

Christ in Prophecy
Prophecy 64: Allen Parr on the Interpretation of Prophecy

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Opening

Dr. Reagan: I grew up in a church that taught the Bible means exactly what it says unless it is talking about end time events, in which case it never means what it says because all end time prophecy is symbolic in nature. So, what about it? Should we understand end time Bible prophecy to mean what it says, or should we spiritualize it? Stay tuned.

Part 1

Dr. Reagan: Greetings in the name of Jesus, our Blessed Hope, and welcome to Christ in Prophecy. My co-host, Nathan Jones, and I have a very special guest in the studio with us today. He is Allen Parr who is an outstanding evangelist based in McKinney, Texas.

Nathan Jones: Allen, it is so great to have you, man. I've been following your BEAT on YouTube for awhile now, and to have you here. Can I give you one of those Coronavirus, greetings?

Allen Parr: Absolutely.

Nathan Jones: Yes.

Allen Parr: Good to be here.

Nathan Jones: Well, before we get into it, can you tell folks a little about your background? How you got saved and how you came into your ministry?

Allen Parr: Yes, so for me it started off in 1982, and I was blessed to have two parents who absolutely adored me and my sister. But in 1982 they got a divorce. And the divorce was really, really difficult for my dad. And, as a result my dad wasn't a believer when they were married, and so he gave his life to the Lord as the result of the divorce. It was just so devastating for him that he really didn't know who to turn to, and for the first time in his life he turned to the Lord. And the Lord got a hold of him and called him to the ministry. And so, I was six years old at the time. And about two years after that when I was eight years old my father led myself, and my sister to the Lord. And even at a young age, at the age of eight, I really understood the Gospel, and accepted the Gospel. But to be fair I really didn't have a strong relationship with Christ when I was a youth and all, so through high school. Until I got to college and I had someone that poured into me, and someone disciplined and took me aside and really showed me what it meant to really live my life for the Lord. And so, that is when my journey with God, and Christ, and really studying the Word, and getting into the Scriptures really emerged.

Nathan Jones: When did the Lord give you a wife?

Allen Parr: Oh, boy. I would have loved to have said that when I was in my early 20's or mid-20's but my journey was much different. I did not get married for the first time, I've only been married once, and my beautiful wife, Jennifer and we have two children, Anaiah and Micah, they are three and two. I didn't get married until I was 40 years old, so, I had a very unique journey of being a single guy for a very, very long time.

Dr. Reagan: Now, you were an electrical engineer weren't you?

Allen Parr: Yes.

Dr. Reagan: When the Lord called you?

Allen Parr: Yes.

Dr. Reagan: And that was a difficult decision to make wasn't it?

Allen Parr: It was. I say that it was really the hardest, easiest decision that I've ever had to make in my life, because I was working as an engineer for two years.

Dr. Reagan: And making good money, right?

Allen Parr: Making very good money. Yeah, I was 22 at the time making good money, single, had the life if you will.

Dr. Reagan: And then the Lord says, "Give it all up."

Allen Parr: And the Lord says, yes.

Nathan Jones: And you obeyed. Wow!

Allen Parr: I did. And at the time I just remember God kind of putting on my heart, and saying, "Hey, if money was not an issue. You know if we took that completely out of the equation would you dedicate your life to serving God, and really teaching the Word of God? Or would you stay in a career that you don't feel fulfilled and called in?" And I felt so clearly that God was leading me to go to ministry.

Nathan Jones: Where did you end up going to seminary?

Allen Parr: Yeah, I went to Dallas Theological Seminary. Which is how I ended up here in Dallas.

Nathan Jones: And you're also a talented musician too, right?

Allen Parr: I have led worship for many, many years. I play the piano and sing. So, I don't do it as much now, but I did it for a very, very long time.

Dr. Reagan: Well, I want to get into what we are going to discuss in this program with that theological background and all. We appreciate you sharing your journey with us. And I want to get into this with this question: I mentioned at the very beginning at the program that I grew up in a church that said that all end time Bible prophecy is symbolic. Everything else in the Bible means what it says. And in fact, when I couldn't figure that out when I was a teenager, and finally I asked some guy that was coming through that seemed to know what he was talking about; he was a traveling evangelist. I said, "Why is it that end time prophecy doesn't mean what it says? The First Coming prophecies meant what they said." He said, "Because it is

apocalyptic.” Scared me to death. I didn’t know if that was a disease or what. So, what about it? Does end time prophecy mean what it says, or not?

Allen Parr: You know thinking about the book of Revelation because we know that a lot of the end time prophecies are Daniel and Revelation. And one of the things that I think that really confuse people, that we have to really remember is that when John was giving us this vision of the book of Revelation, it was just that it was a vision. I mean he’s trying his best to try to explain to us what God has put on his heart in this vision. And I always tell people if you had a dream at night and you tried to explain to people what that dream was all about. I mean you are doing your best to try to explain things, and John is doing his best to try to explain things that you may not have even existed in his time, but now is present with us. So, when we think about this idea of symbols, or symbolism in the apocalyptic literature, we think about symbols are all throughout the New Testament. You know when Jesus said, “I am the door.” Was Jesus really a door? Right? No. Was Jesus really a shepherd when He says, “I am the good shepherd?” But we know that these are just symbols for His character and His nature.

Dr. Reagan: But they have a literal meaning.

Allen Parr: But they have a literal meaning, exactly. So, the question is: Should we just take everything that we see in the Scriptures and not use common sense, and just assume that it is literal? Right? There are certain things that are symbolic. So, once again when we look at the book of Revelation there are some things that are very clear. When John says he sees angels surrounding the throne, we should look at that and say, “Okay, yeah, he probably saw angels surrounding the throne of God.” But whenever he says things like, “I saw a 1,000 people here, a 1,000 people there” numbers are symbolic oftentimes, or the number seven is symbolic for perfection. So, when we see the number six that is one less than perfection, which is symbolic of imperfection. And you’ve got colors and different things like that. So, I think that we have to be careful not looking at every single thing in the book of Revelation or apocalyptic literature as being symbolic, but we have to use discernment in terms of what is and what isn’t.

Nathan Jones: Well, the beauty of Revelation is that a lot of times it will explain what the symbols are, like the great sign of Revelation 12 for instance, who the woman is, who the child is. Or you can go back to the Old Testament and you can understand because the symbols would be explained there as well.

Allen Parr: Exactly. I mean thinking about Revelation chapter 1 where it talks about the lampstands, and John saw seven lampstands. And it could be easy to look at that and say, “Did he really see lampstands?” But if you keep reading in that chapter, it very clearly says these seven lampstands are the seven churches. So, oftentimes what may appear to be confusing can easily be explained or is later on explained in the Scriptures.

Dr. Reagan: Well, it seems to me if the First Coming prophecies meant what they said, we should expect the Second Coming prophecies to mean what they say. I mean my turn around came with the book of Zechariah of all things, because the book of Zechariah has all these First Coming prophecies in it that were literally fulfilled, and yet it is an apocalyptic book. And I would suspect that what it says about the Second Coming of Jesus are going to be literally fulfilled. One of the rules we use around here is if the plain sense makes sense, don’t look for any other sense or you’ll end up with nonsense. And when the founder of the Institute for Creation Research, Henry Morris when he wrote his commentary on the book of Revelation I love what he said at the beginning he said, “I’m writing this because people tell me the book of Revelation

is hard to understand.” He says, “It is not hard to understand, it is hard to believe. If you believe it you will understand it.”

Allen Parr: Amen.

Dr. Reagan: How about that.

Allen Parr: Amen.

Nathan Jones: Well, Allen one of the reasons that so many churches and pastors end up spiritualizing Bible prophecy is they’ve adopted what is called Replacement Theology. Which I am sure you are familiar with. The idea that the Church has replaced Israel, God is done with the Jews, He has no meaning for them. So, when they get to prophecies that talk about a literal Israel, and a literal Jewish people, they don’t know what to do, so they spiritualize and make it the Church. How would you respond to churches and pastors who take a Replacement Theology position?

Allen Parr: Yeah, you know I think Replacement Theology clearly needs to be rejected for a few reasons. First and foremost, it is not biblical. You know there is enough scriptures that we can look at that clearly distinguish God’s plan for the Church, and God’s plan for Israel. And the fact that God still has a plan for Israel.

Dr. Reagan: Like Romans 9-11.

Allen Parr: Like Romans 9-11, for instance Romans 11 where Paul says, “Hey, has God rejected the Jews?” And he says, “Absolutely not! I myself am an Israelite.” And so, we can look at that. We can look at scriptures in Jeremiah where he talks about His plan for His people. We can look at Zechariah chapter 8 where He talks about once again His plan for His people. So, first and foremost Replacement Theology is just not biblical. But then not only that it is not logical. And what I mean by that is it doesn’t make sense that God would replace all of His promises that He had with one group of sinful people, and put it onto group of sinful people, which is the Church. I mean the Bible says, “All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” So, to suggest this idea that okay, God got rid of Israel because they were so bad, and they were so sinful, and so evil so that He could now bless the Church. Well, the Church is also sinful. So, it is not biblical. It is not logical. And it is also not theological either in terms of--

Dr. Reagan: How can you be assured that He is going to keep the promises that He’s made to the Church?

Allen Parr: Exactly. Well, I was getting ready to say that because it also creates this idea that we can’t trust God because He said in the Old Testament, “Hey I am going to bless you, and I am going to bless those who bless you, and bless you with all of this land.” But then whenever you turn away from me, then oh, okay, well, I am not going to bless you anymore, all of promises. So, it creates this idea, or this picture, or this character of God that He’s not trustworthy, or we can’t depend upon Him, or He’s not a promise keeping God.

Dr. Reagan: A good example of this I went to a theological seminary one time and I took a look, I spent a whole day doing this, I took a look at what all of the commentaries had to say about Revelation chapter 7 where it says that 144,000 Jews are going to be sealed by God for a special mission. And it even mentions them by tribes. And 85% of all the commentaries said that was speaking of the Church.

Nathan Jones: And the Church always gets the blessings, but they never inherit the curses. I always find that interesting.

Allen Parr: Very interesting, yeah. Yeah.

Dr. Reagan: It is a sad thing Replacement Theology is dominant. It is the theology of the vast majority of churches in the world today. And it just simply, a lot of it, a lot of it, I wouldn't say all of it, but a lot of it is rooted in Anti-Semitism.

Allen Parr: And I was getting ready to say that as well. Because if you look at it from the perspective of if God rejected these people, if God has no plan for them, if God has already shunned this group of people, then therefore, maybe we should follow suit and also treat the Jewish people in that same way. And once again, many people believe that has led to or encouraged an Anti-Semitic type of response.

Dr. Reagan: And a lot of that is rooted in the teaching that emerged in the early Church that the Jews were Christ killers and therefore they have been put aside by God. But in Acts 4:27 we are told who killed Jesus, "For truly in this city," speaking of Jerusalem, "there were gathered together against Your holy servant Jesus, whom You did anoint, Herod, Pontius Pilate, the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel." So, who killed Jesus? It says, "Herod, Pilate, Gentiles, Jews, and you and me," because He died for everyone who had sinned.

Allen Parr: That's right. Amen.

Part 2

Nathan Jones: Welcome back to Christ in Prophecy and our discussion of the interpretation of Bible prophecy. We have thus far established the fact that all of Bible prophecy should be interpreted for its plain sense meaning. And now, using that principle we are going to ask our special guest, Allen Parr to give us a quick overview of the book of Revelation. Go for it Allen.

Allen Parr: Alright. Well, no pressure, right?

Nathan Jones: Just cover the entire book of Revelation.

Allen Parr: The book of Revelation. Right. You know it is interesting because so many people feel like the book of Revelation is so difficult to understand, and afraid to read it. And as a result, many Christians just reject reading this book. They'll read 65 books of the Bible, and they'll just say, "Oh, I don't want to deal with the book of Revelation." But I think whenever we look at it from an overview perspective I think that we can understand if we break it down into different parts. So, we'll try to do just an overview of the book of Revelation in the time that we have.

So, first and foremost we want to make sure that everybody understands that it is not the book of Revelations, plural, as many people will mistakenly say. But it is in the first verse, "The revelation of Jesus Christ." Which is the unveiling of His plan. So, the first thing we need to understand about the book of Revelation is that it's really all about Jesus Christ. It's all about His plan, and His purpose, and the person of Christ. And so, chapter 1 is all about that.

And then we have chapters 2-3 we are moving into these seven letters that John was writing to churches that were located in Asia Minor at the time. And many scholars have believed, and

there are different interpretations in terms of whether these seven churches were literal churches, we do believe they were literal churches at the time, but many of them believe that they are representative of churches today. So, we could potentially look at Revelation 2 & 3 as kind of the Church Age, different churches; we have suffering churches, we have disobedient churches.

But then in chapters 4&5 the scene shifts from Earth to Heaven. And John is in Heaven, he is having a vision in Heaven and he's envisioning certain things that are happening, and He sees God, the Father sitting on the throne, and he sees this Lamb. And in the hand of God, so we've tried to paint a picture for you, in God's hand there is this scroll. And so, he sees the vision of this scroll, and on this scroll as the Lamb takes the scroll there are seven seals on this scroll. So, if you could just picture a book that has seven seals. So, we have this picture in Heaven, in Revelation 4&5.

And so now, as the Lamb takes this scroll and out of the hand of God the Father who is sitting in the throne, each time this Lamb peels back one of the seals on the scroll, there is a judgment that proceeds from Heaven to Earth. And this is when the Antichrist who is one of the key figures in the book of Revelation enters in the scene. So, if you want to just take a look at Revelation 6 all the way through Revelation 19 there is that 14 chapter break there where we are going to describe that as the seven year Tribulation Period. And it is during this time that the Antichrist is up to no good.

And if we want to also break that seven years up into two different breaks, so we have the first three-and-a-half years we will call that the Tribulation Period. And then the last three-and-a-half years scholars have referred to that as the Great Tribulation Period. And if we think things are going to be bad in the first three-and-a-half years, they are going to get even worse on the other side of the last three-and-a-half years of the Tribulation Period.

Now, during this seven years you've got three different series of judgments that are going to be proceeding from Heaven down to Earth. Now, we may ask the question: What is the purpose of these judgments? Why is God so angry? So, we have to remember that on the cross of Jesus Christ all of the sins of those who place their faith in Christ were paid for. And so, God is no longer angry at those of us who placed our faith in Christ, because He has taken out of all that anger, and all of that wrath on His Son Jesus Christ. But for those who are not believers the wrath of God still exists because we have two sides of God; we have the love of God, and we have the justice of God. Both of them are sides of God that He must fulfill.

And so, in the book of Revelation 6-19 we see God fulfilling the wrath of God. He's judging sin for once and for all, and in three different series. So, the first they call the Seal Judgments, because there are seven seals that peel back from this book, and each time there is a certain judgment that goes out. Many of them are going to affect the earth, whether it is the drinking water, or other different things that are going on.

But then after these six seals, these six seals are peeled back, on the seventh seal when that seventh seal opens that unleashes the second different type of judgments called the Trumpet Judgments. And so, John once again is envisioning all of this, and he envisions these seven angels with these trumpets, and each time a trumpet is played another judgment proceeds from Heaven to Earth to inflict the inhabitants that are on the earth. And once again if one-third of the waters were undrinkable now, then now there are two-thirds of them that are undrinkable because with each series of judgments it just gets more and more intense.

And then you also have this third type of judgment or this third wave of judgments that are called the Seven Bowl Judgments. And so, once again John trying to describe everything as best as he can he envisions these angels with this bowl inside of these bowls contains the wrath of God. And so, if you can imagine these angels just standing up above earth, if you will, and pouring out the wrath of God. And each time a bowl is poured out you have another judgment that is going to be taking place.

And during this time, once again, you have certain things that are happening, like the Mark of the Beast, where if you want to buy and sell you need to take the Mark of the Beast, and if you don't you are going to be persecuted during these seven years. And so, it is going to be very, very difficult for people to be saved.

And there is going to be, in God's grace, there is going to be people who were not raptured--and I actually better go back a little bit here. Because we just missed the fact that many scholars believe after Revelation chapter 3, the Church is not mentioned for the rest of the Book of Revelation. So, you don't have this idea of the Church mentioned in 6-19 which leads many scholars to believe that the Church has been raptured; we have been removed from earth. And so, the only people that are left behind are those who God in His grace will allow to have another opportunity to place their faith in Him. But it is going to be very, very difficult for them to do so, because of all of the persecution that is going to be going on, on the Earth.

And so, once again, if you are a believer it is going to be difficult because you are not going to be able to buy, you are not going to be able to sell. But God is going to be allowing many people to be saved because there are going to be all sort of evangelists. Many of them are going to be Jewish evangelists that He is going to seal and protect. The Bible talks about there being 12,000 from all of the 12 tribes of Israel. So, you are going to have 144,000 at least Jewish evangelists that are going to be covered and protected and sealed by God that will be spreading the Gospel to help people come to a saving faith in Christ.

And so, after this period, this seven year Tribulation Period, from Revelation 6-19, you have this huge battle, if you will, you may have heard of it, it is called the Battle of Armageddon. And if you could just imagine basically two armies coming together; and so you have the army of God, and this is what we refer to as the literal Second Coming of Christ.

And so, we want to distinguish between, and I know that some people have different views of this, but we want to distinguish between the Rapture, which we believe occurred before the seven year Tribulation Period, and then the Second Coming of Christ, where Christ is now coming back with His saints. And we believe that the Rapture, Christ is coming back for His saints. With the Rapture we believe that Christ is going to meet us in the sky, or in the clouds, if we look at 1 Corinthians 15 & 1 Thessalonians, but also with the Second Coming we believe that Christ is going to set foot on the earth, and He is going to come back with His saints, and there is going to be this Battle of Armageddon. Obviously we know it's not going to be much of a battle because we know that in the end God wins, so if we are on His team He is going to defeat the Devil, and his henchmen, the False Prophet and the Antichrist. And so, there is going to be a 1,000 year Millennial Reign that follows the Second Coming of Christ and this seven year Tribulation Period.

And this is going to be a time of righteousness, peace, and joy. And the Devil, the Dragon is going to be locked up for a 1,000 years so there is no influence of sin, it is going to be a peaceful time. And also, at the end of these 1,000 years God, for whatever reason, is going to

allow the Devil to be released from his bondage for a very short period of time. And then you have a series of judgments. So you have the enemy, Satan is going to be judged once and for all, and he along with all those who do not place their faith in Christ are going to be cast into the Lake of Fire where they will spend eternity apart from God.

Now, that is all of the bad news right there. But the good news is that just like the first two chapters in the Bible represented a time of perfection and peace, and joy; the last two chapters in the Bible also represent a time of happiness, peace, and joy. Because there is going to be this time, and we also missed talking about the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, and that is going to be when Christ and His Bride are going to come together, the Bride of Christ being the body of Christ, the Church. And so, now we are united with Christ, and we are basically going to spend our eternity with Christ.

But many people think it is going to be on Earth. But the Bible talks about that this Earth that we have right now is going to be burned up because it's not fit for eternity. There is going to be a New Heaven and a New Earth. And it's on that New Heaven, on that New Earth where God is going to take away every tear, there's going to be no more tears, no more crying, no more death, no more sorrow, all of the old things have passed away. And so, we are going to spend eternity with God in the New Heaven and the New Earth.

So, what is the application? If we know that we are going to spend eternity with Christ forever, that means that we should focus on sowing into the Kingdom of God because eternity is a very, very long time. I heard somebody put it like this, if you took one piece of grain from the seashore, and every year you throw that piece of grain into the sea. If after you get done throwing every single piece of grain into the sea, one time per year, you will have been at eternity for one second. That's how long eternity is. And that's how long we are going to have the opportunity to celebrate and be with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Part 3

Nathan Jones: Allen, it has been incredible having you here. Thank you so much, man. Could you tell folks how they can get in touch with your ministry?

Allen Parr: Sure thing, the easiest way is to go to my website: allenparr.com, or you can find us on YouTube by going to: The BEAT Allen Parr, we have several videos there and you can meet us there.

Dr. Reagan: Well, thank you, Allen, again for being with us. You have just blessed our socks off as we say in Texas. Well, folks, that is our program for today. I hope that it has been a blessing to you as it has been to us. And I hope too, that you will be back with us next week the Lord willing. 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