

Christ in Prophecy

Easter 5: “The Passion of Jesus in Prophecy”

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Opening

Dr. Reagan: Did you know that one of the most remarkable prophecies in the Bible describes the death of Jesus in detail? What makes it particularly remarkable is that it was written more than one thousand years before Jesus was born and more than 700 years before the Romans perfected crucifixion as a method of execution. For more information, stay tuned.

Part 1

Dr. Reagan: Greetings in the name of Jesus, our Blessed Hope and welcome to Christ in Prophecy! Behind me you see Skull Hill, one of the possible sites of the crucifixion of Jesus. This hill is located in Jerusalem, just north of the Old City’s Damascus Gate. As you can see, there is an image on the front of the hill of what appears to be a skull. You can see two eye sockets and the bridge of a nose. During Old Testament times, leading up to the time of Jesus, this was a place of execution where people were stoned to death. This site fronts on the highway to Damascus. The Romans always crucified people along such major highways in order to maximize exposure to what happens when you challenge Rome. But you know regardless of where the crucifixion took place in Jerusalem whether here or some other site the event itself was prophesied in the Hebrew Scriptures over 1,000 years before it occurred. You can find that prophecy in Psalm 22, and in this program we are going to consider that remarkable prophecy in detail.

Part 2

Dr. Reagan: Well welcome once again to Christ in Prophecy. I am delighted to have with me one of my colleagues, Nathan Jones. Nathan is our Web Minister and also is one of our Evangelists. Thanks for being with us, Nathan.

Nathan Jones: Delighted to be here, Dave.

Dr. Reagan: Well folks, there are many reasons to study Bible prophecy. One of the most important is that it validates Jesus as God in the flesh.

Nathan Jones: There are over 300 prophecies concerning the First Coming of the Messiah in the Hebrew Scriptures. 108 of these are separate and distinct. The odds of only eight being fulfilled accidentally in the life of one person are 1 in 10 to the 17th power or one in one hundred quadrillion! Well such a fulfillment is beyond the realm of possibility.

Dr. Reagan: A mathematician by the name of Peter Stoner, in his book, *Science Speaks*, illustrates the meaning of 1 in 10 to the 17th power. Now folks, I’ve never had the opportunity to

meet Peter Stoner before he died, but I know he must have been a good man because he used the state of Texas to illustrate his point. Stoner says that if you want to get an idea of 1 in 10 to the 17th power, you must start by filling the state of Texas knee deep with silver dollars. Then you fly over the state, drop out one silver dollar with a black check mark on it. Then turn loose about 10,000 bulldozers and let them rampage around the state for several years to get the silver dollars mixed up real good. Then, take a blindfolded man and turn him loose in the sea of silver dollars; the odds that on the first draw he will pick up the silver dollar with the black check mark is 1 in 10 to the 17th power. Incidentally, folks, Nathan has been in the process of producing a series of one minute videos called Bible Prophecy Insights, and one of them is based on the mathematics of Peter Stoner. Here is that video.

Bible Prophecy Insight Video

Nathan Jones: I'm Nathan Jones with your Bible Prophecy Insight. Can math prove the accuracy of Bible prophecy? Well let's start with just 8 of the 108 prophecies fulfilled in Jesus' life. Mathematician Peter Stoner calculated that the probability of all 8 being fulfilled in the life of one person is 1 in 10 to the 17th power that's 17 zeroes! That would be like filling the entire state of Texas 2 feet deep in quarters. Mark just one, throw it in. The odds would be like walking for days and then the very first coin picked up that would be the one with the mark. Impossible right? Not if the Bible is truly God's Word. To learn more about Bible prophecy visit us at lamblion.com.

Part 3

Dr. Reagan: Wow, Nathan that was impressive! You know I've heard of "Pennies from Heaven," but I've never heard of quarters from Heaven. And it's a good thing that the producer of that video didn't use silver dollars, or you might have been knocked senseless! Where can people find these Bible Prophecy Insights?

Nathan Jones: We have them right on our website at lamblion.com or they can go on YouTube or Godtube or Vimeo and just type in Bible Prophecy Insights they can find them that way too.

Dr. Reagan: Now what was your idea behind the production of these?

Nathan Jones: We wanted to give people one minute good Bible prophecy nuggets so to speak to give them, for people who haven't thought much about Bible prophecy and then bring them back to our website at lamblion.com so they could read more on Bible prophecy.

Dr. Reagan: And how might people use these?

Nathan Jones: They could use them for sermons illustrations certainly. Hopefully that they will spread them to other friends to just get them interested in Bible Prophecy.

Dr. Reagan: One thing I'm excited about with regard to these is that they really seem to me to be aimed at a young audience. And I want to see young people get excited about the coming of the Lord. You know we go to these Bible prophecy conferences and everybody there is 60 years of age and older it seems like. I want to get the young people involved. I want them to be

excited about the coming of the Lord. And I think these videos are going to be a key of getting young people's attention and then hopefully driving them into the Scriptures.

Nathan Jones: Amen that is the purpose.

Dr. Reagan: Now what are some of the other topics that you've done so far?

Nathan Jones: The second one is Signs of the Times which is really important to know that Jesus is coming soon. And the third one is about the Rapture. And eventually we would like to keep on producing these. I would like to have one about the Tribulation, and the Millennial Kingdom, Jesus' Second Coming. I mean there is so much in Bible prophecy we could do.

Dr. Reagan: Well I hope you can continue to produce them. You know the third one you mentioned about the Rapture is particularly interesting to me I have never seen such incredible special effects as there are in that particular one as you are transported up to Heaven.

Nathan Jones: We are very blessed with a very good animator.

Dr. Reagan: Well he is. He is a wonderful fella from Florida right? What is his name?

Nathan Jones: It is Ralph Streaan of Sevenfold Films.

Dr. Reagan: Yes.

Nathan Jones: He is a former Disney animator who gave his heart to the Lord and wanted really to serve people with his talents.

Dr. Reagan: Well he is certainly doing that and I praise God for his talents.

Part 4

Dr. Reagan: Okay folks let's pick up where we left off with Nathan's short video about the accuracy of Bible prophecy; the one where he was rained on by the quarters! I want to emphasize the point that we are not talking about coincidence here. The fulfillment of these prophecies in the life of Jesus is absolutely beyond the realm of coincidence. And keep in mind, Peter Stoner was only talking about eight of the prophecies fulfilled in the life of Jesus. The total that was fulfilled was 108! Now, in addition to the fact that Bible prophecy validates Jesus as God in the flesh, it also helps us to better understand Jesus to understand who He was and what He did.

Nathan Jones: And one of the most remarkable prophecies in that regard is contained in Psalm 22. This psalm was written by David one thousand years before the birth of Jesus. Get your Bibles ready, and in just a moment we'll take a look at it.

Part 5

Dr. Reagan: Well folks let's take a look at Psalm 22, one of the most remarkable prophecies in the Bible, and as we do so, keep in mind that it was written by David 1,000 years before the

birth of Jesus. The psalm begins with a cry of lament: "My God, my God, why have You forsaken me? Far from my deliverance are the words of my groaning. O my God, I cry out by day, but You do not answer; And by night, but I have no rest." As you can see, the psalm begins with an agonizing cry of despair. David cries out: "Where are You, God?" He bemoans the fact that although he has been seeking the Lord's help both day and night, all he has received in response is silence.

Nathan Jones: Have you ever had that experience? Well, if you pray regularly, I know you have. It happens because God answers prayers in three ways Yes, No, and Wait. Yes and no we can deal with. It's the waiting that wears on our nerves. And we usually desire instant gratification rather than God's will in His perfect timing.

Dr. Reagan: David had experienced this feeling before. An example can be found in Psalm 6 where he wrote: "I am weary with my sighing; every night I make my bed swim, I dissolve my couch with my tears. My eye has wasted away with grief; it has become old because of all my adversaries." David says, "Lord my bed is wet from my tears. My eyes are weary from my grief. When are you going to hear me and respond?" Now folks, this type of statement is not an evidence of a loss of faith. The psalmist would not even bother to cry out to God if he had lost his faith. It is more an expression of impatience and a verbalization of a sense of desperation.

Nathan Jones: In fact, after issuing his cry of despair, David immediately reaffirms his faith in God. He reminds himself of God's faithfulness by proclaiming: "Yet, You are holy, O You who are enthroned upon the praises of Israel. In You our fathers trusted; they trusted and You delivered them. To You they cried out, and were delivered; In You they trusted, and were not disappointed." As if to preserve his sanity in the midst of his suffering, the psalmist reminds himself of God's faithfulness in responding to the desperate needs of his forefathers.

Dr. Reagan: Now, folks, it is one thing for David to cry out to God in desperation in his frail humanity, but how can the fact be explained that Jesus, the Son of God, exclaimed the same plaintive cry while hanging on the cross? Listen to what it says in Matthew 27:46 "About the ninth hour [3pm] Jesus cried out in a loud voice saying, 'Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?' that is, 'My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?'" Again, how can such words coming from the mouth of the Son of God be explained? Well I believe, as with David, this expression was not related to a loss of faith. Rather, it was a desperate cry of inexpressible agony and lament over the separation from God the Father that Jesus experienced on the Cross.

Nathan Jones: You see the greatest suffering that Jesus experienced in His passion was not physical or emotional, it was spiritual. Well think of it He had experienced eternally a perfect fellowship and love with God the Father. Then, suddenly, that sweet communion was broken because your sins and mine were placed on Jesus, and the wrath of God, which we deserve, was poured out on the Son. Well here's how the apostle Paul put it in 2 Corinthians 5 "He [God the Father] made Him [the Son] who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."

Dr. Reagan: Again, for one brief moment the perfect fellowship between Father and Son was broken because our sins were placed on Jesus and the holiness of God cannot countenance sin. God the Father had in effect to turn His back on His Son, prompting Jesus to cry out from the depths of His soul: "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"

Nathan Jones: At verse 6 of Psalm 22 the psalmist shifts from the Messiah's spiritual suffering to His physical and emotional distress. "But I am a worm and not a man, a reproach of men and

despised by the people. And all who see me sneer at me; and they separate with their lips, and they wag their heads, saying, "Commit yourself to the Lord; let Him deliver him; Let Him rescue him, because He delights in him." Well the Hebrew word translated "worm" in verse 6 is *to/a*, and the word for crimson or scarlet. It is also a word for a certain type of worm. In this context it is most likely referring to the bloody red condition of the Messiah after His flogging when He would have been so mutilated and swollen that He would no longer even resemble a man and He would be an object of derision.

Dr. Reagan: So folks this passage describes the intense physical suffering of the Messiah combined with the emotional suffering He would experience as onlookers would sneer at Him and cried out caustic taunts. We find the fulfillment of this prophecy over in Matthew 27 where it reads as follows: "And those passing by were hurling abuse at Him [Jesus on the Cross], wagging their heads, and saying, "You who are going to destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross. In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking Him, and saying, "He saved others; but He cannot save Himself. He is the King of Israel; let Him now come down from the cross, and we shall believe in Him."

Nathan Jones: And this brings us to verse 9 of Psalm 22. And in this verse, and the one following, the psalmist has the Messiah reaffirming His faith in the midst of His intense sufferings, verse 9, "Yet, You are He who brought me forth from the womb; You made me trust when upon my mother's breasts. Upon You I was cast from birth; You have been my God from my mother's womb." Well folks the reaffirmation of faith is an incredible act of will, and it is an example for all of us; while our tendency is to wallow in self-pity when the going gets tough. Well David refuses to do this. He takes the opportunity to reaffirm his faith and indicates prophetically that the Messiah will do the same in the midst of His passion.

Dr. Reagan: You know Nathan it reminds me of the Apostle Paul. When he was in prison in Rome, awaiting execution, Paul wrote in the Philippian letter: "Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say, rejoice!" And folks he was waiting to be executed. He proceeded to urge his fellow believers to "be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving," he said, "let your requests be made known to God." He then revealed the secret of his positive attitude in the midst of suffering. He wrote: "I can do all things through Him [through Jesus] who strengthens me."

Nathan Jones: In other words, Paul was saying that we should keep our eyes focused on the Lord rather than our troubles, and, as he put it, "the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

Part 6

Dr. Reagan: Welcome back to Christ in Prophecy. We are studying the Passion of Christ in Bible prophecy, as it is foretold in Psalm 22, a psalm written by King David one thousand years before the birth of Jesus. Now we are at verse 11, at which point the psalmist returns to the Messiah's emotional suffering. He writes: "Be not far from me, for trouble is near; for there is none to help." Now folks this is a prophecy concerning the solitude the Messiah would experience in His passion. This verse says He will suffer emotionally from His desertion by all His disciples. The fulfillment of this prophecy is recorded over in Matthew 26 beginning there with verse 47 it reads, "While He [Jesus] was still speaking, behold, Judas, one of the twelve, came up accompanied by a large crowd with swords and clubs. Immediately Judas went to

Jesus and said, "Hail, Rabbi!" and kissed Him. And Jesus said to him, "Friend, do what you have come for." Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and seized Him. Then all the disciples left Him and fled."

Nathan Jones: At verse 12 of Psalm 22 the focus shifts back to the Messiah's spiritual suffering. The psalmist resorts to symbolic language to describe a spiritual attack the Messiah will experience during His passion verse 12, "Many bulls have surrounded me; Strong bulls of Bashan have encircled me. They open wide their mouths at me, as a ravening and a roaring lion." I believe this is a prophecy that the Messiah in His passion would be surrounded by demonic hordes gloating over his approaching death. In the New Testament, in First Peter 5:8, Peter describes Satan as "a roaring lion seeking someone to devour."

Dr. Reagan: Although there is no recorded fulfillment of this prophecy in the New Testament, I have no doubt that it happened. The people who were witnesses of the crucifixion they could not see the demons with their physical eyes. But Jesus, with His spiritual eyes could undoubtedly see them as they danced around the Cross and gloated over their "victory" in orchestrating the murder of God's Son.

Nathan Jones: At verse 14 of Psalm 22 the psalmist begins to describe the Messiah's physical suffering and in gory detail. He writes: "I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax; it is melted within me. My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue cleaves to my jaws; And You lay me in the dust of death." His bones are out of joint. He is suffering from extreme thirst. His heart is stressed to the point of bursting. And death hovers about Him. In fulfillment, here's how the Gospel of Mark describes the suffering of Jesus verse 15, "After having Jesus scourged, he [Pilate] delivered Him to be crucified. And the soldiers took Him away. They dressed Him up in purple, and after twisting a crown of thorns, they put it on Him. And they kept beating His head with a reed, and spitting on Him."

Dr. Reagan: John in his gospel adds that Jesus suffered extreme thirst while he was hanging on the cross, and when He cried out, "I am thirsty," the soldiers taunted Him by putting a sponge to His mouth that was full of sour wine

Nathan Jones: Well when we come to verse 16 of Psalm 22, we encounter one of the most remarkable prophecies in the Hebrew Scriptures verse 16, "For dogs have surrounded me; A band of evildoers has encompassed me; they pierced my hands and feet." Now keep in mind, folks that these words were written 1,000 years before the birth of Jesus. And that means they were also written 700 years before the Romans refined crucifixion as a method of execution. Yet, by inspiration by the Holy Spirit, David prophesied that the Messiah would die by having His hands and feet pierced!

Dr. Reagan: The Jewish method of execution at the time David wrote the psalm was by stoning. This was still true a thousand years later when Jesus lived. But the Jews had lost the power of implementing capital punishment under Roman rule, so they turned Jesus over to the Roman authorities when they decided He should be executed. Now folks all four of the gospel stories record the execution of Jesus by crucifixion. The Gospel of Mark describes it succinctly as follows in Mark 15 beginning with verse 22, "Then they brought Him to the place Golgotha, which is translated, Place of a Skull. And they crucified Him."

Nathan Jones: The prophet concludes his observations about the suffering of the Messiah in verses 17 and 18 of Psalm 22, "I can count all my bones. They look, they stare at me; oh they

divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots.” Well all the Messiah’s rib bones are laid bare as He gasps for air while hanging on the execution stake. And the emotional suffering continues as no one shows any compassion. And instead, while His life ebbs away, those carrying out his cruelty pass the time by gambling for His clothes! Well Matthew describes the fulfillment of this prophecy in this manner: “And when they had crucified Him, they divided up His garments among themselves by casting lots.”

Dr. Reagan: In verses 19-21 of Psalm 22, the psalmist records a final prayer uttered by the Messiah. It is a plea for deliverance from Satan verse 19, “But You, O Lord, be not far off; O You, my help, hasten to my assistance. Deliver my soul from the sword, my only life from the power of the dog. Save me from the lion’s mouth; from the horns of the wild oxen You answer me.” Now folks none of the Gospels record Jesus uttering such a prayer on the Cross, but undoubtedly He must have done so, perhaps silently or in a whisper. In the prayer, the Messiah affirms that God the Father is near to Him, although He seems distant because the Father cannot countenance the sin that the Messiah must bear. He ends the prayer by asking for deliverance from Satan (the lion) and his demonic hordes (the wild oxen).

Nathan Jones: Now, in Psalm 22, between verses 21 and 22, the greatest miracle in history occurs and that’s the resurrection of the Messiah. The event is not specifically stated, but it is certainly inferred. And verse 21 ends with a prayer for deliverance from Satan’s attack. And verse 22 begins with a song of celebration, thanking God for answering the prayer. Verse 22, “I will tell of Your name to my brethren; In the midst of the assembly I will praise You. You who fear the Lord, praise Him; all you descendants of Jacob, glorify Him, and stand in awe of Him, all you descendants of Israel. For He has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; nor has he hidden His face from him; But when he cried to Him for help, He heard. From You comes my praise in the great assembly; I shall pay my vows before those who fear Him”

Dr. Reagan: Oh, I praise God for the promise of the Resurrection that is clearly inferred in these verses! Incidentally folks, the most direct prophecy concerning the Resurrection in the Old Testament is found in Psalm 16:10 where David wrote these words: “You will not abandon my soul to Sheol; neither will You allow Your Holy One to undergo decay.”

Nathan Jones: Well in the New Testament, Jesus repeatedly told His disciples that He would be killed and resurrected. It was one of His most frequently stated prophecies. Well for example, in Matthew 17 He is quoted as saying: “The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men; and they will kill Him, and He will be raised on the third day.” And Luke records the fulfillment of these resurrection prophecies in the following way verse 1: “But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they [a group of women] came to the tomb bringing spices which they had prepared. And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. While they were perplexed about this, behold, two men suddenly stood near them in dazzling clothes; and as the women were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, “Why do you seek the living One among the dead? “He is not here, but He has risen. Remember how He spoke to you while He was still in Galilee, saying that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and on the third day rise again.”

Part 7

Dr. Reagan: Welcome back to our discussion of Psalm 22. The last six verses of the Psalm give us a summary of the glorious consequences of the Lord’s passion on the cross. The first

one is the most important. It is salvation for all who put their faith and trust in Jesus as their Lord and Savior. Here's how it reads in verse 26, "The afflicted shall eat and be satisfied; those who seek Him will praise the Lord, let your heart live forever!" The apostle Peter sums up the meaning of this verse over in 1 Peter 2 and beginning there with verse 24 where he writes "He Himself [Jesus] bore our sins in His body on the cross, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed."

Nathan Jones: The second blessing of the Cross that is mentioned in Psalm 22 has to do with the obedience of Jesus. And it says that His submission to the humiliation of the Cross will result in His glorification before all the nations of the earth when He returns to reign over the world. Here's how the psalmist expresses it verse 27, "At the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations will worship before You. For the kingdom is the Lord's, And He rules over the nations."

Dr. Reagan: When the Lord's glorious reign begins, all the Redeemed will be prospered, while those who are condemned by their unbelief will bow before Him and confess Him as King of kings and Lord of lords before being consigned to Hell. Verse 29 of Psalm 22 reads as follows, "All the prosperous of the earth will eat and worship, all those who go down to the dust will bow before Him, even he who cannot keep his soul alive." Over in the book of Isaiah he puts it this way: "every knee will bow, every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord." This is affirmed in the New Testament in Romans 14 and Philippians 2.

Nathan Jones: Well think of it, folks a day is going to come when Hitler and Stalin will bow and confess the lordship of Jesus, as will Madeline Murray O'Hare, Charles Darwin, and every other nefarious person who has ever lived. But it will have no impact upon their eternal destiny. Only those who make the confession in this life will receive the blessing of having their "hearts live forever."

Dr. Reagan: The final consequence of the Cross that is mentioned in Psalm 22 is that during the millennial reign of Jesus, the Redeemed who will be in glorified bodies will teach those who are born during that time of the righteousness of Jesus and of the all-sufficiency of His sacrifice on the Cross. The psalm concludes with these two verses: "Posterity will serve Him; it will be told of the Lord to the coming generation. They will come and will declare His righteousness To a people who will be born, that He has performed it." Notice again the last phrase of Psalm 22: "He has performed it." Literally, in the Hebrew, it says, "It is finished." This fact has prompted some scholars to theorize that as Jesus hung on the Cross, He quite likely quoted all of Psalm 22, beginning with the words, "My God, My God, why has Thou forsaken Me?" and ending with the words, "It is finished." The witnesses then simply wrote down the opening and closing words which were recorded in the Gospels.

Part 8

Dr. Reagan: As we conclude our consideration of Psalm 22, one thing is certain the fulfillment of the prophecies of Psalm 22 in the life of Jesus confirms Him to have been the promised Messiah. This fact raises a crucial question the most important question of your life: "Who is Jesus to you?"

Nathan Jones: When Jesus was tried by the Roman authorities, the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate, asked the assembled mob, "What shall I do with this Jesus who is called the Messiah?" My friends that is the most important question in the universe. So, let me put Pilate's question to

you: "What will you do with Jesus?" Will you accept Him as Lord and Savior, as did the thief on the cross? If so, then you will receive the same promise as did the thief. Jesus said to him: "You shall be with Me in Paradise."

Dr. Reagan: Or, will you simply wash your hands of Jesus, as did Pilate? If so, then your destiny will be one of eternal separation from God in Hell. Your eternal destiny Heaven or Hell depends upon your answer to one question: "Who do you say that Jesus is?"

Nathan Jones: Well the Bible says that every person on planet earth is under either the wrath of God or the grace of God because these are the two ways in which God deals with sin. Are you under the wrath or grace? You can move from wrath to grace by putting your faith in Jesus as your Lord and Savior. And do it today. Do not delay. And when you do so, seek out a Bible believing church where you can manifest your new faith in public confession of Jesus and in water baptism. You need to get involved in the fellowship of a local church where you can begin to grow in the image of Jesus through systematic Bible study and prayer.

Dr. Reagan: Well, folks, that's our program for this week. We pray it's been a special blessing to you and your household. I hope you will be back with us again next week. Until then, this is Dave Reagan and Nathan Jones speaking for Lamb & Lion Ministries' saying, "Look up, be watchful, for our redemption is drawing near!"

End of Program