

Christ in Prophecy
Christmas 12: Christmas Prophecies About Peace

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Tim Moore: Welcome once again to Christ in Prophecy. I'm coming to you from our Lamb & Lion Ministries headquarters here at Maranatha Acres. As we approach the time of year when we celebrate Jesus' birth over 2,000 years ago, I wanted to change our usual setting and slow down to reflect on His First Coming and the promise of His Second Coming. I'm joined today by Dave Bowen, our teaching evangelist. Pastor Dave, I'm so glad you could join me today.

David Bowen: I am so excited to be here. I really enjoy the Christmas season.

Tim Moore: Well, you are right in the middle of it, brother. And so we are at the right place, the right time of year, and we're going to talk about the right thing, which is our soon coming King. And without forgetting what lies behind, we are going to look forward to what is coming ahead. So what are you looking forward to this time of year Dave with all the Christmas celebrations?

David Bowen: Every year, I look forward to this because things get out, now it's commercialized I understand that. But you have the manger, you have people talking about the birth of Jesus. It gives me as a pastor a chance to really talk about Jesus and people are open to it. So they may not quite understand it, but at least their hearts are open to it.

Tim Moore: Amen to that. You know, I think one word that sums up this time of year, at least in our nostalgic memory, is peace, or what the Hebrew people would say Shalom, which means God's peace. And that beautiful Hebrew word is something that seems so very elusive, not just in Israel, but around the world today. So how can we have peace if the world seems like it's in so much turmoil?

David Bowen: Well there's a lot of chaos going on we can't deny that. However, if you look at the Apostle Paul in Romans 5, he talks about peace, and he says in order to have peace, what that really means is to be in a right relationship with the Lord. So no matter what's happening in the world, no matter how chaotic it gets, what we do here at Lamb & Lion is we help people understand they can be in the right relationship with the Lord and have that peace.

Tim Moore: Have that eternal peace.

David Bowen: Amen.

Tim Moore: You know, I think we've talked about even this year, at times, long before the turmoil in the Middle East, that it's one thing to have trouble in this world, external trouble, but it's another thing to have internal peace or shalom. The Lord said, "In this world you will have trouble, but in Me you can have peace." And he told His followers, "Let not your heart be troubled." I think there's a key distinction on that which is within our heart, and that which is external. And so as Christians, yeah, there may be troubles buffeting all around, but inside we can know that lasting peace which passes all understanding.

David Bowen: Right. And it just came to me too as you're talking about that what's happening in Israel. Psalm 122:6 tells us, commands us, to pray for the peace of Jerusalem.

Tim Moore: Amen.

David Bowen: And doing that, it's not it's not a suggestion. I want you to do this. And He gives us two blessings to do that He gives us peace and security in our own household. If we will look at Jerusalem

and pray for the peace of Jerusalem, which you and I know won't happen until the Lord Jesus comes back.

Tim Moore: You know, so even as we pray for the peace of Jerusalem, what we're really praying for is the coming of the Prince of Peace, so He could reign from Jerusalem, giving peace not only to Jerusalem, the land of Israel, but the entire world, which will be flooded with peace, righteousness and justice during the Millennial reign of Christ.

David Bowen: Amen.

Tim Moore: Well, right now we don't see that kind of peace in spite of some who claim we're living in the Millennium as we speak, the world seems to be swirling with chaos and a lot of people can testify, some of you may be able to testify that in your daily lives you feel just a swirl of chaos, a lot of anxiety. And I'm reminded that when Jesus came 2,000 years ago and was born in a little town of Bethlehem, just south of Jerusalem, laid in a manger and swaddling clothes the world then, like it is now, was a very dark and foreboding place.

David Bowen: Well the Romans made sure it was that way, especially for the Jewish people. However, the Roman opposition and pressure they put on them was temporary. And one thing we can remember Christmas songs, everybody enjoys Christmas songs, I like the First Noel. Many people don't know what it means. It's the first birth, and in that first birth Israel has a brand new king. That's a thing to celebrate. And that King is not a temporary king, that's an eternal king to last forever and ever. So we can even have joy, even when there's oppression at all kinds of chaos going on.

Tim Moore: Certainly right. You know, obviously, I am reminded this year my daughter sent me a text and asked me, "Dad, how often do you think of the Roman world?" I thought what? I guess there's some kind of a meme out there or a question on TikTok or somewhere that has asked young people how often they think of Rome? And supposedly men think of it every day, or every other day, and I thought, well, I don't think of it that often. But as a Christian and as someone who studies the Word of God, I realized that when Christ came, Rome was the empire in control of Judea and Samaria, and what they later came to label Palestina or Palestine. And so again, Roman oppression was very prevalent, and I think a lot of people even then were looking for relief from Roman oppression. They were looking for a reascendance of Israel's primacy. And still today, a lot of Jews are looking for relief from the oppression of those who are surrounding them. Many of us could testify in our life, even here in the United States, we're awaiting a relief and a coming peace that would be external as well as internal.

David Bowen: I agree with that question being asked. Actually it was a sportscaster, a female sportscaster who asked an athlete that question. And I don't think she was ready for an answer. He goes, "Well, I think about the Roman Empire about once every two or three days." And she was shocked at the answer. And I wonder how much they really understand biblically what they're talking about.

Tim Moore: Yeah, a lot of people don't realize our society, our government really was modeled on the Roman Empire in a lot of our government structures, and us being a republic, having a Senate, of course, we have a bicameral house. I don't want to get distracted, but the political churning of that day and age is not unlike the political churning people feel today. And yet again, God determined in that moment to pierce the darkness and descend forward the light of the world, and yet He was only recognized by those who were looking for Him or had spiritual insight to realize He's here, right now in our midst.

David Bowen: Yes, well, Isaiah 9:2 talks about this too, the people walk in darkness. It says, "People walked in darkness, they will see a great light, and those who live in a dark land, the light will shine on them." It says, "You will multiply the nation, you will increase their joy, and they will rejoice in your

presence as with the joy of harvest, as people rejoice when they divide the spoils." Now Christmas is coming, people will be dividing the spoils Christmas morning.

Tim Moore: Yeah, that happens on Christmas morning in most households with children.

David Bowen: Exactly. But will they enjoy the light? Will they enjoy the light of Christmas?

Tim Moore: You know, that's a great point. For many of us who look forward to gathering with family, a lot of us, even in our Christmas practice, have a tendency to become, I already used the word nostalgic, we look forward to decorating a tree, and wrapping gifts, and gathering with family and loved ones. Are we really focusing on the reason for the season as the bumper sticker goes? Or are we just getting caught up in that family moment?

David Bowen: You have to be focused on it. You have to make sure you do. I know when I was raising our children, my kids, before we opened gifts, we read the Christmas story. And it got to the point to where the girls were fighting every year on whose turn it was to read the Christmas story.

Tim Moore: I don't know if that's the right answer, fighting every year.

David Bowen: Yeah, it's my turn to read. It's my turn to read.

Tim Moore: But the eagerness of children.

David Bowen: Yes, this is the meaning of Christmas. Now the gifts are just a blessing, and you say thank you, but the whole purpose and why we're here is the birth of Christ.

Tim Moore: You know, my family a while back began to borrow from some of the more liturgical traditions to have a season of Advent, and every day to read a passage pointing to the anticipation of the coming of the Lord. Obviously, many of those anticipations we reflect on were His coming the first time, but we always turn it to our anticipation of the coming of the Lord the second time. So if you can get a sense of the eagerness of a child looking forward to Christmas, you can begin to understand the heart that all of us as followers of Jesus Christ should have to the coming of our Lord in the fullness of time. At the appointed time known only to the Father.

David Bowen: Amen.

Tim Moore: Well, you know, Dave, as I think of Christmas we always, again, tend to think of this as a backward looking celebration. We're looking back now 2,023 or so years. I actually think Jesus was born before what we would call year zero. We won't get into all the details of the dates and how those were calculated. But it's not just a backward looking celebration, as I said, it's a forward looking. To me Christmas is a lot like communion, a lot of people think communion only commemorates. You know, if you go to a church oftentimes on the altar, it says in remembrance of Me. And we do take the elements of the wine, or the grape juice, and the bread in remembrance of our Lord. But Paul says that that is a forward looking celebration as well. Because how long should we be practicing communion, the Lord's Supper?

David Bowen: Well, I think it's something that's eternal almost because He will be worshipped. I mean when He said, "I give you this cup, this is my new covenant." A covenant is a promise, and that promises is an everlasting promise. So we will always be worshiping the Lord. To me, the communion time becomes a time of worship as well.

Tim Moore: It is a time of worship, but I'll point this out in 1 Corinthians 11:26, Paul says, "As often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord until He comes." And so even that backward looking commemoration is a celebration of Jesus death, burial, and resurrection, the very

Gospel that we grab a hold of. But we do that looking forward to the time when He comes and we get to have that that true last supper with Him, the Marriage Feast of the Lamb, you might say.

David Bowen: Right. Well, there's so much in Scripture we can look back, but by looking back, you look forward as well. I think the Angel Gabriel coming to talk to Mary is a prime example, when you go back to Luke. In Luke 1:30-33 there are seven promises there.

Tim Moore: That's a great point.

David Bowen: Four have been fulfilled, when he spoke to her, but three are yet to happen. So we can look back, we can also look forward with it. In Luke 1, he said you will conceive and give birth to a son. Check. You will name Him Jesus. That happened. He will be great. That happened. He will be called the Son of the Most High. That happened. But from that point on, we have three things still yet to happen as we look forward to Christmas. We were told the Lord God will give Him a throne of his father David.

Tim Moore: You mean that's not happened yet?

David Bowen: That's not happened yet. That's going to be in the Millennium.

Tim Moore: Now, a lot of Christians would say He is on a throne in Heaven. He's sitting at the right hand of His Father. But that's not the throne of David.

David Bowen: That's not the throne of David. David was promised here, He will come back and reign on earth in that 1,000 year millennial period.

Tim Moore: Okay.

David Bowen: So that has to be fulfilled.

Tim Moore: I agree with you obviously.

David Bowen: He will reign over Jacob's descendants for how long? Forever.

Tim Moore: Now, a lot of Christians have been taught that that means the spiritual descendants of Jacob. In other words, those of us who have put faith in Jesus Christ, Gentile believers. Some of our viewers today may think that, well, that's me because I'm spiritually grafted in. But we believe that that is a promise to who?

David Bowen: To Israel.

Tim Moore: To Israel, to the Jewish people.

David Bowen: To the Jewish people.

Tim Moore: That the Lord will reign over them as well as the entire world.

David Bowen: Right. And I believe, again, backtrack a little bit to the Tribulation Period. I believe the main audience will be Jewish in the Tribulation Period. I mean, right now there's no number to put to this, but if you look at the evangelical Christians, how much of a percentage is Gentile and how much is Jewish? I mean, you have Messianic congregations out there, and you have ministries that are Jewish who love the Lord, but the majority is Gentile. And I believe once the Church is pulled out with the Rapture and we get into the Tribulation Period, those numbers flip flop and God is going to finish with the Jews what He started way back in Abraham. Which goes back to Luke, he says His kingdom will be a never ending kingdom beyond going on forever and ever. But he will finish it by looking back at Israel and the whole world will look upon Israel and say, we want what you have. What do we have? We have an everlasting God.

Tim Moore: I think you almost skipped over that last promise because you said it, but you didn't site it, this is number seven of those seven promises from Luke 1:30-33. So the seventh promises is?

David Bowen: That the kingdom will never, never, never end.

Tim Moore: Will it ever end?

David Bowen: It will never end.

Tim Moore: Never, ever. Okay. So the point is that these three promises made in Luke 1:30-33, we see that four of them have already been fulfilled.

David Bowen: Looking back, looking forward.

Tim Moore: And then others are yet to be fulfilled. And I think this is a key even for us as Gentile believers, because sometimes we see all the promises in Scripture wrapped up in me. In other words what am I looking forward to? I'm looking forward to opening a gift on Christmas. I'm looking forward to receiving what is coming for me. And there are many promises given to me, given to you, given to all of us who have put faith in Jesus Christ. But these promises are given to the Messiah.

David Bowen: Yes.

Tim Moore: And I think that we need to begin to understand that some of the promises in Scripture aren't about me, they're about Him. And they're about others in the fullness of time, receiving what they have been promised, the Jewish people, the world, the creation itself, even Satan, who we'll talk about in another episode coming up in a few weeks. But right now, instead of just looking forward to opening my own gift, I really again need to turn my focus on Jesus Christ and what is promised to Him.

David Bowen: Right. And the promise--in the Christmas story, I connect with Simeon. Remember Simeon in the Temple?

Tim Moore: Yes, I do.

David Bowen: I look at him, as a young Christian I'm reading about Simeon I go, that's how I want to be, because Simeon said he has seen the Messiah. He understands it was all about the Messiah. And here he is waiting His whole life. He felt like God promised that He would be able to see this before he passed away. And what did he say, "My life is complete because now I have seen the Messiah." And to me that that just touches my heart because I go, no matter what happens, I know I have that peace, getting back to peace.

Tim Moore: Yes.

David Bowen: Because I have understood who the Messiah is. I understand Jesus. And once I have Him now, Christmas really is Christmas.

Tim Moore: You know, I also love Simeon. I wish I could claim to have his heart. I think I've got a sense of it because I am looking forward to the Lord's Messiah. I believe and every time I go and speak, I tell people in a given audience, I say, I think some of you will not see death until you see the Lord's Messiah, just as Simeon was promised. And I can't say that prophetically. I just sense it in my spirit. I truly hope that I'm in that generation that with my mortal eyes in this life, sees the Son of Man descending from the clouds to regather His Church. But the spirit has not revealed that clearly to me. I just sense the time is so, so near. And yet when I look back at the story of Simeon and Anna, I also point out that Scripture records only two who were looking for the Messiah. That being Simeon, who was waiting there in the temple, and Anna, who was a prophetess of God, also awaiting the Lord's Messiah.

David Bowen: But Anna also the verse says in verse 38 of Luke, there it says that that she went out and spoke to many people. It wasn't just the two people that she spoke to more about that, in fact that is what she was doing. She couldn't wait to go out and share the news. The good news.

Tim Moore: She couldn't wait. There's a lesson there. But let's look at that verse, read verse 38. We're talking about Luke chapter two, which deals with Simeon and Anna, who were at the Temple. And let's be very clear, this was eight days after Jesus' birth when his parents and in fulfillment of the law's command, brought their newborn Son to the Temple and would have offered a sacrifice on his behalf. Joy filled. And we know that they were a poor couple. I don't think they'd yet received the gold, frankincense and myrrh, so they gave a poor person's sacrifice. But that's where these two older folks were there waiting, Simeon and Anna. But read verse 38.

David Bowen: And the joy that she had too.

Tim Moore: Yes.

David Bowen: It says that, "She gave thanks to God," first of all.

Tim Moore: Yes.

David Bowen: How do you celebrate Christmas? You give thanks to God. And spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

Tim Moore: Ah, so here's where I'm going to contradict back again. They were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem. Here's my question, there's a lot of people today who are looking forward to the redemption of America or to the redemption of Israel. Let's face it, in this day and age, there's a lot of Jewish people are looking forward to the redemption of Israel. Looking forward to peace once again being reestablished, or at least a semblance of peace. But my question is today, are those people who want to see our nation redeemed or return to being made great again, or those who want the world to have peace, are they looking for the Messiah or are they just looking forward to the gift that the Messiah brings?

David Bowen: I think if they truly understand Jesus, they have to understand what redemption is. When Jesus redeemed us, He redeemed humans. He didn't redeem angels, did not redeem animals, HE redeemed humans. So to say a city is being redeemed, he's talking about people. And the only people who are redeemed are those who understand Christmas, the birth of Christ, and the eternal life and promise of Christ.

Tim Moore: Well, we understand that. But do people looking forward to all those blessings understand that? Again, I think there are so many in our society who are looking forward to the redemption of a nation, sometimes a political party, whatever, but are they focused on Jesus Christ or are they just want the blessings? And so we're going to come back to make sure we talk about how a person can be redeemed.

But for just a moment, I want to give an example of someone who did understand their need for redemption, and that is none other than Christ own mother, Mary. So Mary, as a young woman, was singled out, she was visited to be told you will conceive and bear a child. We know she was very young because that's when a Jewish woman would be married, probably in her mid-teens. And yet she already understood, well, this is not possible I've never been with a man. And yet the Lord told her through the angel that the Holy Spirit would come upon her, that's how she would conceive. And when Mary went to visit her cousin Elizabeth, she records a song or at least she expressed a song of exultation and joy. And in Luke chapter one, Mary says in the beginning of verse 46, "My soul magnifies the Lord," she's praising the Lord, "and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior." Now, there are some who would claim today

Mary didn't need a Savior because she was perfect. By Mary's own testimony she needed a savior. You need a savior. The Lord knows I needed a savior. All of us fall short of the glory of God. And so here is this young woman favored of God, and yes, Gabriel said you have found favor with the Lord, and yet she too needed a savior.

David Bowen: And I wonder if her heart or her mind went back to the book of Genesis. Genesis chapter three, where the promise of the seed of the woman, which means the virgin birth, because a seeds always from a man, not from the woman, except in Genesis. Or if her mind went back to Isaiah and the promise of the virgin birth? And I wonder if her mind went there and she understood how it could happen, because obviously it's impossible, unless this is not by a human way, but by the Spirit of God.

Tim Moore: But by the Spirit of God. You know, with God, all things are possible. Going back to Genesis as well, when Sarah laughed at the idea that that she would have a child in her old age. So here we have a young woman who's never been with a man. In Genesis we have an old woman who had never been able to conceive, and yet the Lord, in a pre-incarnate form, who appeared there with Abraham and Sarah beneath the oaks of Mamre, says with man, things are not possible, with God, nothing is impossible. And I love that passage as well from Genesis, where he goes on to testify at the appointed time I will return to you. Now I know that he's referring to coming back the next year when Sarah would have a son, but I think it's a prophetic foreshadowing of the promise that at the appointed time the Messiah will again come a second time.

David Bowen: See this is the great thing about Christmas, because you can start talking about Christmas and get into a Bible study with that too. You bringing Sarah up, I mean, God changed Abraham's name and Sarah's name, but what He did, He added a "H" to both their names and the "H" represented God breathing. Meaning that they're 90 years old, and 100 years old there's no physical way they could do it. So it had to be God's breath. God had to be involved in order for that promise to be fulfilled. Christmas, God has to be involved in order for the promise to be fulfilled. Our mind has to come back to our Lord Jesus Christ and what it's all about. So this brings us back full circle. Here we are at Christmas when we pause. Most people, if you drive around on Christmas morning, you see that even the traffic has stopped. There's nobody out shopping. The stores, most of them, thankfully, still are closed. And so there's a moment of at least semi peace.

Tim Moore: Yes. And yet there may be people watching us today who say I'm too far gone. The Lord's Redemption can't be for me because you don't know what I've done. You don't know what kind of background I have, how big of a mess my life is. And yet with God, all things are possible. And so, you know, we want to give a message of encouragement and hope and eternal peace, even to those who feel like their lives are in such turmoil. Or like the people of Zebulun and Naphtali, they are groping about in darkness. So you and I obviously have found this peace in the "H" you talked about. What's the secret for finding peace, even in a world as chaotic and turbulent as ours today?

David Bowen: Well, again, looking back, you can look forward and we understand how God's been involved in everything. See Bible prophecy to me, which is what we do, that's what we do, that's what we love. That's our heart. It brings trust to the Lord. It brings trust to the Bible. It brings trust. If you tell me you're going to do something and you do it, I'll trust you. If you say you're going to do something and you don't do it, then I may second, I may not trust you the next time doing that. So that trust comes in. But you look at the scripture Numbers 24 talked about the star, it talked about a star shall appear from Jacob. Psalms 72 talked about the wise men and gifts. Jeremiah 31, unfortunately talked about King Herod and the babies in Bethlehem. Hosea 11 talked about them being called out of Egypt. So because the Scriptures talked about this and we see everything play out in the past, then we can say everything that's in the future will also play out as it did then. The trust is there. So the Christmas story, the entire

Christmas story comes full circle as well, and we can trust all of it. And that's what we need to understand what Christmas is all about, it's not about a baby in the manger. See, people enjoy the baby, they get uncomfortable with the adult on the cross come Easter time.

Tim Moore: Yes, they do.

David Bowen: But the story comes full circle.

Tim Moore: Yes, we cannot end at Christmas. We do have to go to the cross. So even now, the baby in the manger, as you said, is destined for the cross. And we can't just be like the movie where the racecar driver wanted to only focus on little baby Jesus. That's the safe Jesus. That's the non-threatening Jesus. That's the Jesus that's so picturesque, He lays in a manger and he's innocent and harmless and non-threatening. But what we really have to point people to is the Messiah on the cross, because that's what He came to fulfill in God's plan of salvation for us.

David Bowen: And it brings the show full circle too because you opened with the word shalom, peace and you really can't have peace without Christmas. You really can't have peace without the Lord Jesus.

Tim Moore: Well what was the old word? Without Him there is no peace, with Him you have peace. You know, I'll go back to Simeon one more time, because Simeon's prayer, I think, is a testimony of what the Lord offers even today and what is still to be fulfilled a Messianic expectation. So, Simeon, upon seeing the Messiah, upon holding this child and recognizing through spirit inspired eyesight that the Messiah had arrived. He had indeed lived to see the Lord's anointed One. Simeon says this in Luke 2:29-32, "Now, Master Lord God, you are releasing your servant in peace, according to your word, for my eyes have seen your salvation." Just like Mary was looking forward to a savior. I've seen your salvation. And that's not a concept. That's a person. In this case, it's a baby who has come to save. "Which you prepared in the presence of all peoples a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for the glory of your people Israel." In other words, Jesus Christ, the Messiah. Yes, He's for the Jew first, but also for the Gentile. And so Simeon right here recognizes that Jesus, the Messiah, Yeshua would be a revelation even to the Gentile people, you and I are grafted in. Praise the Lord. But also for the glory of Israel.

David Bowen: I think the greatest gift anybody can give or receive at Christmas time is the true, honest pitch of who Jesus is. I think a lot of people think, well, I'm a Christian or I go to church or I pray, but do they really have the eyes of the savior on them. Can they really say, I've seen the Lord, I know who the Lord is, as Simeon did? And when you have that peace, you can say, you know what, I get to part now in peace because my life has been full.

Tim Moore: Beautifully said, Dave. Here at Lamb & Lion Ministries, for many years, we've proclaimed that this is the season of the Lord's Return. We don't set a day or an hour, but we know that soon and very soon Jesus will burst from the heavens. If you've not yet put your trust in Him, you don't have eternal shalom, His everlasting peace. And so don't wait another hour, not another day in this season of supposed peace put your trust in the Prince of Peace and then join us in looking for his soon coming. If you don't know how to do that, call us here at Lamb & Lion Ministries, go to our website, ChristinProphecy.org, where you can get a wealth of material pointing you through God's prophetic Word to our soon coming king.

So on behalf of Dave Bowen and myself, Tim Moore and all of us here at Lamb & Lion Ministries, we hope that you know the Prince of Peace and are awaiting His soon return. Until He breaks from the heavens we bid you Shalom and Godspeed.

End of Program