

## **Christ in Prophecy** **Israel 20: Pilgrimage 5- Megiddo & Beit Shean**

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### **Opening**

**Dr. Reagan:** Most people have heard of only one war of the end times, what is normally referred to as the Battle of Armageddon. But the Bible speaks of nine end time wars. For an overview of these wars presented at the ancient fortress of Megiddo that overlooks the Valley of Armageddon, stay tuned.

### **Part 1**

**Dr. Reagan:** Over the past few weeks we have been taking you on a pilgrimage through the Holy Land. We began in Tel Aviv at Independence Hall. From there we journeyed up the coast to visit sites like Caesarea Maritime, the Roman capital during the time of Christ. Our third program focused on the area around the Sea of Galilee where Jesus had the headquarters of His ministry. Last week we visited the city of Nazareth where Jesus grew up. In this program we are going to take a look at two sites en route to Jerusalem. The first is the ancient fortress of Megiddo which controlled access to the Valley of Jezreel, or the Valley of Armageddon, as it is known among Christians today.

We began our visit to Megiddo at the Visitor Center by taking a look at an animated model of the site. From there we headed up to the top of Megiddo to take a look at the ruins of the Valley of Armageddon, as you can see the site has been thoroughly excavated revealing a total of 26 layers of ruins dating back to 4500 BC. The fortress was built to control the trade route between Assyria and Egypt which passed through the Valley of Jezreel.

### **Part 2**

**Dr. Reagan:** And that's what I want to talk to you about the final battles of the end time. You know every time a war breaks out over here without exception we get calls and e-mail messages and all asking, "Is this the Battle of Armageddon?" And the reason for that is because most people are only familiar with one battle of the end times and that's the Battle of Armageddon, so every time a war breaks out people want to know: Is this the Battle of Armageddon? Most people know that name, even people in the secular world. We've had movies named Armageddon, people are always--secular writers are talking about well we are in the time of Armageddon and on and on it goes. So, what I want to point out to you today is that I believe that Bible prophecy mentions nine wars in the end times, and only one of them is the Battle of Armageddon. And as you are going to find out there is no battle at all, none whatsoever.

So, let's take a look for a moment at what those wars are that are prophesied in the end times. Now the one that most people talk about is Ezekiel 38 & 39 the War of Gog and Magog that's

mentioned in Ezekiel 38 & 39. And the person who has written about that the most recently, who has gotten the most attention is Joel Rosenberg who is a very, very fine writer and great fiction writer, and is a student of Bible prophecy and really loves Bible prophecy. I've been with him on several podiums when we have shared in conferences and I've got to know him well, he's a great guy. And he is the one who has really popularized the idea that the next major prophetic war will be Ezekiel 38 & 39. I think he's wrong about that because Ezekiel 38 & 39 says that it will occur at a time when Israel is living in peace without walls. Well folks, Israel is not living in peace today. And it certainly is not living without walls. It has a wall that runs the entire length of the country. By the time it does all it zigzags and everything it runs 400 miles long. In some places it is more of a scientific wall in the sense of a technological wall that if you cross it sets off all kinds of alarms. Other places it's a big tall wall, but it's been necessary to stop the terrorists from coming into Israel and it has been extremely effective in stopping them. So Israel is not living in peace right now.

Another thing that is interesting about the Ezekiel 38 & 39 War is it says that it's going to be an invasion led by Russia with certain specified allies, and all the allies are specified and all of them are Muslim states today. But the thing that is interesting is not one single one that's mentioned in Ezekiel 38 & 39 has a common border with Israel, not a one. So it makes you ask, well why is it that none of the states that have a common border with Israel, why is it that they're not mentioned? Come on over here.

So the person who has come up with that answer in recent years has been a fella named Bill Salus who is a good personal friend of mine. Gary knows him very well. Bill Salus. Bill wrote a book called, "Isralestine," and he made a point that I immediately endorsed and that is that there is the first war of the end times that's in Bible prophecy is this war of Psalm 83. And if you read that Psalm it is a short psalm it talks about the fact that all the Arab States in the end time will get together and say, now is the time for us to annihilate the State of Israel. So we call it the Psalm 83 War of Annihilation. And the interesting thing about it is it names the nations that are going to come against Israel and every nation it names is one that has a common boundary with Israel. So it's Gaza, it's Jordan, it's Lebanon, all the ones that have a common border, they are the ones who come against Israel to annihilate it in Psalm 83. I think that is going to be the next great war in the Middle East.

And the thing that is interesting about Psalm 83 is that it doesn't tell who wins the war, but we know who wins it, because in Zechariah chapter 12 it says in the end times one of the miracles that God is going to perform is that Israel will have one of the greatest military forces in the world. Now Israel is one of the smallest countries in the world but it is always ranked in the top four in terms of military power. And many rank it number one in the effective use of its power. So I think that probably the first war of the end times that is in prophecy is going to be the Psalm 83 War when these nations that have a common boundary with Israel will come against it and try to destroy Israel. I think that is most likely when Damascus will be destroyed because two times in the Old Testament we are told that Damascus will cease to exist in the end times. The Syrians have highly sophisticated missiles, they could put a missile right down the smokestack of any building in Tel Aviv if they want to and they are only shooting them 125 miles, they are not shooting them 1,000's of miles. And Syria also has all kinds of chemical weapons. If they were to attack Tel Aviv with chemical weapons probably the only way the Israelis would be able to defend themselves is to use one of their tactical nuclear weapons to blow up the city of Damascus. So it could very well be that in that very first war is the one in which Damascus will

cease to exist. But it is war between Israel and all those, the inner circle of Muslim States that have a common boundary. I think that's going to be the first one.

The second war of the end times I think is going to be the one in Ezekiel 38 & 39 where Russia comes down with certain specified Muslim allies but all of those states are the outer ring, none of them have a single common border with Israel. I think what will happen is in the first war Israel will conquer all the states around it and Israel will finally have peace and at that point the Muslim world will turn to its natural ally and its natural ally is Russia. And I think the Russians will come smiling from ear to ear because they have always wanted to dominate the Middle East. And what they really want is not so much the annihilation of Israel, as they want access to all the Arab oil fields. So the Arabs will invite them in and they'll say, oh, yeah, sure we'll come and they will come. And they will be destroyed supernaturally upon the hills of Israel it says. They won't be destroyed by the Israeli Defense Forces that is the first war Psalm 83 the Israeli Defense Forces will take care of them. But that time God will do it, and He'll do it in such a way that even the people of Israel will realize that God did it and I think at that time many of these people will begin to believe. I think that includes many of our guides who have heads full of Scripture and I think it's going to move, boom, when they suddenly see God intervene and deliver the nation of Israel. So the first war I think is going to be that Psalm 83 War, the next one would be that Ezekiel 38 & 39 War we don't know when that's going to occur, there's lots of debate among prophecy scholars as to when it will occur. Some think it's going to occur in the middle of the Tribulation, some at the beginning of the Tribulation. Some think it will start before the Tribulation. I tend to think it's going to start before because it talks about that fact that when that war is over they are going to spend seven years cleaning up the battle field. And we know that in the middle of the Tribulation the Antichrist is going to run the Jews out of the country, they are not going to be there to clean up the battle field. So I think most likely the war of Ezekiel 38 & 39 will start 3 ½ years before the Tribulation begins and they'll finish it up in the middle of the Tribulation cleaning up the battle fields, but those are the first two.

When you get to Revelation chapter 6 the Tribulation begins. The Tribulation does not begin with the Rapture of the Church, there could be months, or even years between the Rapture and the beginning of the Tribulation. Probably will be several months to a year, they are going to close together I think. But the Tribulation begins when the Antichrist signs a treaty with Israel that allows Israel to rebuild its temple. And when that happens you can count down to the day that Jesus Christ is going to come, that's one of the reasons I know there is a difference in the Rapture and the Second Coming is because the Rapture can occur any moment. When the Bible says you cannot know when the Lord's returning that refers to the Rapture because we know when the Lord's Second Coming is going to occur it going to occur exactly seven years from the date that the treaty is signed, it even tells in the book of Revelation how many days that will be until the Lord comes. So if you are here during the Tribulation you can count it, you could calculate when the Lord is going to come.

Now the Antichrist is going to come to power out of the European Union and he is going to come to power it says through cunning, through deception, through his charismatic personality, and I think he's going to use all those things to take over the European Union. But let me tell you something, once he takes over, it doesn't matter how much charisma he has he is not going to turn to the world and say, come and worship me, the world is going to say, you are nuts because the world has not spent the last 250 years getting out from underneath European colonialism to suddenly turn around and say to a European ruler, come rule us. South America

is not going to do that. Asia's not going to do that. They are going to say you know we've had enough of European colonialism, we're not going to let you rule us. And so what happens as soon as the Antichrist comes to power we're told in Revelation chapter 6 that he launches a war. It is a war to conquer the world. It's a conventional war, you can read the description of it in Revelation 6 it is a very conventional war. But in the process of that war he slaughters 1.5 billion people on planet earth. It says in that description of that war that one-fourth of humanity will die, one-fourth. Today we have close to seven billion people on planet earth, let's say a billion of those are taken out in the Rapture. That is going to leave six billion here on this earth. One-fourth of six billion is 1 ½ billion people that are going to go out in this initial war. Then in chapters 8 & 9 of the book of Revelation the war begins to morph, it begins to morph from a conventional war into a nuclear war. And it talks about how suddenly one-third of the earth is burned up. Jesus Himself said in the end times men will faint from fear from the terrors that will come upon the world. And I think it's going to morph into nuclear weapons.

I think what happens you see is when mankind begins to rebel against God, God steps back and He lowers the hedge of protection, read Romans 1, He lowers the hedge of protection. And if there is no repentance He steps back and He lowers the hedge of protection. And it says in Romans 1 there is a third time He'll stand back and lower it and then He turns them over to a depraved mind. Basically what He's saying is if you want to live that way I will let you live that way and I will stop giving you any protection whatsoever and I'll let evil take its course. So I think that is what is going to happen during the Great Tribulation is that God's just going to step back and man is going to begin to use those weapons that have been restrained up to that time.

It says that another one-third of humanity will die during that second period, that's another 1 ½ billion so by the middle of the Tribulation the book of Revelation teaches that one-half of the population of the world will be dead, 3 billion people. I have preachers sometime call me and say, "Do you think we are in the Tribulation?" And I say, "If we were in the Tribulation you wouldn't have to call anybody and ask them." I mean you will know it if you are in the Tribulation. I don't plan to be here but you'll know it if you are here because it is going to be beyond anything. Jesus said if I don't stop it all mankind would cease to exist. The only reason anybody is going to live through the Tribulation is because I am going to bring it to an end it's going to be that terrible.

So, we have the Psalm 83 War in which Israel defeats its inner ring of enemies. The Ezekiel 38 & 39 War, Gog and Magog where God defeats the outer ring of enemies. Then in addition to that we have the First War of the Tribulation, the Second War of the Tribulation and then in the middle of the Tribulation there is another war, right in the middle of the Tribulation there is a supernatural war. It says in Revelation chapter 12 that suddenly Satan decides one last time to try to take the Throne of God right in the middle of the Tribulation. And so he and his angels make an attack upon the throne of God upon Heaven itself to try to take it one last time. And it says that when that happens that Michael who is the commander and chief of the armies of God that Michael and his angels confront Satan and his angels in the atmosphere of this planet and there is a great battle. And as a result of that battle it says Satan is defeated and he is cast down to earth and it says he has no more access to the Throne of God. He still has access to the Throne of God, he can condemn us, he can charge us before the Throne of God. And I'd love to see that because I can see him, you know up there before the Throne of God attacking Vaughn and Jesus saying, "Oh, by the way Vaughn is covered by my blood. You might as well forget about him." So anyway Satan is cast down and there is a very interesting statement there

in Revelation 12 about Satan it says when he is cast down he knows his time is short; that means Satan knows Bible prophecy. That's why when people ask me, "Do you think the Antichrist is alive today?" I say, "Yeah." He's always been alive, always, Satan knows Bible prophecy but he doesn't know timing so I think throughout all of history he's always had a candidate that he is ready to anoint. When God plays His card, He is going to play his card. It might have been Mussolini at one time or Hitler, or whoever but he is ready to play his card. So I think the Antichrist has always been alive, he's always had a candidate ready to go. But it says there he knows his time is short, he knows he's only got 3 ½ years and so he becomes obsessed with one thing, one thing he's going to do in that 3 ½ years and that's destroy every Jew on planet earth, everyone because he hates the Jews with a passion. As I said the other day he hates them because God gave the Bible through them. He hates them because God gave the Messiah through them. He hates them because they are the chosen people of God. And he hates them because God has said in the end times I am going to save a great remnant of the Jews and he doesn't want to see a Jew saved. So in the book of Zechariah we're told that in the last 3 ½ years of the Tribulation that two-thirds of the Jews on planet earth will be destroyed by Satan it will be a greater holocaust than the Nazi Holocaust. But the glorious thing is that at the end of the Tribulation that remnant that's left is going to look upon Him whom they have pierced and they are going to weep and wail and mourn and they are going to cry out, "Baruch haba beshem adonai," blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Jesus said, I will not come back until the Jewish people are willing to say that, and that is when they are going to say it. They are going to be brought to the end of themselves. In the Old Testament they run to Egypt all the time; and today they run to the United States all the time. But they are going to get to the point at the end of that Tribulation where there is no one to turn to because all the nations of the world are opposed to them. The only thing they can turn to is God and they will turn to God, and the veil will be lifted and a great remnant will be saved.

So we've got the War of Psalm 83, the War of Gog and Magog both of those probably before the Tribulation. The initial wars of the Tribulation the first 3 ½ years a conventional war, an atomic war. Then the war in the heavens in the middle of the Tribulation. Then the War of the Antichrist against the Jews in the second half of the Tribulation, when he begins to persecute the Jews and try to kill every Jew on planet earth. And it is during that time that I think his attention is so distracted from his kingdom that he just completely loses it because he is only focused on one thing, killing the Jews.

And at that point I think all the nations of Asia say, "Hey, this is our opportunity let's revolt against this madman," and they begin to march across Asia, an army of 200 million coming over to fight him. And it says in the book of Daniel, Daniel chapter 11 he hears of these armies coming and he is very distressed by the news of these armies and he decides he must make an invasion into the Middle East and he brings his armies from Rome and all and he invades the Middle East. And it says he goes down to Egypt, all the way to Egypt and back up into Israel and he camps his army in the Valley of Armageddon and he waits there for all of these 100's of millions of other armies to come. They are converging from all over the world as he waits.

Interesting it says in Daniel 11 he is not allowed to go into Jordan. Not allowed to go there, kept out of there. And I think the reason for that is I think that when the Jews flee Jerusalem in the middle of the Tribulation they are going to flee into Jordan and that's going to be their haven, possibly at Petra they will be protected there by God. And another reason I believe that is because it says in the book of Isaiah that when the Messiah returns he goes first to Jordan to

Bozrah and apparently picks up the Jewish remnant there and brings them with Him as He comes to Jerusalem to land on the Mount of Olives. So we have that war there of the Antichrist against the Jews.

That brings us to the end of the Tribulation, at the end of the Tribulation then all of these armies are encamped there in the Valley of Armageddon, 200 million more coming and suddenly at the end of the Tribulation the Lord breaks from the heavens on a white warhorse. He returns to the Mount of Olives. He touches the Mount it splits in half. He speaks a supernatural word it says in Zechariah 14, He speaks a supernatural word this is the one who spoke and the whole universe came into existence. He speaks a supernatural word and when it does it is like a neutron bomb goes off because it says that all of the people gathered in the Valley of Armageddon that suddenly their tongues melt in their mouth, their eyeballs melt in their socket, their skin falls off their bodies. It is no wonder it says that the valley will be full of blood as high as a horses reign for the entire valley, horses bridle it is just going to be incredible. There is no Battle of Armageddon the Lord speaks, He doesn't send out an army, He doesn't need to send out an army He just speaks and the Antichrist and his forces cease to exist. I wish that were the last battle of history but it's not.

At that point the Lord Jesus Christ judges everyone who is left alive at the end of the Tribulation both Jew and Gentile, there is a Jewish judgment and there is a Gentile judgment. And He allows all those at the end of the Tribulation who believe in Him who will put their faith in Him He allows them to go into the Millennium in the flesh. So the Millennium begins with a very small group of people, Jews and Gentiles who have lived to the end of the Tribulation who have accepted Jesus as their Lord and Savior. And we will be there in glorified bodies to reign over them. That's one of the rewards we are going to have degrees of reward and one of them is one will reign over one, and one will reign over two cities, one will reign over five cities, another over ten cities, that is part of our rewards. We will be scattered all over the earth to reign over those who are in physical bodies. And those who come in the Millennium in the flesh will begin to repopulate the earth very, very rapidly. It says in the book of Micah for example that those who live during that time will live as long as a tree. It says if a person were to die at 100 they would be wept over as if they were a baby. I think what's going to happen is God is going to return the lifespan of man to what it was in at the beginning when people lived 800-900 years. They will live the whole Millennium and they will be repopulating the earth. The population of the earth will grow exponentially and we will be in charge of governing these people with the Lord Jesus Christ. And then at the end of the Millennial reign of Jesus where the earth has been flooded with peace, righteousness and justice for 1,000 years Satan will be released he is going to be captivated at the very first he is going to be put in a pit and he is going to be held there. But at the end he is going to be released. Now people say, "Why is that? Why would the Lord do that?" I think one of the reasons is because God is going to use the Millennium to prove beyond a shadow of a doubt that the evil in the world is due to the evil in our hearts and not to the evil in society. History goes in a cycle it begins with two people in a perfect environment who rebel against God. It ends up with all of mankind in a perfect rebellion and they end up rebelling against God. And the last war in history is again a war of Gog and Magog right at the end of the millennial reign of Jesus when God destroys supernaturally all of the forces that come against Jesus Christ in Jerusalem. And then we enter into the eternal state where there will never again be any war whatsoever, eternal peace. I can hardly wait for that day to come but there is going to be a lot of conflict in the meantime. What is the message of all this? The message is very simple, the message is God is in control. God has the wisdom, He has the power, to orchestrate

all the evil of mankind to the triumph of Jesus Christ, He's in control. And the message is that you and I and all of us we win in the end. Hallelujah.

### **Part 3**

**Dr. Reagan:** Well here we are at a place called Beit Shean it's over near the Jordan River we've driven all the way across the Valley of Armageddon from Megiddo to get here. And as you can see here in the background this is a place where you can contrast the old with the new. In the far background is a tel a classic tel there are probably 21, 22 cities just built--they destroy one build on top of it, destroy one build on top of it. This goes back some 4,500 years to the Canaanite time. And then down at the base of this tel you can see a Roman city the ancient Roman city down here at the base of the tel. And all of this was destroyed by an earthquake in the 700's and completely abandoned and left to accumulate dust and soil until finally it was completely covered over and only excavated in modern times. So what a contrast between the time of the Romans and the ancient city.

Now let me tell you something about that tel though that is very interesting when King Saul was killed by the Philistines in battle they cut off his head and they took his body and his armor and they brought it here to this tel. He was killed not far from here near Mount Gilboa. And they went up to the wall that existed at that time around the city and they nailed his body and his armor to the wall. And later on when the word got out that had happened some of the Jewish people came and raided it at night and got his body and took it, and gave it a decent burial. In fact they burned his body and gave it a burial.

Now I want to show you something else about the kind of strange things you run into over here in this land. Up on the top of this tel and we are going to zero in on it at the top of this tel there is a tree, a barren tree that you can see at the top there. That is not a natural tree, a natural dead tree. When they were filming the movie "Jesus Christ Superstar" I guess they just happened to be in this area and they decided that they were going to film the hanging of Judas. So they put an artificial tree in concrete up at the top there and they filmed the scene of Judas hanging himself. And they left it and it has been a part of the landscape ever since. That is the kind of crazy things you run into all across this land.

Well folks, that's our program for this week. I hope it's been a blessing to you, and I hope you will be back with us next week, the Lord willing, when we will arrive in Jerusalem. 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**

