

Christ in Prophecy

Sermon 17: “The Wars of the End Times, Part 1”

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Opening

Dr. Reagan: When most people think about war in the end times, they think of only one war, and that is the War of Armageddon. A war by that name is going to occur, but did you know that the War of Armageddon is only one of nine wars that the Bible says will occur in the end times? For a fascinating survey of end time wars, stay tuned.

Part 1

Dr. Reagan: Greetings in the name of Jesus, our Blessed Hope, and welcome to Christ in Prophecy. I have been to Israel some 45 times, and to this day, I just never cease to be amazed when I go to the top of Mount Carmel and look out over the majestic Valley of Armageddon. It is a breathtaking view. Napoleon called it the greatest battlefield he had ever seen. And one day, right before the return of Jesus, it will be the gathering place for armies from all over the world, and the greatest slaughter in the history of warfare will take place there. When it is all over, we are told in the book of Revelation that the blood will be as deep as a horse's bridle.

But as I said at the beginning of the program, the Armageddon battle will be only one of many that the Bible prophesies will occur in the end times. The total number of wars that can be found in end time Bible prophecy is 9 that's right, 9! And in this program and next week's I am going to outline for you in detail those 9 end time wars.

The first will be one that you have probably never heard of the war of extermination against Israel that is describe in Psalm 83. The last of the wars is the one that will conclude the Millennial reign of Jesus, and it will usher in the Eternal Age where war will exist no more.

Let's go now to Calvary Chapel in Chino Hills, California where I delivered this message on the wars of the end times to a Bible Prophecy Conference sponsored by the ministry of David Hocking, a ministry called Hope for Today.

Presentation

Dr. Reagan: Well greetings to all of you, I greet you in the name of Jesus our Blessed Hope. He was asking, "What language we speak?" Well I speak Texan and so some of you may not be able to understand me. Several years ago I was in the Czech Republic to preach and they said, "The translator wants to meet with you early to kind of get a feel of your accent and all." And I said, "Ok." So I meet with this fella and we talked for about 30 minutes and he had been trained to speak English in England. And he kept looking at me very strangely. And finally I said, "Is there something wrong?" And he said, "I've never heard anyone speak English the way you do." I said, "Well what's different about it?" And he said, "Well, I'm trying to think of the word. So the world in Czech is so, and so." And his wife was sitting there and she said, "Oh that means hillbilly." He said, "That's right, you sound like a hillbilly." I said, "Well, ok."

You know that wonderful song that was just sung is a song we've been singing in Texas. We're having the worse drought in modern history. The worse one we ever had was in 1980 but this one is going to surpass it. There's a large part of Texas, almost two-thirds of Texas has not even had a tenth of an inch of rain since the beginning of the year. Where we are in Dallas we've had some rain but we haven't had any in three months. Our longest 100 degree temperature span was in 1980, 42 days in a row of a 100 degrees or more. Usually we don't hit that until August, and we're getting ready in 2 or 3 days to surpass that mark with no end in sight. It is hot, and it is dry. It was 110 when I left Dallas yesterday. And I was hoping to find some really cool weather out here, but I didn't find it until the sun went down last night. That's one great thing about this area when the sun goes down it cools off. In Texas it doesn't because humidity is so high it is still 95 at midnight. Let me tell you how hot and how dry it is in Texas. Are you ready for this, this is how hot and dry it is: the Baptist have started sprinkling. [laughing] The Methodist are using damp wash clothes. The Presbyterian's are handing out rain checks. And the Catholics are praying earnestly that God will change their wine into water. Now brother, that's hot. That is hot.

Well I want to talk with you this evening about Israel's fate in the wars of the end times. Every time a war breaks out in the Middle East my phone starts ringing off the hook and I start getting e-mail message like you wouldn't believe asking me one question, "Is it the War of Armageddon?" That's always the question, over and over. Is this the War of Armageddon? This question is prompted by the fact that most people are familiar with only one end time war, the one that has been popularized in movies, and novels as the Battle of Armageddon. In fact this afternoon when Paul was speaking I noticed that book, after book, after book that he put on the

screen had the word Armageddon in the title of it. So that is what most people know about the end times, there is going to be a Battle of Armageddon. This term literally means, rather it comes from Revelation 16:16 which in Hebrew it says is called, Har-Magedon.” It says in the end times that the nations of the world will gather at Har-Magedon. In Hebrew that literally means, the Mount of Megiddo, the Mount of Megiddo. This is an aerial photograph of Megiddo, which is an ancient fortress dating back 1000’s of years ago that always controlled the Valley of Armageddon. Now the Valley of Armageddon is known in Israel as the Jezreel Valley it lies in front of Megiddo. It runs diagonally across Israel from Haifa on the Mediterranean, to the Jordan River. Most people are surprised to discover that there is no reference in the book of Revelation to the Valley of Armageddon, only Har-Magedon. Nor is there any reference to the Battle of Armageddon, but we’ll talk more about that later on. People are even more surprised to learn that Bible prophecy reveals 9 wars, 9 wars in the end times and that Armageddon relates to only 1 of those 9 wars. Most prophetic scholars have long believed that the next great end time war will be the War of Gog and Magog that is described in Ezekiel 38 & 39. Incidentally that’s not misspelled up there where it talks about the Mid-East Peace process, that’s a sarcastic comment on what is going on in the Middle East as Israel is being divided up in the name of peace.

The idea that this will be the next war of Bible prophecy is the stated position for example of Joel Rosenberg in his popular book, *The Epicenter*. This war will start when Russia invades Israel with certain specified allies, all of whom are Muslim nations today. But I seriously doubt personally that the conflict described in Ezekiel 38 & 39 will be the next war of the end times. I feel that way for two reasons: first there is a condition for the war in Ezekiel 38 & 39 that simply does not exist today. And there is no prospect for it to exist in the near future. Three times in Ezekiel 38:8, 11, 14 it says, “This war will occur when the people of Israel are living securely in unwalled villages.” It is this requirement that has motivated most modern day prophecy scholars like men like John Walvoord for example to place the Gog and Magog War after the beginning of the Tribulation because the Tribulation begins with the Antichrist signing a treaty that appears to bring peace to Israel. Since that is the only way they can imagine peace would come to Israel they say, “Ok, then the Gog and Magog War has to begin after the Tribulation starts.” And I can certainly understand that argument. I don’t agree with that argument, but I understand it. I would certainly agree that Israel is not living securely today in unwalled villages. Either internally or externally do they have security. Internally there is the constant threat of missile attacks from Hamas in Gaza and Hezbollah in Lebanon, and terrorist attacks from Palestinians. Externally

there is the constant threat of war. Israel was born in war. And Israel has remained in a state of war ever since it was established, sometimes we just don't realize how many wars there's been in Israel.

Israel began with the War of Independence, 1948-49. Then came the Suez War of 1956. Then the Six Day War in 1967. Then came the War of Attrition from 1967-1970. Next came the war that Israel almost lost, the Yom Kippur War of 1973. In 1982 was the Lebanese War. In 1987-1993 was the First Arab Intifada. In 1991 the first Gulf War. 2000-2004 the Second Arab Intifada. 2006 the Hezbollah War. 2008-09 the War with Hamas. It goes on, and on and on. The Bible says that the nation will be established in one day and the next day the birth pains will begin and they did, and they continue to this day. I would argue that Israel is not only insecure, but that it is the most insecure nation in the world when it comes to external security. Not internal security, I'll go to Israel and walk around the streets of Tel Aviv in Jerusalem at night and never feel any problem at all. I wouldn't do that in Dallas, Texas. But it is the most insecure nation in the world externally. It is the only nation I know of where every village that is built there is built out of reinforced concrete, all the houses, all the building, everything because they build for war. It is the only nation I know of where every apartment building, every house, every community of single family houses has to have a bomb shelter within walking distance. It is a nation so insecure that it has built a wall that meanders almost 400 miles to protect its citizens from terrorists and it has been very effective. In fact I would argue that Israel is currently more insecure than in any time in its history for two reasons: first the missile attacks that can be launched any moment by Syria and other nations, the next war in Israel is going to be unlike any other war that Israel has ever fought because when it breaks out thousands of missiles are going to literally rain down on Tel Aviv. And the second reason it is more insecure than ever before is because of its abandonment by the Obama Administration.

The second reason that I doubt that the War of Ezekiel 38 & 39 will be the next end time war of Bible prophecy is because the nations mentioned as allies of Russia do not include a single Arab state, not one that has a common border with Israel. I don't know if you've ever thought about that or not, not a single one has a common border with Israel. Instead the nations identified are Persia which is Iran and possibly also Iraq, Cush which is the Sudan, Put which is Libya and possibly Algeria and Tunisia also, and then Gomer and Bethogarmah which of course is modern day Turkey. As you can see none of these Russian allies, not a single one has a common border with Israel. Specifically there is no mention whatsoever of Egypt, of

Jordan, of Syria, of Lebanon, or Gaza. This produces an important question, why is it that none of the nations located next to Israel are mentioned as allies of Russia, in the Ezekiel 38 & 39 War? I personally believe that the best explanation of this mystery is the one supplied by Bill Salus in his book, *Israelestine*. He proposes that the next prophetic end time war will mostly likely be that described in Psalm 83, a war between Israel and its immediate neighbors. He believes this war will produce the conditions that are necessary for the war of Ezekiel 38 & 39 and I agree with that conclusion. With that point clarified let's now take an overview of the end time prophetic wars and what I think is there logical order.

Part 2

Okay, we are now ready to take a look at the nine wars of the end times. You know I wonder how many you could name right now? Are you stuck on the War of Armageddon? Well, don't feel like the Lone Ranger. Most Christians could probably not name more than two or three of the wars, at the most. So here are the nine wars.

The first the War of Israeli Extermination described in Psalm 83. Psalm 83 states that the immediate neighbors of Israel will launch a war for the purpose of wiping out Israel as a nation. The nations described as being a part of this nefarious effort are those with a common border with Israel, including Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Egypt and Gaza, all of these with a common border. The second half of Psalm 83 is a prayer for Israel's victory. The outcome of the war is not specifically stated in Psalm 83 but we know from other Scriptures that Israel will be victorious. For example Zechariah 12:6 says, "That in the end times Israel will be like a firepot among pieces of wood, and a flaming torch among sheaths so that that they will consume on the right hand and on the left all the surrounding peoples." They are going to be like David against Goliath.

Bill Salus believes this war of annihilation will boomerang on the Arab nations and will result in their overwhelming defeat producing great territorial expansion, enhanced national resources for Israel and yes, peace for Israel. Incidentally it is during this war that Israel will most likely destroy Damascus in fulfillment of the prophecies in Isaiah 17 and Jeremiah 19 which says that in the end times Damascus will be destroyed and it will never be built again.

But the security provided by Psalm 83 War will not last long because what will happen is that the Arab nations will turn to their natural ally Russia and cry out for help resulting in the first war

of Gog and Magog. The war described in Ezekiel 38 & 39. This is where Russia comes down against Israel with certain specified Muslim allies. The Russians will be delighted to respond to the Arab cry for help because they have always dreamed of taking over the oil fields of the Middle East. They will therefore launch an invasion for the stated purpose of helping the Muslims destroy Israel. Their specific allies will involve the outer ring of Muslim states that surround Israel all but Saudi Arabia.

Now I believe that the unstated agenda of the Russians and their real motivation will be to use the Arab invitation as an excuse to expand their sovereignty over all the Middle East. This alternative motive is described in Ezekiel 38:12 where it says the Russians will come to capture spoil and to seize plunder. The invading armies will be supernaturally destroyed by God on the mountains of Israel. The Lord will accomplish this destruction through earthquakes and pestilence, hail, fire and brimstone and battle field confusion. Even the Jewish people will recognize that the victory belongs to God and it will open many of their hearts to the Lord.

The greatest mystery concerning this war is its timing. Most have placed it at the beginning of the Tribulation. Others have delayed it to the middle of the Tribulation. But increasingly in recent years the tendency has been to place it before the beginning of the Tribulation. The reason there is so much question is because the Bible does not say for sure when it will occur, and there is room for honest disagreement on this. Probably every person on this program has a different view as to when this war will occur. So there is room for honest disagreement.

In recent years as said the most common view that is coming out these days is that this war will start before the Tribulation. The best discussion of timing that has yet been written I think can be found in this book, *Northern Storm Rising* by Ron Rhodes who lives in Frisco, Texas. He's a great writer. He concludes that this war of Gog and Magog will most likely occur 3 ½ years begin 3 ½ years before the Tribulation starts. Now here's his reasoning: the Tribulation lasts 7 years, Ezekiel 39:9 says that the Jews will spend 7 years burning the weapons that they capture in that war, likely nuclear fuel. But they are going to be burning weapons that they captured in that war for 7 years. But Revelation 12 tells us that 3 ½ years into the Tribulation the Jews will be evicted from the land by the Antichrist, and most will flee to Jordan. Therefore the only way the Jews could spend 7 years burning the weapons Ron argues is for the war to begin 3 ½ years before the start of the Tribulation. This brings up another question: Does this mean that the wars of Psalm 83 and Ezekiel 38 & 39 must occur before the Rapture? Not at all. The

Rapture can occur any moment; before, during or after these wars. Keep in mind that the Rapture is not what starts the Tribulation. The Tribulation will begin when the Antichrist signs a security treaty with Israel. There could be a period of several years between the time of the Rapture and the beginning of the Tribulation.

This brings us to the third end time war, the conventional war of the Tribulation mentioned in Revelation 6, although the Antichrist is going to rise to power in Europe through cunning and deception, intrigue, and his charismatic personality. I believe he will have to resort to military power to concur the world. Listen folks Asia, Africa, and Latin America have spent the last 200 years casting off European colonialism. They are not suddenly going to turn around to some European leader no matter how dynamic and how charismatic he may be and say, "Please come and rule us." They are not going to do that. They are going to resist any leader who rises to power in Europe regardless of how brilliant and charismatic he maybe. We are told in Revelation 13:7 that the Antichrist will ultimately achieve authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation and I believe this authority will be achieved through war. Revelation 6 records the outbreak of this world war it results in the death of one-fourth of humanity. You ever stop and make those calculations? One-fourth of humanity, in today's terms that means that in this war at the beginning of the Tribulation 1 and 1/2 billion people will die, this carnage is called the seal judgments.

To review the wars of Psalm 83 results in the destruction of the inner ring of the Muslim states around Israel. That's Iraq, Syria, Jordan, Egypt and Gaza. Then comes the war of Ezekiel 38 & 39 which results in the destruction of the outer ring: Turkey, Iran, Iraq, Sudan, Libya, Algeria, Tunisia. Both the inner ring and the outer ring are destroyed in these two wars. In other words what I think is going to happen here is that God is going to use the Antichrist as His hammer of wrath to destroy Islam in the Middle East. But there are many other nations of the world that also will have to be taken care of because all the green area there is the Muslim world. And the largest Muslim nations in the world are not in the Middle East. The largest Muslim nations are Indonesia with 200 million, India with 145 million, Pakistan with 140 million, and Bangladesh with 115 million. Those are the big Muslim nations of the world, none of which are in the Middle East.

So I think the Antichrist will have to continue his war to conquer all the nations of the world. And it appears in Revelation 8 & 9 that we come to the fourth war and that is the nuclear war of the

Tribulation. What appears to happen here in the book of Revelation is that the conventional war started by the Antichrist begins to morph into a nuclear war resulting in the deaths of another one-third of those left alive. Well if you calculate that one-third of those left alive is another 1 1/2 billion that means folks that by the middle of the Tribulation 3 billion people will die in 3 1/2 years. That's one-half of all humanity is going to die in the first 3 1/2 years of the Tribulation. I have preachers all the time call me and say, "Do you think we are in the Tribulation?" And I say to them, "Let me tell you something, if you go into the Tribulation you will not have to ask anybody if you are there, you'll know. You'll know without a shadow of a doubt."

There are some hints that this conventional war is going to become a nuclear one. For example one of the hints is found in Revelation 8:7 where it says, "The escalation of the war will result in one-third of the earth being burned up." One-third of the earth being burned that sounds like nuclear war to me. Another hint is found in Revelation 16 right at the end of Revelation at the end of the Tribulation where we're told that loathsome and malignant sores will afflict people all over the earth at the end of the Tribulation; something that would be a natural consequence of radiation from the use of atomic weapons. It could very well be that the nuclear holocaust was what Jesus had in mind when He said that in the end times men will faint from fear over the expectation of the things coming upon the world for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. This war is portrayed in the book of Revelation in chapter 8 & 9 as a series of trumpet judgments.

Part 3

Welcome back to Christ in Prophecy. We have been taking a look at the end time wars that are prophesied in the Bible. Thus far we have considered first of all the War of Israeli Extermination. This is a war described in Psalm 83 in which Israel will overwhelming defeat all the nations with whom it has a common border. This war will most likely occur before the Tribulation and will result in a short-lived peace for Israel.

The second, is what we call the First War of Gog and Magog now this war is the one described in Ezekiel 38 & 39. It will be a second attempt to annihilate Israel, led by Russia who will be accompanied by an outer ring of Muslim nations. In this war, the enemies of Israel will be destroyed supernaturally by God. This war is most likely to occur at least three and a half years before the Tribulation begins.

The third war is the Conventional War of the Tribulation, this war, is described in Revelation 6, and it will be one launched by the Antichrist in his attempt to conquer the whole world. It will ultimately morph into the 4th war of the end times, what I call The Nuclear War of the Tribulation, this war, is described in Revelation 8 & 9, and it brings us up to the mid-point of the Tribulation, and by the time it is finished, the Antichrist has conquered the whole world, killing one-half of humanity in the process.

Next week, the Lord willing, we'll take a look at the remaining five wars, the first of which will be a supernatural war in the heavenlies. Now, your homework assignment in the meantime is to search the book of Revelation following chapter 9 to see if you can find the remaining 5 wars. You might also take a look at Daniel 11.

At this point, you may be asking yourself, "Well what do these wars have to do with me? Why should I be concerned about them?" Let me mention two reasons. First, the signs of the times point to the fact that we are on the very verge of the first of these end time wars; The War of Israeli Extermination mentioned in Psalm 83. And that, in turn, means that we are living on borrowed time. The Lord is at the very gates of Heaven, waiting for His Father's command to return.

Second, the story of these wars should be of concern to us because they are the climax of a cosmic battle between God and Satan for dominion over this world, and the good news of these wars is that we, the Saints of the Lord, we will win in the end!

Yes, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, is going to win. He is going to take back the dominion over this world that was stolen by Satan when Adam and Eve sinned, and He is going to give it back to us. This will happen because our Creator has the wisdom and the power to orchestrate all the evil of Mankind and Satan to the triumph of His glorious Son, Jesus Christ.

That is going to happen very soon folks, and I pray that you are ready for it. I pray that you have accepted Jesus as your Lord and Savior. John 3:36 says that God deals with sin in one of two ways; either grace or wrath. Are you under grace or wrath? It is a glorious thing to be living under the grace of God. It is a terrible thing to be subject to His wrath.

If you have never accepted Jesus as your Lord and Savior, I pray you will do so before it is too late. Just confess to God the Father that you are a sinner, repent of those sins, and receive Jesus as your Savior. Then, seek out a Bible believing and Christ-exalting church and witness your new born faith in public confession of Jesus and water baptism. Then, get involved in a Bible study group so that you can start growing in the Lord.

Well, that's our program for this week, until next week, the Lord willing, this is Dave Reagan speaking for Lamb & Lion Ministries, saying, "Look up, be watchful, for your Redemption is drawing near."

End of Program