

Christ in Prophecy

Prophecy 47: The Nature & Purpose of the Tribulation

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Opening

Dr. Reagan: The signs of the times indicate that we are on the threshold of the Tribulation- a time of unparalleled carnage here upon the earth. What is the purpose of the Tribulation? When will it begin? How long will it last? And why would God allow such carnage to occur? For the answers to these questions and many others concerning the Tribulation, stay tuned.

Part 1

Dr. Reagan: Greetings in the name of Jesus our Blessed Hope, and welcome to Christ in Prophecy. My colleague Nathan Jones and I are going to discuss today a period of time that the Bible pictures as the worst period in the history of the world. And one of the names the Bible gives it is the Tribulation. Well, Nathan, let's jump right into this. What is the Tribulation, and what are its purposes?

Nathan Jones: Well the Tribulation we have to think about is not the daily sufferings that we go through. Many Christians around the world are suffering immensely. They are being persecuted by ISIS, or illegally be shut out, or being considered second class citizens. Or even the daily traumas that we go through in life our sufferings because of man, and Satan, or even that we put upon ourselves because of our sin nature. The Bible when it talks about tribulations, that's think of it as a lowercase "t" tribulation.

Dr. Reagan: Yes.

Nathan Jones: But when prophecy talks about the Tribulation think of it as the all uppercase capped THE TRIBULATION, it is like the Flood. It is a time where God judges the world because of its sins. And that time will come in the future where God will again judge the world for its sins just like the Flood.

Dr. Reagan: And isn't there a special purpose in the Tribulation that relates to the Jewish people?

Nathan Jones: Oh, definitely. I believe actually there are four purposes, main purposes for the Tribulation.

Dr. Reagan: OK.

Nathan Jones: We talked about the wrath of God. It is like a cup that fills up and it is about to overflow, God's anger. He's very patient but His wrath eventually pours out when His anger reaches that limit. And God's anger will finally come out upon the world in what is called the Day of the Lord. That is the first thing it's a punishment for sin. Two it's also to bring a remnant of the Jewish people back to know Jesus as their Savior. By the end of the Tribulation we know that two-thirds of the Jews will be killed tragically in a second holocaust. But when Jesus returns

they will look up at heaven and they will weep, and wail, and they will realize that Jesus is the Messiah and they will give their lives to Him. Third is that Gentiles too will come to know the Lord as their Savior. The Bible talks about martyrs from every tribe, tongue, nation and people standing before the throne of God and worshipping Him. So we know many Gentiles will come to know the Lord through the Tribulation as well. And the fourth reason, I think this is the main reason for the Tribulation Jesus returns; it's the Second Coming. He comes back to earth. He defeats Satan and the Antichrist, and He sets up His Kingdom for 1,000 years. So that would be the four reasons for the Tribulation.

Dr. Reagan: Well, I appreciate that. And you are right about those four reasons. One of the reasons I mentioned the Jewish people is because in Daniel 9, Daniel says there is going to be a period of 490 years, 70 weeks of years in which God is going to deal with the Jewish people and try to accomplish some very specific purposes and one of the most important thing is being the salvation of a great remnant of the Jewish people. And that clock stopped ticking when Jesus died on the cross and the Jewish people refused to accept Him as their Messiah. That was what, 483 years up to that point. And this last seven years has been put off, it is like He called a time out in a football game, and that last seven years is waiting. And that is the seven years of this Tribulation. So there is going to be a special focus upon the Jewish people during that time. But, also half the people on the planet earth according to the book of Revelation are going to die during that time, it is not just the Jewish people.

Nathan Jones: No, no.

Dr. Reagan: But the point that you made that I want to emphasize is that even when God pours out His wrath His fundamental purpose is to bring people to repentance that they might be saved.

Nathan Jones: Amen.

Dr. Reagan: What a God of grace that is.

Nathan Jones: It is. It is. You know some people they really need to get down on their knees. Life has to be as hard as it can be before they finally surrender their lives to Jesus Christ. And that is what the world is like. The world right now is shaking its fist at God. We are seeing it in the United States especially this great spirit of rebellion.

Dr. Reagan: Oh, the spirit of rebellion going on, yes.

Nathan Jones: The great spirit of antichrist as the Bible calls it. And they will need to see first the Rapture of the Church as the church is taken out. And then we get into a time period that leads up to the Tribulation. And Daniel 9:27 tells us that the Tribulation begins when a one world ruler ascends and makes a peace covenant with Israel, Daniel 9:26-27 and that starts Daniel's Seventieth Week like you said that extra seven years that particularly are meant for the Jewish people. It's a blessing that the Gentiles come to salvation during that time too. But I totally agree that Daniel's Seventieth Week prophecy is primarily about the Jewish people and bringing them, a remnant back to know Jesus as Savior.

Dr. Reagan: Now, you keep talking about people coming to the Lord during that period of time. How is that going to happen when the Church we believe is going to be taken out before all of this starts?

Nathan Jones: Right. You and I we are definitely strong believers that the Rapture is pretribulational that Jesus defends and protects His Church, we are not subject to His wrath 1 Thessalonians 1:10 and 5:9 are the verses.

Dr. Reagan: So how do people get saved with the Church gone?

Nathan Jones: Well, we don't need the Church there. Clearly when you read through Revelation the Church isn't there. The Tribulation we are here the Church in the beginning and the end but not in the middle. But God doesn't leave the people of the Tribulation without the Gospel. He leaves in the first half what is called the two witnesses. And they are in Jerusalem and they're preaching and the world hates them and they want them dead. And the Antichrist will end up killing them. We also have the 144,000 Jewish evangelist; Jewish people that will come the Lord and they will be like all Billy Grahams, you know as you always say they'll be super preachers. He'll also have a Gospel Angel near the end of the Tribulation who will go around the world and everybody will get the Gospel.

Dr. Reagan: That is amazing to me that it says that right at the end of the Tribulation God is going to send forth an angel to circumnavigate the globe and proclaim the Gospel to every person right before He pours out His final wrath. That's really grace.

Nathan Jones: It is. It is. And I think a lot of the materials that we create, this TV show, everything that we've put on line will go for a while.

Dr. Reagan: OK, well I was going to come back at you on that because you mentioned the two witnesses. You mentioned the Gospel angel. You mentioned the 144,000. You mentioned the wrath itself because wrath often causes people to come to repentance. But you didn't mention the Word of God.

Nathan Jones: Amen.

Dr. Reagan: I mean the Bible is still going to be here. It's going to be all over the place. In fact I have right at the front of my Bible what must you do to be saved. And I hope that everyone watching will take the time to write right in the front of the Bible what must you do, because people are not going to have a lot of time to sit down and study during the Tribulation. They need to be able to be directed to the verses that will show them how they can relate to Jesus Christ and be saved. Because the Bible are going to be everywhere.

Nathan Jones: Oh, yeah.

Dr. Reagan: And then of course we'll still have the Internet and you've put a lot of resources there. And it is going to take a lot of time for the Antichrist to get all this stuff down, and when we've got here, there and everywhere.

Nathan Jones: There are thousands of Bible apps that people can download right now, so we don't even need the paper, they can carry them with them. But right the Antichrist will try to purge the Gospel out because he wants the world to worship him especially at the mid-point of the Tribulation and on. But yeah we've got the Bible. And our ministry has left many materials behind even a left behind video to help people who they see the Rapture and they're left behind.

Dr. Reagan: Now, you mentioned that the Tribulation is going to begin when the Antichrist signs a treaty with Israel. What makes you think it is going to be a peace treaty? Because in

Daniel 9 it mentions this treaty but it doesn't say it's a peace treaty it just says it is a treaty of some sort.

Nathan Jones: Or covenant, yeah.

Dr. Reagan: Yeah. Why do we think it might be a peace treaty?

Nathan Jones: Well, in the middle of the Tribulation the Antichrist breaks the covenant. He goes into the newly built temple, there is no third temple right now on the Temple Mount there is the Dome of the Rock, the Islamic Mosque there. And he desecrates the temple, he then has the world he declares that they should worship him. And so he is breaking a treaty that allows the Jewish people to rebuild the Temple. Well how can the Jewish people rebuild a Temple unless there is some kind of peace between them and the Muslims? I believe the War of Gog and Magog in Ezekiel 38 & 39 which happens just before the onset of the Tribulation will end the world of the Islamic threat. But somehow the Antichrist is involved in it, he steps into a power vacuum or something. So, there is peace involved in that covenant.

Dr. Reagan: Well I think that is a good inference because we do know the Temple is going to be rebuilt. We know the Temple can only be rebuilt on the original site. And the Jews believe with all their heart that original site is where the Dome of the Rock sits today on the Temple Mount. So, something's got to happen to the Dome of the Rock, perhaps it's going to be destroyed in the Psalm 83 War, the Gog and Magog War. And we know that the Temple is going to be rebuilt so there has to be some sort of treaty, a peace treaty where the Antichrist is guaranteeing the peace of Israel and allowing them to rebuild their Temple. Which he goes into in the middle of the Tribulation and declares himself to be god.

Nathan Jones: Yes.

Dr. Reagan: At which point the Jewish people totally reject him, and he becomes obsessed with annihilating them in the last half of the Tribulation. Jesus referred to the last half of the Tribulation as the Great Tribulation. But he referred to that that way because he was speaking to the Jewish people, that's when their tribulation is going to be. But many people have taken that and said, well that means the first half of the Tribulation is going to be very peaceful. Well, the Bible doesn't indicate that.

Nathan Jones: No.

Dr. Reagan: It indicates that there is going to constant war escalating probably into nuclear war in which one-half of the Gentiles on planet earth are going to be killed during the first half of the Tribulation. There is no peace during this whole thing.

Nathan Jones: No, not at all.

Dr. Reagan: And you mentioned about the pouring out of God's wrath. I'd like to close out this particular session with a reading from the book of Nahum, because you know Billy Graham has often said that if God doesn't judge San Francisco soon He's going to have to apologize to Sodom and Gomorrah. Well listen what it says in the book of Nahum chapter 1 verse 2, "A jealous and avenging God is the Lord, the Lord is avenging and wrathful. The Lord takes vengeance on His adversaries. He reserves wrath for His enemies. The Lord is slow to anger, and great in power, but the Lord will by no means leave the guilty unpunished." The day of wrath is coming.

Part 2

Dr. Reagan: Welcome back to Christ in Prophecy and our discussion of the Tribulation. Nathan, let's get right into the central figure of the Tribulation. He's called the Antichrist who in the world is he?

Nathan Jones: Who in the world is he? OK. Well he will be one of ten kings who will either rise from Europe or the world will partitioned into ten regions, not sure which. But he will rise up and he will overthrow three and he will then become the head of a new government. The government will then stretch out and eventually encompass the whole world. So, the world at some point, likely because of the destruction and the chaos that comes from the Rapture. The War of Gog and Magog where God supernaturally steps in and destroyed Islamic countries of the Middle East and Russia. But he rises from Europe. He takes power. And eventually he becomes the leader of the world, and Satan rules the world through this man.

Dr. Reagan: Why do you keep saying that he comes out of Europe?

Nathan Jones: Well, when you read Daniel 9 it says that he will come from the people who will destroy the Temple. And the people who destroyed the Temple were the Romans.

Dr. Reagan: That's right.

Nathan Jones: And so we know then that the Antichrist will arise out of the Roman Empire.

Dr. Reagan: Yes, that is very important. That is in Daniel chapter 9 in verse 26 where it says that the people who destroyed the Temple will be the people of the Antichrist.

Nathan Jones: Yes, in 70 AD the Romans destroyed the Temple.

Dr. Reagan: That's right. Could he be a Muslim?

Nathan Jones: Well that is a very popular theory now because Islam is so prevalent right now. And it appears by all statistics and probability that given another 50 years Islam could take over the world. I don't believe so for one because of that verse it pretty much points out that he will rise out of the Italian area of Europe. But primarily because in the prophetic time line there's two wars that likely lead up just to the beginning of the Tribulation. You mentioned earlier the Psalm 83 War where Israel has to finally subjugate the countries around them.

Dr. Reagan: That have a common border with them.

Nathan Jones: Share a common border like Egypt, and Lebanon, and Jordan. But then there's also where then as a reaction the Islamic nations an outer ring: Iran, Turkey, Sudan and all join up with this leader named Gog who rules over Russia. And some people today wonder it that is Vladimir Putin. And they will come against Israel and try to destroy it. And God steps in and he not only obliterates their armies but then He sends fire on their countries and destroys them. Well that guts Islam in the Middle East, and it shows Allah has no power. And then we read about this one world ruler who steps into the fray and then he goes and he conquers a third of the world. Well is that Islamic countries? What world are we talking about? So, I don't believe since the Antichrist wants worship for him that he wants another monotheistic religion to

compete with. So, I do not believe that the Antichrist will be a Muslim because it appears that on the onset of the Tribulation Islam is pretty much wiped off the earth.

Dr. Reagan: Yeah, I would agree with you whole heartedly on that at least Islam in the Middle East--

Nathan Jones: At least the Middle East, yeah.

Dr. Reagan: --will be eliminated. I think there is another thing I would throw in there and that is the fact that we are told by the Apostle Paul that in the middle of the Tribulation the Antichrist will go to Jerusalem to that rebuilt temple, go inside and declare himself to be god. No Muslim would ever declare himself to be God.

Nathan Jones: No, he's be killed.

Dr. Reagan: And if he did the Muslims would kill him.

Nathan Jones: Yeah. That is a wonderful point. That's a wonderful point. And the fact that the Dome of the Rock isn't even there.

Dr. Reagan: Yes.

Nathan Jones: And that the Jewish people have full control of the Temple Mount and have a temple. Where is Islam's power? I mean you can't even send up a Jew up on the Temple Mount without riots worldwide.

Dr. Reagan: Another thing that occurs to me what Jewish leader in his right mind is going to put enough trust in a Muslim for some peace treaty? I mean.

Nathan Jones: No, no, no. They're going to look for somebody outside of the country, and outside what is their hated enemies.

Dr. Reagan: Do you think the Antichrist is alive today?

Nathan Jones: Well, I believe and you've done so much work on it, check out our website "Signs of the Times" and especially your article "50 Reasons" and it shows so many signs that point that we are coming to the soon return of Jesus at the Rapture. And if that's the case and if we are really near that time. And we've seen Israel the fig tree re-budded, its back in the land. And we're the generations that's seen that happen. I believe firmly that the Antichrist is probably is out there. I'm not saying that he's already-- people are always saying he's the president he's like President Obama, or President Trump now or anybody.

Dr. Reagan: Whoever they don't like.

Nathan Jones: Whoever they don't like. But he's probably low key. He probably doesn't even know he's the Antichrist one day. Because he will end up being possessed by Satan in the mid-point of the Tribulation and he might now even be alive. He might be run by Satan. So he's--

Dr. Reagan: Well you know Satan knows Bible prophecy.

Nathan Jones: Oh, in and out.

Dr. Reagan: The reason is, one thing is the book of Revelation says that right in the middle of the Tribulation that he tries to take God's throne one last time and he's cast down to earth. And

he comes down in great anger because he knows his time is short. So he knows Bible prophecy. But he doesn't know God's timing. He doesn't know when God is going to implement all these end times things. So, I believe that throughout history Satan has always had an Antichrist candidate, somebody he is ready to groom and to move on the scene as soon as God makes his move, he'll make his move. So, I think he has a candidate right now, somewhere, some person that he could move very quickly and put into the position. And we know he's going to be possessed by Satan. So it is very interesting that he might always have had a candidate and he might have one right now.

Nathan Jones: If the Tribulation is pretty much Satan finally getting what he wants and ruling the earth. But he knows Bible prophecy why does Satan do it? I mean he knows he's going to be defeated. Why do you think that he goes ahead with fulfilling Bible prophecy knowing that he is going to be defeated?

Dr. Reagan: I think he's self-deceived. And self-deception is the greatest deception of all. I think he truly believes that somehow he is going to be able to be victorious.

Nathan Jones: Typical narcissist.

Dr. Reagan: Well let me ask you this: throughout much of history Christian theologians have taught that the Antichrist would be a Jew. And they've really emphasized this because it was part of the Anti-Semitic attitude of the Church which prevailed throughout most of Church history, and even is predominate in Replacement Theology today. Do you think that the Antichrist might be a Jew?

Nathan Jones: Well you hear that especially those who follow the Muslim Antichrist view the Dajjal is supposed to be a Jew with one eye, and the word infidel on his forehead, as if that's Bible prophecy. It's not. It was 600 years after Jesus was born. But, no I don't because when you get to Revelation 13, Revelation 13 describes the Antichrist, and it describes the false prophet. And the Antichrist is described as the beast that rises out of the sea, and that is always a pointer that the sea is separate from Israel, it's not the land it's the sea. Now the false prophet-

Dr. Reagan: And the sea is used as a symbol of the Gentile nations.

Nathan Jones: A Gentile nation. He rises out of the Gentile nations. So, no, I don't believe.

Dr. Reagan: And the false prophet comes out of the land.

Nathan Jones: The land.

Dr. Reagan: Which indicates he might be Jewish.

Nathan Jones: Yeah, he might not be the pope as some people say, but he might actually be a Jewish person who is, he's the PR man for the Antichrist. He does the miracles that Satan allows him to do. But he could be Jewish.

Dr. Reagan: Yes. And I think it's pretty feudal for people to speculate today that the Antichrist might be this person, or that person, or that person.

Nathan Jones: We'll never know we're going to be raptured, right?

Dr. Reagan: I think we're going to be taken out. We will not know. And I don't think the Antichrist will be revealed immediately. I think there is going to be a time between the Rapture and the beginning of the Tribulation, maybe a short time. But we won't know until he makes that treaty with Israel.

Part 3

Dr. Reagan: Welcome back to Christ in Prophecy and our discussion of the Tribulation, its meaning and purpose. Nathan, there are some prophecy teachers out there, thankfully not many, who are teaching that we are in the Tribulation now and have been ever since World War I. How do you respond to that?

Nathan Jones: Are we living in the Tribulation? Well I made a video about that, one of the Inbox videos. Do you want to see it?

Dr. Reagan: I would love to. Let's show it to them.

Nathan Jones: OK.

Inbox #9- Are We Currently Living in the Tribulation

Nathan Jones: There are some Bible prophecy teachers out there who are teaching that we are currently living in the Tribulation. All the way back since World War 1, they claim, the prophetic judgments of Revelation have been pouring down upon the earth. Sadly, the only thing predictable about their predictions is that they've scared a whole lot of people senseless.

Are We Currently Living in the Tribulation?

Let's define "Tribulation," for there's tribulation, and then there's THE Tribulation. How one defines tribulation is often tied to where they're coming from. Some people think of tribulation as having to endure. We're obviously not talking about First World problems here. The rest of the world defines tribulation much more severely, such as having to endure...

These are the severe trials and afflictions that much of the world suffers from on an ongoing basis. Then, there are the Christians, who live under an extra level of persecution.

For Jesus warned: "If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you," therefore "In the world you will have tribulation"

The world hates Jesus and His moral law, and so will of course also hate and persecute His followers.

But, when talking about tribulation, as Bible prophecy describes, we're not talking about the inevitable day-to-day sufferings we all share caused by Satan and our fellow man. Rather, prophecy is talking about an event – The Tribulation.

The Tribulation goes by a number of different names and descriptions in the Old Testament: The Day of the Lord, The Terror of the Lord, A Day of Reckoning, A Day of Wrath, A Day of Trouble and Distress, A Day of Destruction and Desolation, The Time of Jacob's Distress, The Great and Terrible Day of the LORD

Think of modern-day movies which often mislabel the Tribulation as Judgment Day, Armageddon, and the End of the World. They're close, but woefully nowhere near as intense in scope.

God has a four-fold purpose for the Tribulation: 1. To pour out His wrath upon the nations of the world for all their evil, as He did during the Flood. 2. To bring multitudes of people to finally accept Jesus as Savior. 3. To gather a remnant of Jewish people who finally accept Jesus as Messiah. 4. For Jesus to defeat evil and set up His Kingdom.

The Tribulation will last for seven excruciatingly long years. It begins when the ascending one-world ruler – the Antichrist – makes a peace covenant with Israel. The seven years are split into two periods of 3 1/2 years each, with the division occurring when the Antichrist enters into the newly built Jewish Temple and declares himself to be God. He then engages in genocide, killing two-thirds of the Jews in a second holocaust. And that's why the second half is often referred to as the Great Tribulation, for it truly is the time of Jacob's trouble.

So how do we know we are not currently living in the Tribulation? Well, just look out your window. Do you see the following conditions Revelation describes, conditions so horrific that Jesus declared:

“And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened”

- A one-world ruler risen to power who rules over a global government.
- The Antichrist making and breaking a peace covenant with Israel.
- A one-world religious system being implemented.
- A new world war being waged so great that a quarter of the world's population – almost 2 billion people – are slaughtered.
- Death by mass starvation and rampant plagues.
- The worst evils let loose from people's hearts so that they sin exceedingly.
- Violence, theft, and witchcraft are the norm.
- Demons run reckless, no longer obscured.
- The planet cracked apart by earthquakes, meteors, and fire so that the entire biosphere teeters on the brink of collapse.
- Christians and Jews hunted down like animals to be slaughtered.
- The Antichrist's name tattooed on his people's right hand or forehead, or face starvation.
- The world's leaders crawl into caves and cry out for the mountains to fall upon them to protect them from God's anger.

Clearly, we are not currently living in the Tribulation, but eventually it will come. But, don't lose hope, for there are a people who will not have to endure the horrors of the Tribulation. While the Tribulation, like the Flood was, is God pouring out His judgment upon mankind for our sins, believers in Christ are promised exemption from God's wrath.

The wrath of God is meant only for those who live in rebellion against Him, and not for those who have accepted Jesus as Savior. They have kept His command to persevere through the tribulations of this life, and so He will also will keep them from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world to test those who dwell on the earth.

So, no matter how bad the world gets today, it is nothing compared to what life will be like during the Tribulation. Make sure you never have to face those terrible days. Accept Jesus' lifeline of salvation.

"For then there shall be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be"

Part 4

Dr. Reagan: Outstanding job, Nathan. I really appreciate that.

Nathan Jones: Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord.

Dr. Reagan: And I appreciate particularly the fact that you pointed out in that video that it is not necessary for anyone to go through the Tribulation if they'll reach out to Jesus in faith.

Nathan Jones: Amen. In Revelation 3:10 gives us that promise: "Because you have kept my command to persevere I will also keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world." We have that promise.

Dr. Reagan: Yes, Christians are guaranteed protection from the wrath of God. Well folks, that's our program for this week. I hope it's been a blessing to you and I hope you'll be back with us again 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