesus returns in Wrath. In 1 Thessalonians 4 Jesus appears as a Bridegroom; whereas in Revelation 19 Jesus returns as a King. Now, I ask you: How can these passages be reconciled?

I believe the only way to reconcile these two accounts is to conclude that they are talking about two different events, and that the Lord's return will be in two stages first, the Rapture, and then the Second Coming.

Incidentally, this reconciliation solves another problem. You see the Bible says repeatedly that the Lord's return is imminent, that is, it can happen at any moment. But how can it be imminent if there is only one future coming? Here's the point: If there is only one future coming, then the Lord's return is not imminent because there are many prophecies that must be fulfilled before He can return to earth.

For example: There must be 7 years of Tribulation. The Jewish Temple must be rebuilt. The Antichrist must be revealed. The Two Witnesses of God must be killed. The Antichrist must desecrate the Temple. The False Prophet must institute the Mark of the Beast. And a Jewish Remnant must be saved.

The Point Again: The only way the Lord's return can be imminent is for there to be a Rapture that is separate and apart from the Second Coming and which can occur at any moment, without the fulfillment of any prophecies.

This reconciliation also solves another problem. The Bible says that no one can know the date of the Lord's return. But the date of the Second Coming can be calculated precisely. The book of Revelation says it will take place exactly 2,520 days or 7 prophetic years from the day that the Tribulation begins. Therefore, the statement about not knowing the date must apply to the Lord's appearing in the Rapture.

Again, the solution is two future comings, an appearing and a return. This brings us to the second great prophetic event of triumph that we can look forward to it is the Second Coming of Jesus. The Bible says Jesus will return to this earth at the end of the seven years of the Great Tribulation. He will return to the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem from which He ascended into Heaven.

This will occur when the Jewish people have come to the end of themselves through the persecution of the Antichrist, motivating them to turn their hearts to God. When Jesus comes, they will look upon Him whom they have pierced, and they will recognize Him as their Messiah, and they will repent of their rejection of Him, and they will cry out "Baruch Haba Bashem Adonai!" meaning "Blessed is He Who Comes in the Name of the Lord!"

At that point Jesus will speak a supernatural word and the Antichrist and his forces will be instantly annihilated in the Valley of Armageddon. Jesus will then resurrect the Old Testament Saints and the Tribulation Martyrs, giving them glorified bodies. He will proceed to judge all those still living, both Gentiles and Jews. The Saved will be allowed to enter the Millennium in the flesh. The Unsaved will be consigned to death and Hades.

This brings us to the third great triumphal event Christians should be looking forward to and that is the Lord's glorious millennial reign. The Bible says that those of us in glorified bodies will reign with Jesus over those in the flesh for a thousand years, during which time the earth will be flooded with peace, righteousness, and justice. And during those thousand years, God is going to fulfill six promises He has made.

First and foremost are the promises that God has made to His Son. God has promised that the day will come when Jesus will receive honor, and glory, and power. Jesus was humiliated the first time He came. During the Millennium He will be glorified in history. Isaiah describes it this way, he writes, "Then the moon will be abashed and the sun ashamed, for the LORD of hosts will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and His glory will be before His elders. Paul, in 2 Thessalonians makes the same point, he wrote, "Jesus is returning to be glorified in His saints on that day, and to be marveled at among all who have believed."

God is also going to use the Millennium to fulfill promises He has made to the Creation. He has promised to restore the Creation to its original perfection. Repeatedly in the Hebrew Scriptures, the promise is made that God will one day redeem His creation. Isaiah 11 says, "The wolf will dwell with the lamb and the lion will eat straw with the ox." Peter affirmed this promise in his sermon to the Sanhedrin Council when he declared, "Jesus must remain in Heaven until the period of the restoration of all things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time." Notice that Peter said God is going to restore "all things" promised by the Hebrew prophets, and folks, that includes nature.

This brings us to the third promise God is going to fulfill during the Millennium. It is a promise to the Nations that a time will come when they will be blessed with peace, righteousness and justice. Again, the Hebrew Scriptures speak of the promise many times. One example can be found in Micah chapter 4. The prophet wrote, "He, the Messiah, will judge between many peoples and render decisions for mighty, distant nations. Then they will hammer their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks; and nation will not lift up sword against nation, and never again will they train for war.

The fourth promise God is going to fulfill during the Millennium is one He has made to the Jewish people. It is the promise that a day will come when the nation of Israel will be given primacy among the nations. Consider, for example, the incredible promises of Isaiah 60 which God made to the Jewish people promises that have never yet been fulfilled: "The glory of the Lord will appear upon you, Israel. And nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising. The wealth of nations will come to you. Whereas you have been forsaken and hated, I will make you an everlasting pride, a joy from generation to generation.

The days of your mourning will be finished. Then all your people will be righteous and they will possess the land forever.

Likewise, the prophet Zechariah describes the millennial glory of Israel with some remarkable imagery in chapter 8, verse 23 of his book, "Thus says the Lord of hosts, 'In those days, ten men from all the nations will grasp the garment of a Jew saying, 'Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.'"

The final group of promises God is going to fulfill during the Millennium are those He has made to the Church. God is going to give the Church Age Saints, you and me, ruling power over the nations. This is a promise made many times in the Scriptures, both in the Old and New Testaments. Here is one example from Daniel 7 in the Old Testament, "Then the sovereignty, the dominion, and the greatness of all the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be given to the people of the saints of the Highest One; His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all the dominions will serve and obey Him."

And here is confirmation of that promise by Jesus in the New Testament, "And he who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as I also have received authority from My Father.

Now, in addition to the Rapture, the Second Coming and the Millennium, there is a fourth triumphal blessing that we can look forward to. The final stage of God's Plan for the Ages will come at the end of the Millennium, when we will be presented with our Heavenly home. The Redeemed will be removed from this planet to the New Jerusalem which Jesus has been preparing for us. And I suspect that from that vantage point, we will be able to watch the greatest fireworks display in all of history as God superheats this earth to burn away the pollution of Satan's last revolt.

Out of that fiery inferno will come new heavens and a new earth that will serve as our eternal abode. That's right, Heaven will be on a new earth, we will be lowered down inside the New Jerusalem to the new earth, and God Himself will come to earth to live among us.

Here's how it is described in the book of Revelation, "Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away. And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, 'Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.' And He who sits on the throne said, 'Behold, I am making all things new.' And He said, 'Write, for these words are faithful and true.' Then He said to me, 'It is done. I am the Alpha, I am the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost. He who overcomes will inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son.'" Notice the one to whom all these promises are made: is the "overcomer." And who is an overcomer? The definition is found in 1 John chapter 5, "Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God. And who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?"

Let me summarize what the Bible says about Heaven. Heaven is going to come to earth. We, the Redeemed, will dwell in glorified, perfected and immortal bodies in a fabulous New

Jerusalem on a gloriously beautiful New Earth. And our Creator and Savior are going to dwell with us. According to Revelation 22:4, we will "see God's face" which I think means we will have intimate fellowship with our Creator eternally. And Revelation 22:3 says we will "serve Him forever." Yes, we are going to have meaningful and fulfilling things to do in service to our Creator.

Part 5

Dr. Reagan: Let me illustrate all that I've said by giving you a visual overview of God's Plan for the Ages.

The end times began on Pentecost in about 30 AD when the Church was established. We have now been in the Church Age for 1,900 years plus. The Church Age will be followed by the Great Tribulation which will last seven years. Then will come the Millennial reign of Jesus, lasting 1,000 years. The final stage of history will be the eternal state or heaven when we will live eternally in glorified bodies on a new earth.

The Church Age will come to a halt with the appearance of Jesus in the heavens, followed by the Rapture of the Church Age Saints, both the living and the dead. We will be in Heaven with the Lord during the Tribulation. But we will return with Him at the end of the Tribulation to reign with Him over all the world. So, we have the return of Jesus in two stages: first, the Rapture of the Church, and then the Second Coming of Jesus to this earth.

Part 6

Dr. Reagan: Well, folks, now I hope you can better understand the meaning of the two great passages written by the Apostle Paul, first, Romans 8:18, "I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us." He repeats this sentiment in 1 Corinthians 2:9 where he writes, "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, nor has the mind of Man conceived what God has prepared for those who love Him." But in the next verse, he adds: that these glorious things have been revealed to us through His Spirit, speaking, of course, of the Scriptures. In like manner, the Apostle Peter referred to the events we have surveyed as "God's precious and magnificent promises."

When you consider the details of God's Glorious Plan for the Ages, how can you possibly be passive or apathetic? We are promised victory, and it will be achieved with the Rapture of the Church, the Second Coming of Jesus, the Lord's Millennial Reign, and Life Eternal with God in glorified bodies on a New Earth. Clouds of darkness may be gathering around us, but the Light is about to break through.

It is the worst of times, but it is the best of times, for the signs of the times are shouting the good news that Jesus is coming soon! In response, you and I should be shouting, "Maranatha! Come quickly, Lord Jesus!"

Part 7

Dr. Reagan: Okay, folks, I have shared with you the incredible good news that Bible prophecy contains for those who have put their faith in Jesus as their Lord and Savior. But what about those who have steadfastly rejected God's gift of grace in Jesus?

That's where the bad news of Bible prophecy comes into play. Here are the prophetic facts: Unbelievers will be left behind at the Rapture of the Church. Unbelievers who are left behind will have to face the wrath of God and the terror of the Antichrist during the seven years of the Tribulation. Those unbelievers who are left alive at the Second Coming of Jesus will be judged and condemned to death and Hades. At the end of the Lord's millennial reign, all unbelievers who have ever lived will be resurrected and judged of their works to determine their eternal destiny. And since no one can be justified before God by their works, all unbelievers will be cast into Hell where they will be tormented in proportion to their sins, after which they will experience what the Bible calls "The Second Death."

But, if you are an unbeliever, the good news from the Bible is that God has delayed the Second Coming of His Son because He does not wish that any should perish but that all should come to repentance and salvation.

And so, I urge you to reach out to God in faith, confess that you are a sinner, receive Jesus as your Savior, and become an overcomer. As such, you will become an heir of all the marvelous blessings that God has promised to the Redeemed.

Please do not think for one moment that you can justify yourself before God with good works. There are going to be many people in Hell who performed good works but who refused to put their faith in Jesus as their Lord and Savior.

When you place your faith in Jesus, from God's perspective, you are then clothed in the righteousness of Jesus, and all your sins, past, present and future are forgiven and forgotten. Here is a brief video by a Christian artist named Justin Jackson that emphasizes this truth:

Good-O-Meter Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XrLzYw6ULYw>

Closing

Dr. Reagan: Well, folks, that's our program for this week. I hope it has been a blessing to you. And I hope, the Lord willing, that you will be back with us next week. Until then, this is Dave Reagan speaking for Lamb & Lion Ministries saying, "Look up, be watchful, for our Redemption is drawing near."

End of Program