

Christ in Prophecy

Prophecy 17: “McGee on End Viewpoints”

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Opening

Dr. Reagan: Why are there so many different views of end-time Bible prophecy? Is it because Bible Prophecy is just too difficult to understand? Should we just give up on trying to interpret end-time prophecy and all of us become Pan-millennialist; believing it will just all pan out in the end? For the answers to these questions stay tuned.

Part 1

Dr. Reagan: Greetings in the name of Jesus our Blessed Hope and welcome to Christ in Prophecy. Once again this week I am delighted to have as my special guest a dear friend and colleague, Don McGee from Amite, Louisiana. Welcome back to Christ in Prophecy.

Don McGee: Good to be here. Good to be here.

Dr. Reagan: We are glad to have you Don. Also this week I am pleased to have my associate Nathan Jones here to help me interview Don. Nathan is our Web Minister, welcome Nathan.

Nathan Jones: Thank you Dave, good to be here.

Dr. Reagan: Well I am sure that many people viewing are glad to put a face to that guy who does all that work on the internet.

Nathan Jones: Yes, don't look at the man behind the curtain.

Dr. Reagan: There you go, okay. Well Nathan why don't you get us started on this discussion of Bible prophecy.

Nathan Jones: Alright Don, I need to know this from you; there are so many different viewpoints of Bible prophecy out there that some people have just given up. They said well like Dave said earlier they are Pan-millennialist they think that it will all pan out, because they just give up. Why do you think there are so many viewpoints out there?

Don McGee: First of all I would like to address this term Pan-millennialist.

Nathan Jones: That is a mouth-full.

Don McGee: Yes it is. You know I hear that from time to time Nathan.

Dr. Reagan: I hear that a lot from pastors.

Don McGee: Yes, and it is usually intended to evoke a chuckle or a laugh. I don't see it that. I see it, if someone is really a Panmillennialist it indicates to me they are not willing to study. How can you study Bible prophecy from Genesis all the way to Revelation and not have an opinion.

Dr. Reagan: That's right.

Don McGee: And if you read it literally then you are going to come out with a, what I believe to be a Pre-Millennial, Pre-Tribulation opinion about it. I don't see any other option.

Dr. Reagan: You know I used to have a colleague named Dennis Pollock, you remember Dennis?

Don McGee: Oh, yes, yes.

Dr. Reagan: Well Dennis had, he got so aggravated at pastors saying, "Well I am just a Pan-millennialist." He said, "Those people would have been really good members of the Know-Nothing party back before the Civil War."

Don McGee: That's right.

Dr. Reagan: Because they just are admitting that they know nothing about it and don't care to know anything about it.

Don McGee: Who, anybody with money invested in the stock market does not take a pan-stock market attitude you can believe that. So why would they take it with Scripture?

Nathan Jones: Well you know they look at Bible prophecy and they say these people they just sit on their suitcases twiddling their thumbs waiting for Jesus to come, they are no good to anybody. But that is not the case, Bible prophecy makes us motivated right, to preach.

Don McGee: It certainly does, and I believe that one of the reasons to address your original questions, one of the reasons we have so many attitudes about this is because people want to hear what they want to hear. And now if you don't want to hear about the imminent return of Jesus then you are going to take the attitude, well the Lord says a year is like a thousand, a thousand years is like a day and all that kind of thing. That is not a hermeneutical principle that He was establishing there.

Dr. Reagan: Well Don isn't also rooted in whether or not you approach the Scriptures for their plain sense meaning, or whether you tend to spiritualize it.

Don McGee: Why would we spiritualize Scripture Dave? If you spiritualize Scripture...

Dr. Reagan: It is done all the time.

Don McGee: ...you can make it mean anything you want it to mean.

Dr. Reagan: Well that makes you God.

Nathan Jones: Yeah.

Don McGee: Well it makes you God and it also stabs the conscience, you know I don't really have to worry about this because I see this as meaning something else. We don't spiritualize directions to putting furniture together. We don't spiritualize anything. If you are learning to fly an airplane and that guy gives you a check-list you don't spiritualize that thing.

Dr. Reagan: That is a good point. You know when I was growing up in church the only message that I ever heard about Bible prophecy was this, "There is not 1 verse in the Bible that even implies Jesus will ever put His feet on this earth again." And then when I was about 12 years old, I discovered Zechariah 14, said He was coming back to the Mount of Olives. I took that to my preacher, I said, "What does this mean?" And I will never forget he read it and read it, I don't think he ever read it before and he looked up and said, "Son I want to tell you something, I don't know what it means but it doesn't mean what it says." Because it disagreed with us.

Don McGee: What else do you need to say? That betrays an attitude, if someone is seeking the truth, as Christians we need to do that. Then they are not going to take that attitude, they are going to read Zechariah 14 and they are going to look at other texts that are similar to it and they are going to arrive at a conclusion.

Dr. Reagan: But people say, "Well Bible prophecy is apocalyptic therefore it never means what it says."

Don McGee: That is almost like a disease, right?

Dr. Reagan: I thought it was for a while.

Nathan Jones: Yeah, I got apocalyptic.

Don McGee: That is an excuse term. That is a buzz word that is used almost like the Pan-millennial buzz word. Well if I say it is apocalyptic then God is going to relieve me of any responsibility of studying this and arriving at a conclusion that is definitive according to Scripture. It takes me off the hook.

Dr. Reagan: And the interesting thing about it is the book of Zechariah is an apocalyptic book yet every prophecy in it about the First Coming meant exactly what it said.

Don McGee: I have a problem sometimes with people who look at it that way for instance Micah, if you go to the book of Micah you will find that they spiritualize 1 text having to do with the Lord's coming but when you go, 2 chapters earlier, 3 or 4 something like that where it talks about the First Coming of Jesus they will say, "That is absolutely accurate there, that is literal."

Dr. Reagan: Yeah.

Don McGee: Well, my question is where do you draw the line? Show me the chapter and verse where you draw the line from spiritual to literal.

Dr. Reagan: Right.

Don McGee: It can't be done.

Dr. Reagan: Well that's right, and when you start spiritualizing brother you get in trouble. I mean the 2 parts of the Bible that are spiritualized the most are the beginning and the end. "Oh, it wasn't really 6 days it was really 600 million years for each day or whatever." And you get to the end and, "Well it doesn't really mean a thousand years it means this or that or whatever." Those are the 2 parts that are most abused. And it all by spiritualization it doesn't mean what it says.

Don McGee: I believe without question Satan is behind this spiritualization of Genesis and Revelation because it lures people into a false sense of security about origins and also it lures them into a false sense of security about the Return of the Lord.

Dr. Reagan: And if you are going to say that God doesn't mean what He says there then how do I know He means what He says about the resurrection?

Nathan Jones: Or salvation.

Don McGee: Look why don't we just take this and trash it then. You know if the Lord didn't not mean what He said about taking us out of this world at the Rapture, then what else can I doubt? You know is there a Heaven? Is the Lord really going to take us to Heaven, or am I going to just go into oblivion like the Nihilist say. Or will I spend eternity in Hell?

Part 2

Nathan Jones: Welcome back to Christ in Prophecy and our interview of Don McGee, Evangelist and Director of Crown and Sickie Ministries. You know Don I grew up and many people grew up with Hal Lindsey, "The Late Great Planet Earth." The Left Behind series I read every one of them Tim LaHaye and Jerry B. Jenkins and so generally I always thought that there was just the Pre-Tribulation, Pre-Millennial viewpoint. But the more I study Bible prophecy the more I realize that is a minority case, most people especially the Catholics believe in an Amillennial positions.

Dr. Reagan: And Protestant denominations.

Don McGee: Many Protestants.

Nathan Jones: Lots of Protestants too, so can you explain what the Amillennial position is for our audience.

Nathan Jones: Kind of in a nutshell the early church was Pre-Millennial and using that term broadly because there a lot of varieties of that especially 2,000 years ago.

Nathan Jones: Now we say Pre-Millennial.

Don McGee: Pre-Millennial meaning that the return of Jesus is before the Millennium; the Second Coming of Jesus to this earth.

Nathan Jones: He will come and reign a 1,000 years.

Don McGee: He will come and reign a 1,000 years. The Amillennial view came in with guys like Origin, and Constantine and people like that. And those men came out of a background that said philosophically that anything of the body, anything physical was bad, that it was only the spirit that counted.

Nathan Jones: Gnosticism.

Don McGee: It is Gnosticism basically. So when they got to Scripture they spiritualized it saying, "Jesus is not going to come back to a literal earth because a literal earth is physical, therefore..."

Dr. Reagan: And by nature evil.

Don McGee: And it is inherently evil.

Dr. Reagan: Yeah, yeah.

Don McGee: So Jesus cannot do this so what I have to do now since I am denying that, then I have to come up with an idea that I can believe and they came up with Amillennialism. The "A" there is often called the alpha-privative it simply means that it negates the Millennium. There is no Millennium.

Dr. Reagan: Yeah in Greek if you put "A" in front of a word it negates the word, yeah.

Don McGee: Yeah, yeah right, exactly. So that is what they did and that is where the term Amillennial comes from.

Nathan Jones: And they do not then believe in a literal 1,000 year reign of Jesus on earth.

Don McGee: They do not believe in that, they believe at the Rapture, in fact they don't even like to use the term Rapture but they believe that when Jesus does, could be 10,000 years from now as they say does come back and take the Church out and they don't even refer to it as Rapture, they call it the Resurrection. They believe that bingo 2 Peter 3:10 kicks in the earth is destroyed and burned up and that is it.

Dr. Reagan: Well they take the position that the Millennium actually began at the cross.

Don McGee: Yes.

Dr. Reagan: And we are in in now.

Don McGee: Yes.

Nathan Jones: Really?

Don McGee: I can't understand that.

Dr. Reagan: Yes, absolutely.

Don McGee: If Jesus is ruling and reigning over this world right now.

Dr. Reagan: He is doing an awfully bad job.

Don McGee: Yes, I have some correction to offer.

Dr. Reagan: Yeah, they argue the Millennium began at the cross and for the early when Augustine began to argue this he could argue, "Well He is going to reign for a 1,000 years and He will come back." Well in 1000 AD He didn't come back so then they had to spiritualize the 1,000 years and they've been doing that ever since then.

Don McGee: The majority of Christendom and I use that term very broadly, the majority of Christendom is Amillennial.

Dr. Reagan: So they argue we are in the Millennium now which is hard to believe since it says that the earth will be flooded with peace, righteousness and justice as the waters cover the sea. They also argue that Satan is bound now because it says when the Millennium begins he is going to be bound. Do you believe that Satan is bound now?

Don McGee: Well Peter says he's not. Peter says that he is roaring lion.

Dr. Reagan: And that was written after the resurrection.

Don McGee: That's right. And Peter says that he is out to destroy anyone that he can, so no Satan is not bound.

Dr. Reagan: And John many years after the Resurrection said the whole world is under the power of the evil one. So Satan was bound by the cross in the sense that we, that believers ever since then received the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and we have greater power in combating Satan. But it says in the Book of Revelation that he will be bound that he can no longer deceive the nations. That is a special kind of binding.

Don McGee: He is not talking about not deceiving Christians. He is not talking about not deceiving the Jews. He is talking about the world, the whole world.

Dr. Reagan: Also the Bible says that when the Millennium begins that Jesus Christ will reign on the Throne of David. Is He on the Throne of David right now?

Don McGee: He is not on the Throne of David right now because for several reasons but besides the obvious, secondly the Throne of David never has been, is not, and never will be in Heaven it is in Jerusalem.

Dr. Reagan: Yes.

Don McGee: Yeah.

Dr. Reagan: So He is at the right hand of His Father on His Father's Throne.

Don McGee: Right, He is sitting on a chair, He is not on a throne if I can use that term.

Nathan Jones: So they will say that there is a spiritual kingdom and I believe that is true right? There is a spiritual kingdom where Jesus rules and reigns over the Church but not a physical kingdom which is totally dedicated to the Millennial Kingdom.

Don McGee: That's, I don't see how they could come up with that either.

Nathan Jones: Really?

Don McGee: One of the problems that Amillennials have is that they try to take the Kingdom of God and try to put it into the Church. If you go to Luke 13 about verse 28 Jesus Himself talks about Abraham, Isaac and Jacob being in the Kingdom of God. Now were they in the Church? I mean were they Pre-Pentecostal, or Post-Pentecostal. Well they aren't in the Church as we know the body of Christ and yet they are in the kingdom which tells me that...

Dr. Reagan: Well let me play the Devil's advocate for a moment.

Don McGee: Sure.

Dr. Reagan: I have actually had people write in several times and tell me this idea of Jesus reigning a 1,000 years is only mentioned 1 place in the Bible in the Book of Revelation therefore it's not that all important and it couldn't be true.

Nathan Jones: Yeah here it is right here.

Don McGee: So we have a test that if it is mentioned 3 times it is no good, if it is mentioned 5 times, it's got to be mentioned 10 times for us to believe it?

Nathan Jones: Six times, I found it.

Dr. Reagan: Why isn't it just good enough if He just mentioned once?

Don McGee: That is all we need.

Dr. Reagan: But He says it 6 times in the book of Revelation.

Don McGee: Yes, yes.

Nathan Jones: Revelation 20.

Dr. Reagan: I have also had people write it and say, "Well now if you go over the 1 Peter you will find that it says that the Lord, that the earth is going to burn up and Jesus is going to come that the earth is going to burn up immediately and so how can there be an earth in the Millennial reign?"

Don McGee: Well it is going to burn up but that is going to be before the eternal state.

Dr. Reagan: You have to consider all prophecies; they don't all give you all the details do they?

Don McGee: No you don't take 1 prophecy out of context and stand on it and this is all God says about that.

Dr. Reagan: Well you do if you want to prove your point.

Don McGee: Yeah, well that is that pig path we were talking about.

Dr. Reagan: You and that pig path.

Don McGee: They just pick a pig path; you know what a pig path is?

Nathan Jones: Yes, sir I do. Yes, sir.

Dr. Reagan: Actually the Millennium is needed because God is going to fulfill a lot of promises He's made during the Millennium.

Don McGee: He is going to fulfill a lot of promises that He made to the nation of Israel. And He is going to fulfill promises that He made to the entire world.

Dr. Reagan: World, that's right.

Don McGee: That's right. But there is another aspect to that Dave. If there is no Millennium then Satan wins and God loses. In the garden everything was perfect.

Dr. Reagan: That's right.

Don McGee: God says this is the way that I want it. Sin entered there was a curse, and we are experiencing the consequences of that even today. But there is a time coming when Jesus is going to take back from the clutches of Satan that which He created.

Dr. Reagan: Yeah.

Part 3

Dr. Reagan: Welcome back to Christ in Prophecy. We have been talking with Don McGee about end-time viewpoints of Bible prophecy. Don is the Founder and Director of Crown and Sickle Ministries in Amite, Louisiana. Don how about giving us an overview or summary of end-time events?

Don McGee: I would be happy to Dave. What I am going to do is give you an overview of end-time events from the Pre-Millennial, Pre-Tribulation point of view. There are others out there but we believe in the literal interpretation of the Scriptures and that presents the Pre-millennial, Pre-Tribulational point of view regarding end-time events.

The very next event that is going to happen is the Rapture of the Church. This is when Jesus comes down from Heaven and He does not come to the earth but is in the air above the earth, and a trumpet is sounded and there is the voice of the Archangel and the dead in Christ rise out

of their graves to meet Jesus in the air. When that happens they are going to be given new glorified, immortal bodies that they will have for all eternity. Immediately after the resurrection of the dead in Christ those of us who are still alive at the Rapture will be caught up to meet them in the air. That means that this corruptible, mortal body must be shed, and we will be given an incorruptible, immortal body just like the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul talked about this in the Philippian letter we are going to have bodies like His; never anymore sickness or pain or anything like that. There are some other things that have to do with the resurrection of the Lord's people at the, what we commonly call the Rapture and that is it is not a general resurrection, not everybody is going to be raised at this time. There will be others that will be raised later, the dead who are not Christians and then the Old Testament Saints at another period of time also. But this is a family affair, this is just the Church.

When we are caught up to meet the Lord in the air we are going to go back to Heaven with Him. And what will happen on earth is a very, very terrible time of tribulation Jesus talked about this in Matthew 24, Luke 21, and in the book of Revelation too. People who are left behind are going to experience suffering that is unprecedented Jesus said if it were not for the intervention of God by sending Jesus at the end of that tribulation to establish His Millennial reign on this earth, then no flesh would survive. When you look at the Book of Revelation there are three sets of seven events that are going to happen, there will be seven seals that will be broken, and then seven trumpets will be sounded, and then seven bowls of wrath will be poured out on the face of this earth. Folks when we read these things we need to understand that though there is symbolic language in the Book of Revelation regarding these events, yet that symbolic language points to very literal events. For example by the time the first 4 seals are broken in Revelation 6, 25% of the earth's population will have died, from famine, in war, and disease, and wild animals.

So if people believe that they can escape committing their lives to Christ at this time and can go on living the way that they want to and believe that they can become Christians, they can become saved during the Tribulation, they are walking on very thin ice for a couple of different reasons. And if you are sitting out there thinking that, you really need to pay attention to this. Number one if you reject Jesus Christ now there are some things said in Paul's letter to the Church of Thessalonica that could indicate your heart will be hardened to the point that you will reject Him. Number two there is a good chance that you are going to be killed during this tribulation time, even before you might get to the point of accepting Christ as your Savior.

The Tribulation is going to be a time that is unprecedented in its horrors. And it is going to end with an event that is just so beautiful and so fantastic it is very difficult to understand. Zechariah in chapter 14 wrote about this event, and in the Book of Revelation in chapter 19 John saw it and recorded what he saw. This is the coming of Jesus from Heaven back to this literal earth. He is going to come to the Mount of Olives, and the Bible tells us that when He arrives at the Mount of Olives, that mountain is going to split north and south allowing an east-west valley, into which people choose who are still alive in the City of Jerusalem will flee and the reason they are going to flee into that valley is Jesus is going to do business with His enemies at that time. We are told in Revelation 19 that they are destroyed; they are killed by the very word of Christ as He rides in on that horse. But Zechariah says some things that are different, Zechariah says that their eyes, and their tongues, and their flesh will rot even before their bodies hit the ground.

Some people believe that is the result of a nuclear catastrophe, personally I do not believe that, I believe that it is simply the means that Jesus will choose to destroy His enemies. These are enemies not only of Christ but of the Jewish people. During that seven year period the Jewish people are going to experience trial that they have never seen before. And it is going to take that kind of tribulation for them to finally recognize that Yeshua, Jesus is their Messiah. And they are going to be brought to a point where they will cry out, actually they will be crying out to the one whom they pierced, and they will say, "He's our God," and He will say, "Their my people."

When Jesus arrives on the Mount of Olives He is going to have believers with Him, that's us, we are coming back with Him. And I don't understand every detail of that, but my belief, this is not based upon my understanding, it is simply faith in the Word of God, the literal Word of God. We are going to be with Jesus as He leaves the Mount of Olives and as He marches through the Brook Kidron and He is going to go through the Eastern Gate of the old wall City of Jerusalem. Several 100 years ago the Turks walled that Gate up and said, "We are going to prevent Messiah from ever coming back." And then they planted, they established a graveyard right at that gate because they believe that no Jewish Rabbi would even come close to those graves and become ceremonially unclean, and they felt that the blocks in the wall could prevent Him from entering. I find it interesting that the Turks took this literally, understanding these Scriptures literally, Muslim Turks, when many in Christendom today try to spiritualize it. I would encourage you to look at this from a literal standpoint. When Jesus comes back and goes through that gate He is going to go into the Old City of Jerusalem and He is going to establish Himself on David's Throne just like the angel said to Mary in Luke 1. And He is going to be King over all the earth, and Christians will be with Him to assist in the governance of this planet. It is going to be a wonderful time, in Isaiah 11 we are told that wild animals will be freed from the curse, that a lion will actually become herbivorous, will eat hay like a cow. A bear will be in the same pasture as a young calf, also herbivorous. It says that God is going to cause the nations of the world to take their implements of war and beat them into implements of agriculture. And there will be peace on the earth and that is going to last for 1,000 years.

Then an interesting event happens; during this 1,000 years Satan is bound and then he is going to be released for a short period of time and he is going to deceive the nations of the world. And he is going to convince humanity that they can fight God. That indicates to me that not everyone during the Tribulation was a disciple of Christ. But even more important then that, it indicates to me that environment has nothing to do with the human heart, it is evil and wicked like Jeremiah said. For 1,000 years people lived under the absolute perfect reign of the Son of God and here in a short period of time the Deceiver comes out and He is able to convince them that they can fight God. And we find that they are going to be destroyed. Satan is going to be captured and he is going to be thrown into the Lake of Fire.

Then we have the eternal state, 2 Peter 3 we have a brief account how the heavens and earth will be destroyed. And after that there is a new heaven, and out of this new heaven comes this new earth, and the new City of Jerusalem will descend out of Heaven and in some kind of way that only God knows the details of it is going to be established on this earth. A city that is 1500 miles cubed and we are going to live there for all of eternity.

You may be thinking well that is very difficult to understand, I don't know about this literal interpretation of Scripture because I don't understand it. Well folks it is much easier to understand the literal truth of God's Word, then it is to try to comprehend some spiritual allegorical means of interpretation. A spiritual interpretation and allegory you can become God and you can make it mean anything you want it to. The consequence of that is if there are 10 people spiritualizing it you've got 10 different opinions. But we can stand firm on the literal Word of God, understanding that nothing that happens takes God by surprise and every event that happens is being used in God's orchestration of events that have to do with the Rapture of the Church, which is the very next event.

I would encourage you to read these things for yourself. God gave you a mind; He gave you a brain the ability to think and to comprehend. And as a Christian with the Holy Spirit in your heart, you can discern these things and come to a literal interpretation of what He said. May God riches and deepest blessings be upon you.

Part 4

Dr. Reagan: Thanks Don for that incredible summary overview that you just gave us there of end-time events. It was just absolutely fantastic you know if you ever developed any enthusiasm you might be a pretty good preacher.

Don McGee: Thank you for the invitation to be.

Dr. Reagan: How about quickly telling our viewers how they can get in touch with your ministry.

Don McGee: The best way to reach me is to go to our website which is crownandsickle.com, go there and contact us there.

Dr. Reagan: Thank you Don, well folks that is our program for this week. I hope it has been a blessing to you and I hope you will be back with us again next week. Until then this is Dave Reagan speaking for Lamb and Lion Ministries' saying, "Look up, be watchful, for our redemption is drawing near."

End of Program