

Christ in Prophecy

Rapture 10: Brent Miller, Jr. on *Before the Wrath* Film

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Opening

Dr. Reagan: Could the pattern of weddings in the Galilee area of Israel in the time of Jesus provide evidence that the Rapture of the Church is going to occur before the Tribulation begins? For a fascinating insight into this question, 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 today with us, a Christian filmmaker by the name of Brent Miller, Jr. He has a company called Ingenuity Films. And they have produced some compelling documentaries about Bible prophecy, such as one called, *The Coming Convergence*, another one, *The Final Prophecies*. And now a new one called, *Before the Wrath*. Brent, welcome to Christ in Prophecy.

Brent Miller: Thank you so much, it is great to be here.

Nathan Jones: Brent, so good to have you here, sir.

Brent Miller: Thank you. Thank you.

Nathan Jones: Fantastic. Well, Brent's movie *Before the Wrath* narrated by Kevin Sorbo is the reason why we've invited him here today. Let's first watch a clip so you can see exactly why Dr. Reagan and I are so excited about this amazing movie. A movie that claims a great discovery has been found that proves that Jesus Christ will return in a Pre-Tribulation Rapture.

Portion from *Before the Wrath*

Female Narrator: As Galileans we've witnessed His first miracle. He warned us that a time of great deception would come. But we must hold on to our faith. That one day He would return to save us from the end of the world.

J.D. Farag: Most people don't believe that Jesus is coming back. What if there was evidence that proves that this is all real?

Jay McCarl: Because there were so many people bringing up little bits and pieces of this. I'm thinking there's got to be a pattern here.

Jack Hibbs: The Bible talks about it as being a mystery. But why does the Rapture have to happen? What is the point to it all? A Galilean would have understood that perfectly.

Jan Markell: They are the key to everything. I'm just so stunned. I never thought I would see this in my lifetime.

J.D. Farag: This is the most profound discovery in human history.

Female Narrator: From His promise made through wine at the Last Supper. To why the world cannot know the day of His return. We were chosen to preserve the truth until the end of day. So, even if we are not spared from death, others can unveil what we know, and believe.

Jay McCarl: This discovery proves that He is coming back.

Part 2

Nathan Jones: As you can see pretty compelling. Well, Brent one of the prophecy experts you interviewed, Pastor Jack Hibbs, he stated this he said, "Why does the Rapture have to happen? What is the point of it all? A Galilean would have understood that perfectly." In the movie Middle Eastern anthropologist Jay McCarl, he claims to have found that whatever these Galileans understood is a discovery that proves that Jesus is coming back. Pastor J.D. Farag went so far as noting, "This is the most profound discovery in human history." So, what exactly has been discovered that provides indisputable proof that Jesus will return at the Rapture, and that the Rapture will happen before the Tribulation?

Brent Miller: Well, first I think we need a little bit of context. Is that we need to understand that first of all Jesus wasn't simply a Jew, He was a Galilean, to the northern part of Israel. And even though they are all Jews within Israel, the Galileans had a few kind of subcultural things that they did that were different from the religious epicenter around Jerusalem, and many of the other Jews. I mean we even see that here in the United States; different regions you have different kind of cultural differences, and it was the same in the first century. So, understanding that, we also look at how Jesus taught spiritual things to people so that they would understand whether they were Gentile or Jew, that a multitude of people could understand. And He did that through utilizing parables, stories, examples of day-to-day living so people could connect. And that being said when He spoke to His Galilean disciples, they were all Galileans except for Judas of course, they were, He was speaking to them in the Galilean vernacular, to their specific culture about His return at the end of days, and events that would happen at the end of days, that they could understand. So, He was speaking to them on a cultural level that I think a lot of scholars over the past even 100 years here in the West have kind of mostly ignored. And a lot of these new biblical insights we're now gaining as scholars, theologians, and Christian anthropologists are looking at writings from Josephus and first century culture, and they are connecting the culture with some of the parables that were taught biblically. Not to present anything new, not anything that would not be consistent with biblical scripture but provides deeper insight into the depth of meaning of what Jesus was teaching.

Dr. Reagan: Now in that regard your film focuses on the pattern of a Galilean wedding and how that interfaces with what is taught about the Rapture. So, lead us through that.

Brent Miller: Right. And I think a lot of people over the past several decades have heard about the correlation between a lot of Jewish wedding practices and the return of Christ. But some of the new discoveries that the scholars we are working with have found is specifically just the more depth of understanding the relation with some of the Galilean cultural elements. You know, and it kind of breathes new life into the entire topic in a way where it connects a lot more dots that were missing in the past.

Nathan Jones: Like, start with the betrothal period, because the betrothal period is very different than western betrothal. Right? When I was going to marry my wife I went up to her and asked her to marry me, I didn't go to her father I probably should have, but it was different in Galilee, right?

Brent Miller: Exactly. I guess the first step, yeah, the betrothal was absolutely fascinating because here in the west we have this idea that back in the first century that the bride, or the bride to be, that women didn't have a lot of authority or say who they were going to marry, etcetera, and that couldn't be further from the truth.

Nathan Jones: So, weddings were arranged back then?

Brent Miller: They were mostly arranged, but the bride actually had the authority, the complete authority to reject the groom. She could say no. In fact, she was the only person in the entire process, all the way up to accepting him to be her groom, to actually say, "No, I don't want this man." And it would be honored. So, she held all the authority. And that was done as the groom would offer her a cup of wine, symbolically this what they did, to create a new covenant between the two. And if she received, accepted the cup of wine, and took a sip, and handed it back to the groom, then she is receiving, and accepting the betrothal, the covenant between them. And we found that absolutely fascinating because when we look at what Jesus did with His disciples at the Last Supper, what do we see? Him offering a cup of wine to His disciples, establishing a new covenant. And so, if you really just look at it He is speaking to His Galilean disciples who very clearly understood their own cultures and traditions. They would immediately have made that connection, that type of covenant He is making.

Nathan Jones: When you say a covenant, then they were technically married even though they would not consummate the marriage until a later time period.

Brent Miller: Exactly. And I think that's why even before the Rapture, and later the Second Coming of Christ, we're referred to as the Bride of Christ, because you are technically married, but it's just not finished yet.

Nathan Jones: He hasn't come for us yet. Okay, well what about the preparations? What was involved in a Galilean wedding to prepare for eventually the consummation and the conclusion of the wedding?

Brent Miller: Yeah, I mean this also follows exactly what Jesus did in the First Coming. The groom after the betrothal, they wouldn't live together as husband and wife.

Nathan Jones: Not at all.

Dr. Reagan: But they were considered married.

Brent Miller: Absolutely. They were married. They were one. The two became one, they had a union and a covenant, but they didn't live together. In fact, the groom would immediately leave for about a one-year period.

Nathan Jones: A year!

Brent Miller: An entire year they would have to stay apart.

Dr. Reagan: Well, they would have to stay apart at least nine months to prove the bride is chaste.

Brent Miller: Exactly. Exactly, yeah. And during this period, they weren't just staying apart, the groom was preparing a new home.

Dr. Reagan: Yeah, he would build a room onto his father's house.

Brent Miller: Exactly. And surprisingly, for many Americans they would find it surprising they still do the exact same thing today in the Middle East, in actually many different Arab and Persian cultures.

Nathan Jones: Brent, that reminds me so much of John 14:1-3 where Jesus said, "Let not your hearts be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house there are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will also come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also." And when I was watching your video and seeing how the groom was building a room onto his father's house that verse came right to mind.

Brent Miller: Exactly. The parallels are just unprecedented in Scripture.

Dr. Reagan: Okay, so the groom is building the room. What is the bride doing during this time?

Brent Miller: The bride is preparing. She is occupying. She is preparing. She has to be ready for the day that the groom will come for her. She has to remain pure.

Dr. Reagan: And she does not know that day.

Brent Miller: She does not know that day.

Dr. Reagan: The groom doesn't know that day.

Brent Miller: No, not at all. The groom doesn't. You see, this is what we found so shocking between the parallels, some of just the little details that really are just bringing this to life. Is that in a lot of weddings in the Middle East during that day. Even a lot of regular Jewish weddings in Jerusalem, they had a date, they knew when it was going to be. In Galilee to the north, it was a surprise wedding. They genuinely did not know the month, the day, the hour, they had no idea. And the groom didn't know, he just has to make all the preparations to build on the father's house.

Dr. Reagan: Who knows?

Nathan Jones: Who is the guy who knows?

Brent Miller: Well, the father of the groom.

Dr. Reagan: The father of the groom.

Brent Miller: Literally the only person in the entire city or town, or wherever they were in Galilee, is the only one that would know when he would send his son to get his bride, until then they had to wait.

Nathan Jones: That's amazing because that then makes when Jesus was talking about the end times in Matthew 24:36 & 44, "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels

of heaven, but My Father only.” So, the father of the groom in the wedding was the only one who knew when he would send the groom out for the bride. Just like God is the only one who knows when He is going to send Jesus to collect His Bride.

Brent Miller: Right. And Jesus said the exact same thing, no one knows the day or the hour, only My Father.

Dr. Reagan: So, the bride had to be ready.

Brent Miller: Yeah, the bride had to be ready. Not only ready, but as she knew based on the things going on in town, food is being prepared. You may not know, this is what is also interesting, it that you may not know the day or the hour, but you kind of get the feeling of the season. Well, the bride would have known too, she may not know the day or the hour.

Nathan Jones: The room’s done.

Brent Miller: But you know, yeah, the building is done, she can see the signs, we are close. And what she would begin doing is often even sleeping in her wedding gown, because she literally wouldn’t know when she had to jump up.

Dr. Reagan: The bridesmaids had to be ready too.

Brent Miller: Yeah, the bridesmaids had to be ready. They had to have oil in their lamps, and their lamps lit, especially during the night.

Dr. Reagan: So, how does that relate to the Rapture?

Brent Miller: This is the part that gave us chills during our interviews in the production of this film is that it said that Jesus comes as a thief in the night. But to the Galileans, even though it is an analogy, and a parable in many ways, for the Galileans they heard that literally. His disciples would have understood literally in the middle of the night, because this is one of the few things that separated the Galileans subculture, that His disciples understood, from the rest of the Jewish wedding culture, is that when the father of the groom sent his son to get his bride, it was often in the middle of the night.

Nathan Jones: Wow.

Dr. Reagan: Part of the surprise.

Brent Miller: For a surprise. And you know they did it--

Dr. Reagan: The blowing of a shofar at that time.

Brent Miller: Exactly. And the reason why they blew the shofar was to wake the bride. I mean, parallel after parallel.

Nathan Jones: You said something in the video that was amazing, is that when the groom comes with the procession to get the bride they put her on a litter, and they carry her back to the house and it is called flying the bride to the father’s house. And that is such beautiful imagery of Jesus Christ when He calls, He’s got the shofar trumpet, and He calls, and in a litter so to speak, the angels take us up into the clouds to meet Jesus in the air. And then we get to this wedding feast, and this is the last part of the Galilean wedding. Can you tell us the significance of the wedding feast?

Brent Miller: Well, the wedding feast is also shocking. But just to back up, if I can real quick. When they lifted the bride up in the air on the litter, I mean a lot of people say that Jesus didn't speak of the Rapture when He was talking to His disciples, that that came later through Paul when he reveals a mystery. And of course, Paul reveals this through a mystery. But I think Jesus definitely alluded to the doctrine of the Rapture with His disciples, simply because again they would have understood that parallel, that when the groom comes for the bride she is lifted up off the ground. And then they may not have understood it at the time that Jesus was saying this to them as many things they didn't connect, so later when Paul revealed this a mystery that he reveals that we will be caught up in the air. I guarantee it clicked, and they said, well, this is like when we are lifted up off the ground as we do in our wedding customs, and the bride is flown to the father's house. So, they would have made this connection as well. But the feast is so fascinating because when we look at Revelation it speaks of the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, again, another wedding analogy. It's all over the place. And during the feast after the consummation and then you have the feast. Many scholars believe that it would last for seven days and nights. And during this period the door was shut, it was locked, and if you didn't make it into the wedding feast you didn't get in, that door did not open. And anybody left out in the streets, with you know, tearing of clothes and gnashing of teeth just in distress, because a wedding was the most amazing thing that could happen in that day. There was nothing more important. Nothing that would have been such a blessing and an honor in your life to attend. And if you missed that it was like missing a once in a lifetime experience that you would regret until the day you died.

Nathan Jones: Well, we are going to end this segment with another clip that drives home how severe the situation is for those who were not ready.

Before the Wrath Segment

Kevin Sorbo Narrator: There will be many that choose to be separated from Him, for all of eternity. Those that will be left behind.

Jack Hibbs: You not only had to be ready, you had to have enough oil, you had to get in. You had to get into that wedding, and then the door was shut. By the way once the door was shut, it was shut.

Kevin Sorbo Narrator: And in ancient Galilee if you were locked out, there was no getting in.

Part 3

Nathan Jones: Welcome back to our discussion with filmmaker Brent Miller, Jr. about the exciting discovery of how the Galilean wedding provides the key to understanding the Rapture of the Church. Brent, you spent a good amount of time in the movie addressing a very serious problem. I am looking at a statistic here that Bible prophecy is being marginalized, 2% of 400 sermons that Lifeway surveyed only talk about Bible prophecy. So, why are churches intentionally marginalizing 27% of the Bible?

Brent Miller: That is a huge question. And this is a topic that is very, very personal to me. In fact, it's the reason why I got into filmmaking in the first place. And I think the reason why we are seeing this trend of just overwhelming marginalization of prophecies is because of the sensationalists out there, the date setters. And in this age of, even over the last decade of social

media, and news where everything is reduced to ten second sound bites, and it's getting worse, now it is five second sound bites. Is that the average America, in fact the average person in the world when it comes to things like biblical prophecy they hear about the sensationalized headlines of things that aren't really founded in biblical truth. So, it gets their attention, and it becomes an issue of crying wolf because a lot of these things that are claimed they don't come to pass, they don't happen and then you have millions of people disappointed and saying, "Oh, see it's the same kind of hokey, fringe stuff that you would find in Nostradamus or anything else." And they throw the baby out with the bath water. And it's become such a topic of contention amongst Christians that are not founded in biblical literacy that pastors themselves, I believe for many different reasons: out of fear for creating tension in their congregations, for creating conflict, for being flagged as maybe a sensationalist, you know they just decided to avoid the topic, and they just simply don't discuss it. And so, and over the last ten years it is being essentially eliminated from seminary. So, most pastors themselves now are not even aware of really the details of Bible prophecy.

Nathan Jones: That's interesting. I was at a church once and the pastor was making a joke up on the stage he said, "Ah, going to one of those Bible Prophecy Star Trek Conventions." And the whole congregation is laughing. I'm like they've turned the Rapture into a butt of a joke. And I finding as pastors try to connect with their people, some of them do it on the cool factor, you know they are cool and trendy, and wear the skinny jeans and all that, and Bible prophecy that is so left behind, that's so uncool, and so they are ignoring it just for the cool factor. And that's just tragic, because again 27%, I've seen as high as 31% of the Bible is Bible prophecy. God wants us to know how the story ends. And the story ends for the church at the Rapture. Would you say that there are some other teachings that are starting to dominate, like say, post-millennialism, or symbolic interpretation of the Bible that is making the Rapture disappear from teaching?

Brent Miller: Yeah, and this is what we found most alarming. We worked directly with Lifeway Research in Nashville on some of the trending data in the church. And we found that the state of the church as a whole in the United States is far worse on so many levels then we could have possibly ever imagined. I mean we know its bad, but we didn't now it was this bad. And in fact, just from a basic, one example, from a basic Rapture polling we found that only 36% of Christians believe in a Pretribulation Rapture. Which means that's not the majority. We have this perception that Pre-Trib is the majority viewpoint in the church.

Dr. Reagan: Oh, no, not at all.

Brent Miller: Not at all. In fact, it's becoming more diverse in every year, and Pre-Tribbers the number is getting smaller and smaller every year. And even polling Christians and pastors now 25%, 1 out of 4, pastors included do not believe in the Rapture anymore. And these Christian churches here in the west.

Dr. Reagan: Well, Brent one of the things I really like about your movie is that right in the middle of it you make a transition from talking about the Galilean wedding and how it references to the Rapture, and you make a transition into an in-depth discussion of the way in which Bible prophecy is ignored in the teaching and preaching programs of most churches today. And I really appreciated that because that is one of my pet peeves in all the world, of course as a Bible prophecy teacher, is the way that Bible prophecy is both abused and ignored. And certainly, it is ignored for many reasons, I think primarily because preachers don't get any

training in it in seminary and they are afraid to touch it. I get very upset when preachers tell me, "Well, Dave you know I'm not Premillennial, Postmillennial, Amillennial, I'm Panmillennial, I just believe it is all going to pan out in the end." And I have to bite my tongue, because I want to say is, "That means you are too lazy to study the subject."

Brent Miller: Right.

Dr. Reagan: And that's 30% of the Word of God. Now, let's get serious about this. And so, I'm so glad you made this particular emphasis in your film.

Brent Miller: It's how God drew me to Himself, was studying prophecy. So, this is a topic that I actually try to work into every film that we work on. And of course, it is something that falls perfectly into the age of grace, during the wedding timeline, if you will, as the bride is occupying waiting.

Dr. Reagan: Well, pastors are always telling me, "Well, you know David, Bible prophecy is pie in the sky, it doesn't relate to the here and now. And I've got people in my congregation who's involved in adultery, and liquor, and you know alcoholics and drug addicts, and I've got to have something practical." And my response to them is, "If you can ever convince the people in your church of two things, really convince them, number one that Jesus really is coming back. The average Christian believes it here, but they don't believe it here because it doesn't affect how they live. But if you can convince them number one Jesus is really coming back, and number two that is an event that could occur any moment, it will motivate them to holiness, and evangelism. What more could you ask for?"

Brent Miller: Right. And I think we are seeing this decay within the church because as you were saying people, they have a desire to believe, they think they believe, but you are right there's not a sincere receiving of Christ. There is not a sincere following. And when you ask people why, especially amongst the younger generations, the number one reason is that there is no proof. This is why the idea of prophecy is so dear to me, and why it is so detrimental that it is being marginalized in the church is because the reason why, no one asks why prophecy exists. In fact, the pastors probably don't even understand why.

Dr. Reagan: It's one of the greatest evidence the Bible is the Word of God.

Brent Miller: Exactly. That is why it is up to 30% of the Word. I mean prophecy exists so that God can prove to us that He is God. That's the point of it.

Dr. Reagan: And I also point out to these pastors that the very first Gospel sermon ever preached by Peter on the day of Pentecost was nothing but Bible prophecy.

Brent Miller: Exactly.

Dr. Reagan: All he said was, "The prophet said this; Jesus fulfilled it. The prophet said this; Jesus fulfilled it." Finally, the people cried out, said, "What must we do?"

Brent Miller: Right.

Dr. Reagan: The whole thing was Bible prophecy.

Brent Miller: Yeah.

Nathan Jones: Well, it's a fulfillment, right? The Bible said in the end times people would be, the church of Laodicea. As we get into this final segment could you tell us, and end this with: What is the message that you wanted to get out? And before that what is the key message that you want us to be left with?

Brent Miller: Well, the bottom line is as in a time where we so much turmoil, so much volatility in the world, that we need to be focused on the return of the Lord. And that's a topic that's being marginalized more and more in every passing year. What I've said many times on a lot of different interviews is that the reason why it is so detrimental to take prophecy out of the Bible is because you can't take prophecy out of the Bible without also removing the return of Christ.

Nathan Jones: Absolutely.

Brent Miller: And that's exactly what's happening.

Nathan Jones: Satan wants that.

Brent Miller: Right. No wonder why 25% of pastors no longer believe in the Rapture. And the whole message, the whole point here is that we need to wake up to how detrimental this is for the health of the church and the spiritual readiness of the body of Christ. It is decaying the church in so many ways that pastors themselves don't even understand. So, one, understand how important prophecy is to the church, that it has to be brought back into the church and taught properly. And two, to understand that we need to rely on the Blessed Hope in these last days.

Dr. Reagan: Thank you very much Brent for being our special guest today, we appreciate you coming. Well, folks, in just a moment we are going to tell you how you can get a copy of this wonderful movie, "Before the Wrath." That is our program for today. I hope it I has been a blessing to you. I hope too, the Lord willing, that you will be back with us next week. 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