

Christ in Prophecy

Pre-Trib 32: The Message of Bible Prophecy Today

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Opening

Dr. Reagan: If you were asked to describe the fundamental message of end time Bible prophecy, what would you say? What is the message to the believer? What is its message to the unbeliever? For the opinions of 14 Bible prophecy experts, stay tuned.

Part 1

Dr. Reagan: Greetings in the name of Jesus, our Blessed Hope, and welcome to Christ in Prophecy. For the past three weeks I have been sharing with you the opinions of a number of Bible prophecy experts on a variety of questions regarding the Signs of the Times and the nation of Israel. If you have missed those programs, you can find them on our website at lamblion.com or on Internet sites like HisChannel.com or Light Source.com. This week I want to continue with my interviews of Bible prophecy experts, and my question to them will be: "What do you think is the message of Bible prophecy to the world today to both believers and unbelievers?" Here now are their responses to that question.

Part 2: Bible Prophecy Experts

Brian Thomas: To the believer we can trust the Word of God. We've already seen so many prophecies in the Scriptures that have been proven to be true with 100% accuracy, therefore we can have trust and know that the prophecies that are still to come will be fulfilled as well according to the Word of God. We can have the faith and know that maybe today as a Christian you are being persecuted for your faith, you may not be looked upon favorably by the world. But if you keep the faith, keep the trust and confidence in our Lord He says that He is going to reward us openly and eternally. But for the unbeliever a day of judgment is coming. Maybe you are getting away with rebellious living and you think you are getting away with it because you are not seeing immediate consequences, but Revelation 20 speaks of the Great White Throne Judgment. And in that day every unbeliever will stand before Christ to be judged even the dead will be resurrected to stand before Him and be judged according to their evil deeds; that is the second death. Each one, one by one will be cast into the Lake of Fire. And so the message to the unbeliever: repent and accept Christ because a day of judgment is coming.

August Rosado: Well that's simple get ready Jesus Christ is coming soon. And I'm reminded of Titus 2:11-13, "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men. Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, that we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." Then he says, "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ." So the message to the believer is get ready Jesus is coming soon, live faithfully, live holy. Number two for the unbeliever you are either one heartbeat away from going to Hell or one trumpet sound away from being left behind; repent and trust in Jesus Christ as your Lord and personal Savior and you'll be ready for that next event we call the Rapture of the Church.

Terry James: I think prophecy--the day that we see unfolding for the believer and for Bible prophecy that are in the Scriptures. I believe for the believer it is to be a wake-up call, we are to be discerners of the time and the season. And we are to watch for Jesus we are not to have our head in the sand or join the world system, or become part of the Laodicean church. We are to be watchmen on the wall for Christ, whom many of the churches have turned in the opposite direction and away from Bible prophecy. It is a distraction as we talked about earlier. And for the unbeliever it is the warning; whether you believe it or not Christ is coming again. He is coming in great power and glory. He is going to judge sin. He is not willing that any should perish and that is why He is patient in regard to His coming. But, He's not willing that any should perish but that all should come to redemption. And so for the lost the time is now for tomorrow may be too late.

Jobe Martin: Well I think the message of Bible prophecy to the believer is, Jesus is coming and He is coming for His Church, His Bride today the way things are shaping up, so let's get busy evangelizing the world. Let's not put on a white sheet and go sit on a mountain, let's use these last days as best we can in His power, for His glory within the framework of His Word. Let's share the Gospel and make disciples. For the unbeliever you better get things straightened out; it's time to get things straightened out with the Lord Jesus. I mean the prophecies of His First Coming, all fulfilled just like they were; even what He was going to say, "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Psalm 22. You know none of His bones would be broken, Isaiah 53. All these places are telling us about Jesus' First Coming, they were all fulfilled. Now, we are seeing with the Jewish people back in the land we are seeing the Second Coming prophecies, or the prophecies leading up to the Second Coming they are all just right in place. So, to the unbeliever I would say, it's time to sit down and consider the Lord Jesus as your Savior. Read the Gospel of John get this thing figured out, get it nailed down because our time is short. And after the Rapture happens if you've been convicted of the Holy Spirit and haven't received Jesus maybe 2 Thessalonians 2 there is no second chance. So, I would say today is the day of salvation.

Nathan Jones: I was asked that question at my ordination interview, I had all these elders sitting around me and the one in front of me asked that questions he said, "Can you sum up all of Revelation in just a sentence?" And I went on and on about sheep and goats and judgments. And he said, "No, no, stop, stop, stop. Jesus wins, get ready." I was like, "Can I use that?" Get ready. It is so true. The message of Bible prophecy is get ready. If you're a believer then you need to be out there sharing the Gospel and bringing people to Christ. If you're an unbeliever you need to get ready because Jesus is coming back in wrath and you need to get right with Him by accepting Him as your Savior, asking forgiveness of your sins. And then being a Christian and anticipating having that blessed hope of the Rapture. So, get ready.

Part 3

Dr. Reagan: I hope you are finding the answers of our Bible prophecy experts to be as interesting as I did when I interviewed them. They have been responding to question, "What do you think is the message of Bible prophecy to the world today to both believers and unbelievers?"

One of the reasons I asked this question is because one of our nation's best known pastors recently stated that the study of Bible prophecy is a "distraction" that Christians should not get involved in. Well frankly, I was appalled at that statement, because it meant that he was urging Christians to set aside one-third of God's Word and pay no attention to it. He was also implying, of course, that Bible prophecy contains no messages of any importance for us today. And I

would like to say emphatically that nothing could be farther from the truth. Bible prophecy is not just pie-in-the-sky poetry that has no relevance to the here and now. It can serve as a great tool of evangelism, and it can be used very effectively to call believers to commit their lives to evangelism and holiness.

Thus far, I have shared with you the responses of 5 of the 14 Bible prophecy experts I interviewed regarding this particular question, and all 5 have provided us with some vital messages that Bible prophecy has for both believers and unbelievers. Let's return now to our Bible prophecy experts.

Part 4

Tim LaHaye: I love that question because the issue of our times is are you ready because Jesus could come at any time. The great news about Bible prophecy is there is nothing that has to be fulfilled before Jesus comes. He can come delayed or a little sooner than we expect but He is going to come. And the issue of mankind is are you ready? Are you ready to meet Jesus Christ because after He comes it will be the Tribulation for you?

Al Gist: The message of prophecy to us as believers is that we are certainly living at the end of the Church Age and whatever we are going to do for the Kingdom of God we need to get on with it. It is one thing to have long range planning but many times people use that excuse for not doing anything today. We need to be busy today winning as many people as we can to the Lord. To the unbeliever it's of course telling us first of all that it tells them I believe that the Bible is real it's God's Holy Word, and everything it says is true. And so it says you know you need to get your life right with God because soon at any moment actually the Rapture could take place and you could be left behind to face the worst period in all of human history; a time called the Tribulation when it is going to be literally hell on earth. And whether you are left behind to go through the Tribulation or when you suddenly pass through the veils of death to the other side one thing is for sure; tomorrow is not certain. We have no guarantee of tomorrow. The Bible says your life is but a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away. So get your life right with Christ today, right now, that's what it says to the unbeliever.

Don McGee: That is the great thing about being a Bible prophecy teacher you're not just out there talking to the amen crowd, you are talking to people who are believers and who recognize that there is this thing about the coming of the Lord and it is something that is going to happen. And as a Bible prophecy teacher part of my responsibility is to cause believers to understand the lateness of the hour. And it should enhance our efforts at evangelism and doing those things that will bring people to understand that they need Jesus as their Savior. And to look for Him for His return for the Church. To unbelievers it's it should be a wakeup call. If people's hearts are so softened to the degree that they will listen to what the Bible says prophetically then they have an opportunity to respond to it. They need to understand that this is something real, that we are not here as some kind of result of evolution, that we are immortally eternal souls that will spend eternity somewhere. And if unbelievers can spend some time and to really, seriously, even academically consider Bible prophecy and what God has said is going to happen, it is going to cause a change in their hearts; and it should prompt to them to understand that time is short.

Michael Norten: Bible prophecy would tell all us believers that the time for Christ's coming is very, very soon. And I like to tell people that He is not, Jesus is not only at the door He's turning the dad-gum knob. And so we better be witnessing like crazy like we've never done before. And the non-believers should be responding to the message of the Gospel. And if they should

accept Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord so they can experience that salvation and that fellowship and that adventure that we all get to enjoy.

Gary Fisher: I would say it would have to include the verse that Luke 21:28, "When you see these things beginning to take place, straighten up, lift up your head redemption is drawing near." Prophecy indicates there is a time in the world when Jesus will intervene. He is sitting at the right hand of God the Father but the day is nearing when He will come back to this earth. He is coming back that is a promise in Christianity. That is a message to both apathetic Christians and to Mr. Lostman that we are running out of time. And the time to consider where we are going to spend eternity is right now. It's a good time considering all the things that are going on in the world. And that is the most major accomplishment that any individual will ever accomplish in his life, where is he going to spend eternity? And who does he approach to address that question, the answer is the Messiah of Israel, Yeshua Hamashia, Jesus the Messiah and the goal in life is to make peace with Him. And today is the day to do it based on all the stuff that we see that is going on, today is a good day.

Part 5

Dr. Reagan: I hope you are enjoying these interviews with Bible prophecy experts. In case you tuned in late, they are responding to the question, "What do you think is the message of Bible prophecy to the world today to both believers and unbelievers?" We have thus far interviewed 10 of the experts, and I think a clear pattern has emerged. The phrases I keep hearing repeatedly are "Jesus is returning soon!" and believers need "to get to work" and unbelievers need "to get serious" about where they are going to spend eternity. One of the statements that has thus far impacted me the most is one that was spoken by August Rosado to unbelievers. He said, "The message of Bible prophecy for unbelievers is that you are either one heartbeat away from going to Hell, or you are one trumpet sound away from being left behind!" I like that statement. It is true and it will preach! Let's return now to our remaining Bible prophecy experts.

Part 6

Andy Woods: Well to the believer when we live with the moment that any second Christ could come back it completely changes our priorities and the way we live. Just a real fast story my parents when I was a younger teenager living at their house used to put me in charge of their home and they would say, "Ok, we are leaving Friday and coming back Sunday." So what do you think I let happen to the house Saturday and so forth? You know there is a tendency to not be a good steward of their home, not to give you all the details. But one day they said this, "We are leaving Friday and we can come back anytime between Friday evening and Sunday." And I kept their home in a tidy state constantly because I knew their return was imminent. And you know if we are really looking at the any moment return of Christ it changes our thought patterns, the conversations we have. We are more aggressive with our evangelistic opportunities so there is a huge message for the believer. To the unbeliever the unbeliever today needs proof that there is a God. And prophecy I believe is the great proof to the unbeliever because the Bible is the only--there is a lot of alleged holy books out there, but the Bible is the only one that actually reveals things before they happen; which shows that there is an omniscient God you know behind it. So, it is a great message to prove Christianity to the unbeliever. And the unbeliever needs to look very carefully at Revelation 20:11-15, the Great White Throne Judgment because

if God reveals the future, and we believe He does, that is the future of the unbeliever if they don't trust in Christ alone.

Don Perkins: Well, I teach a message entitled, "Bible Prophecy God's Order of Events." And in that message it shows that God has everything under control, everything is under control. To the unbeliever I share a warning, today is the day of salvation. To the Christian I share it is now time for us to be about our Father's business reaching a lost world that don't know Him. No matter how chaotic things look today God is in control.

David Hocking: Well to the unbeliever I pray and hope that God will bring them to faith in the Messiah of Israel, our blessed Lord Yeshua. I believe that for the Jewish people also. So in our radio and television outlets we have multiple Jewish people, we have a whole lot of Israeli's who listen to our program, I teach the book of Isaiah. And Dr. Reagan I have heard you enough to know that it is also your heart. And so we beat the same, we are desirous of seeing lost men and women coming to know the Lord whether they are Jew or Gentile. And I can attest to that because I was asked to speak so much in churches about prophecy 25 years ago I stopped being a pastor. And I was a pastor for many, many years but I saw the need. And there has never been a prophecy conference that we've been involved with in 25 years where we've not seen people saved. So, Bible prophecy is definitely being used by God to turn people's hearts to the Lord.

When we come to the message to believers I always love to read what Peter said, in a few words he told us what it was all about. For believers--and I personally like to go to this almost every time people ask me that question, you'll know that he said that we don't follow cunningly devised fables or myths, he said he was with his friends Peter, James and John on the Holy Mount and he heard the voice from Heaven of the Heavenly Father saying, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." Listen to this, "So, we have a more sure word of prophecy where unto you do well that you take heed as unto a light that shineth in a dark place until the day dawn and the day star rise in our hearts, knowing this first that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." You know one of the blessings to me is that prophecy is like an anchor of the soul-- Hebrews has a great discussion of that in chapter 6, it is a light in a dark place. And the fact is that it's prophecy that gives us a sure word. That word sure is used of the anchor of a ship. And I think of how Paul spoke of the children of God wavering and going here, not knowing who to believe and being deceived. But what will keep the anchor deep into the soil and keep the ship steady is the sure Word of prophecy.

Ed Hindson: I think the message to the believer is summarized in the whole communion service. This do in remembrance of me until He comes. Every time we celebrate the bread and the cup we remember the death of Christ in the past, but we look forward to His coming in the future. We are to do that consistently until Jesus comes. So we are living in anticipation of His coming. The message to the believer is then you have a job to do to fulfill the great prediction, build the Church to the glory of God. So it doesn't surprise me that Gospel preaching, Bible believing churches are growing and they are reaching people and thousands of people are coming to Christ today.

At the same time for the unbeliever the warning was but the love of most will grow cold, there will come a time of ungodliness, unparalleled in human history, a self-centered society that will be so indulged in itself that they won't care about God or the things of God, that will set the stage ultimately for the rise of the Antichrist who himself doesn't believe in the God of his father's or any god he things he's god. It would not surprise me that our culture in the way it is going today would produce such a person one day when He is indwelled by the power of Satan to be the ultimate deceiver. So, the message to the unbeliever is you need to come to faith in

Christ while there is hope and while there's time. Don't keep putting it off. Don't delay because one day the trumpet will sound and the archangel will shout, and the family of God will be called home to Heaven. And if you're left behind, literally all hell breaks loose in the time of Tribulation. Trust me you don't want to be left behind. Those who are left behind are under the wrath of the Lamb, Christ Himself. They are under the wrath of Satan when he is cast out of Heaven permanently. And they are under the wrath of God the Father. Everything goes wrong during that period of time.

Sometimes people ask me, "Well why do you and Dr. Reagan and so many other people, I mean I could name a lot of people, David Jeremiah, Chuck Swindoll, and Charles Stanley, etc, why do you all believe the Rapture has to occur before the time of Tribulation? Hasn't the Church always suffered persecution, and trouble and martyrdom and wrath?" Yes, from men, and from the Devil, but not from God. The Church may be the object of the wrath of Satan, she may be the object of the wrath of men, but she's not the object of the wrath of Jesus. Jesus loves the Bride, died for the Bride, gave Himself for the Bride. And you have a high enough view of the Bride you'll understand you don't beat up the Bride of Christ in the Tribulation period and then take her to the marriage, that doesn't make any sense at all symbolically. No, He's going to come one day for His Bride. And when He comes all the persecution will come to an end. All the resistance will come to an end because once He takes the Bride home to the marriage and she receives the white robe, when she receives the blessing of God and the rewards of God at the judgment seat of Christ. Robed in white she then marches out of Heaven in Revelation 19 with her warrior Husband to come back to reign and rule on earth and fulfill her ultimate destiny that she rules over the nations. God has a wonderful plan for His Bride. He has a wonderful plan for His Church.

Question is: Does He have a wonderful plan for you? And have you accepted that plan as part of your own experience in life? The plan that's centralized in the person of Jesus Himself, the sinless Son of God who went to the Cross, bore your sin, died in your place, and rose from the dead to offer you not only forgiveness of sins but a gift of righteousness and of eternal life and it's all free. That is the best transaction you'll ever make. It's the best deal you'll ever hear. And the sooner you say, "yes," the better it will go for you in life.

Part 7

Dr. Reagan: Well, there you have it the answers of 14 Bible prophecy experts in response to the question, "What is the message of Bible prophecy to believers and unbelievers?" I would say that overall, the message of these Bible prophecy experts was one of urgency. The Signs of the Times point to the imminent return of Jesus. And the urgency of the moment demands action, action on the part of all of us. If you are a person who has never received Jesus as your personal Lord and Savior, I pray you will do so this moment. Folks, time is short. Action is needed now. God has prolonged your life to this point because He does not wish that any should perish, but that all might be saved.

Perhaps you think you are saved because you have been baptized or you have become a member of a church or because you consider yourself to be a good person. None of those things will save your soul from Hell. Salvation is not a matter of religious rituals, church membership or good works. It is a matter of relationship. Jesus said, "This is eternal life that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent." Do you know Jesus as your Lord and Savior? Have you committed your life to Him? Are you trusting in Him or in your good works? To come to know Jesus personally and to be sealed by the Holy Spirit for salvation, you need to reach out to God in faith through a simple prayer like this one: Dear

Heavenly Father, I confess to you that I am a sinner and that I am sorry for my sins. I thank You for the salvation You've made possible through the sacrifice of Your Son. I accept Him as my Lord and Savior, and I welcome the indwelling power of your Holy Spirit. In Jesus' name, Amen. Once you have prayed this prayer, seek out a Bible-believing church where God's Word is preached and where Jesus is held up as the only hope for the world. Make a public confession of your faith in Jesus and be baptized to manifest your commitment to Him and to symbolize your own death, burial and resurrection as a new person in Christ. For those of you who have already placed your faith in Jesus as your Lord and Savior, my plea is that you will get serious about reaching out to unbelievers with the message of the Lord's soon return. Time is short. Urgent action is needed. I pray too that you will examine every aspect of your life to see where you have made compromises with the world; where you have grown comfortable with sin. The Holy Spirit is calling you to holiness in preparation for the Lord's imminent return. Identify those areas of your life that are not totally surrendered to the Lord and crucify them.

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 our Redemption is drawing near."

End of Program