

Christ in Prophecy

Conference 43: Tim Moore & Nathan Jones on Prophecy Debates

© 2016 Lamb & Lion Ministries. All Rights Reserved.

For a video of this show, please visit <http://www.lamblion.com>.

Opening

Dr. Reagan: Can we know the date of the Lord's return? Is Jesus going to return to this earth and reign for a thousand years? These are just two of the hotly debated topics that we considered at our recent annual Bible conference. For the answers to both questions, stay tuned.

Part 1

Dr. Reagan: Greetings in the name of Jesus, our Blessed Hope, and welcome to Christ in Prophecy.

In today's program we are going to take a look at two of the presentations that were made at our recent annual Bible conference. One concerned the issue of whether or not we can know the date of the Lord's return. The other dealt with the issue of whether or not Jesus is going to return to reign on this earth for a thousand years.

Now, concerning the date of the Lord's return, there have been many people throughout history who have set dates, and there are people today who are doing the same thing. But should they? What does the Bible have to say about date setting? These questions were answered at our conference by this ministry's Assistant Evangelist, Tim Moore. Tim is a remarkable man. He is a Colonel in the US Air Force Reserve, he is a commercial pilot, and he is a member of the Kentucky legislature. In Tim's spare time on weekends he holds Bible prophecy conferences for us at churches all across this nation. Here now is Tim Moore speaking on the topic, "Can We Know When the Lord Will Return?"

Tim Moore's Presentation

Tim Moore: This morning I will tackle the question assigned to me: Can we know when Jesus is coming again? Well, since Dave first assigned me this topic and in full disclosure, I did choose between two topic options. I thought that his idea was to ensure that my presentation would adhere to the time constraints. That is because the very short answer to that question is simply, no. So I thank you all very much, and we will move. No. Well having said that, and confessing that I feel no real compulsion to be arbitrarily limited to a one hour time slot. I would like to expand on that very short answer and give you some things to consider this morning.

I do have a friend who is positive that although he doesn't know the day, he does know the time of day that the Lord will return. He points out that 1 Thessalonians 5:2 says that the Lord will come "in the night." I've tried to point out to him that the entire metaphorical phrase is "like a thief in the night," and argued that unless the Lord's coming is very gradual across the globe at least half the world will see Him arrive in the daytime. Yeah, it is pretty much a given. I've also

emphasized that the phrase, the entire phrase itself is meant to communicate the nature of the Lord's return to an unsuspecting world. Obviously, the metaphor breaks down if we focus instead on the word thief, "the Lord will come like a thief in the night." Why is that? It's because Jesus clearly contrasted Himself with a literal thief who only comes to steal, kill, and destroy. But our Lord came, and still comes into our own hearts and lives that we might have life and have it abundantly.

So, this brings up a good point though regarding my friend and his interpretation. He is still quite confident I am sad to say. The timing of the Lord's return is the subject of a great and passionate debate, thus its subject matter for us this morning.

Let me start by saying that aside from my friend's conviction no legitimate student of Scripture or Bible prophecy teacher would claim to know the day and time of the Lord's return. Let me say that again. No, legitimate student of Scripture or Bible prophecy teacher would claim to know the day and time of Jesus' return. So, in spite of repeated and invariably discredited dates that have been set, we can't know when the Lord will return. So, whether it's Charles Taze Russell, the founder of the Jehovah's Witnesses, or Sun Myung Moon, the founder of the Unification Church, or Harold Camping who quiet famously has set a number of rapture dates. All of these folks and other violate Jesus' own clear declaration, "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone."

Now many of you will quickly recognize the inherent question that is hinted at by my topic itself. What do I mean by Jesus' coming? Well as Lamb & Lion has maintained for many years, the timing of His literal Second Coming to earth in glory and manifest for the entire world to see can be very accurately known. You see it will occur 2,520 days after the beginning of the Tribulation. And we know the Tribulation itself will be marked by the signing of a peace treaty that allows the Jews to rebuild their temple. Well, during the Tribulation, we know that the Antichrist will break the peace treaty. The world will endure unprecedented death and destruction. And two prominent witnesses will preach in Jerusalem, only to be killed while the entire world celebrates, and their bodies lie in the streets for three days before their resurrection. Many other signs will proceed the Lord's Second Coming to reign in Jerusalem and are clearly foretold in Scripture. But by contrast, no one knows the exact day or hour of the Rapture except the Father in Heaven. But, I will focus my remarks for the remainder of this morning on the stirring that probably occurred in your own heart with this question: What can we know about the timing of the Rapture? In other words: When is Jesus coming for us? His beloved. His Bride. The Church.

Well since the Lord ascended into heaven almost 2,000 years ago, believers have eagerly awaited His return. Many ridicule such faith though we know that secular cynics, and even a number of apostate churches in our day and age, deny the validity of Scripture and the very deity of Christ. They dismiss the Bible as a collection of fairy tales and fables. Some of you are familiar with this man and his well-publicized debate regarding Creation. I put this up there because he was in the news, or at least this debate and issue was in the news recently based on my home state of Kentucky. You see just a couple of weeks ago the Ark Encounter opened in northern Kentucky. I encourage you to come. A life size model of Noah's Ark complete with displays explaining Creation from a biblical perspective. Well, Mr. Nye, Bill Nye the so called Science Guy indeed took up Ken Ham's invitation and visited the Ark Encounter. I'm told that they spent two hours with a running debate and they were being videoed the whole time. So, I look forward to watching that debate.

But other cynics, and doubters pointedly sneer at Jesus' promise to come again. Tragically, even within the church, a growing number of professing Christians are exhibiting a growing

skepticism over accepted tenets of the faith, and the imminent return of Christ. Pointing to an apparent expectation on the part of the disciples and the Apostle Paul himself in the First Century, they scoff at our ability to understand prophecy today. Becoming spiritually blind many of these doubters point to signs in the Old Testament and New that they say have not yet been fulfilled. And they miss all the signs that are multiplying around us today pointing to the Lord's soon return. They would even say, "Well, since even these Spirit-filled men who witnessed Jesus' ministry were 'misguided' in their understanding of the timeframe of His supposed return. How can we possibly hope to have any more discernment?" Ironically, when they voice such doubt, these skeptics fulfill the prophetic words of 2 Peter 3:3-4, "Where is the promise of His coming?"

Well I would note that even as I recited their argument, I voiced the very subtle cynicism that these skeptics express, that the Lord will ever return at all. And, even if they believe that He ascended into Heaven and accept that He will come again maybe someday. They certainly don't think that we can gain any understanding of Scripture regarding the timing of that glorious event. Again, their attitude is if Peter, and John, and Paul got it wrong, how can we possibly be right?

Well first of all, the writers of Scripture did not get it wrong. Given the insight the Holy Spirit provided them they recorded glimpses of Christ's glory to come. And gazing forward in time, they communicated the fact of Jesus' promise to return. The imminence that He would return at any moment. And their own great hope that it would be so soon as to be within their lifetimes. We should humbly recognize that our own understanding benefits from 2,000 years of hindsight. And, we must recognize that those who trust in the Lord are promised insight and discernment as the Day of the Lord draws near. Even the great prophet Daniel was sometimes perplexed by the incredible visions that he was given. But the Lord made it clear that His promises would someday be understood. You'll recollect in Daniel 12 he said, "I heard but I couldn't understand. So I said, 'My Lord, what will be the outcome of these events?' And the Lord said, 'Go your way Daniel for these words are concealed and shut up until the end of time. Those who have insight will understand.'" The insight that we are able to grasp is at the leading and the blessing of the Holy Spirit that dwells in each of us.

Part 2

Dr. Reagan: Let me summarize for you what Tim Moore just said. He began by pointing out that the Bible says no one can know the date of the Lords' return. But then he pointed out that the book of Revelation reveals that the Second Coming of Jesus will occur exactly 2,520 days after the beginning of the Tribulation.

So, he concluded that when the Bible says we cannot know the date of the Lord's return, it must be speaking of when He will come for His Church in the Rapture, and not the Second Coming when He returns to this earth to reign. Tim went on in his presentation to point out that although those of us living before the beginning of the Tribulation cannot know the date of the Lord's return, we can know the season because we are given signs to watch for, and he concluded his presentation by affirming that we are living in the midst of those signs today. And folks, when we begin to see the signs pointing to the Tribulation and the Lord's Second Coming, we can be assured that the Rapture is right around the corner. Let's turn now to the second issue that I raised at the beginning of this program namely, whether or not Jesus is going to return to this earth to reign for a thousand years.

That issue was dealt with by our Associate Evangelist and Web Minister, Nathan Jones, and he did a superb job. The majority viewpoint in Christendom today is called Amillennialism. It is the view that spiritualizes Bible prophecy and concludes that we are living in the Millennium now and that there will be no future reign of Jesus here on this earth. Here now is Nathan affirming that the Bible means what it says when it teaches a future reign of Jesus on this earth.

Nathan Jones' Presentation

Nathan Jones: The Kingdom of Christ. Now I'm going to ask you: What do all these nations and empires have in common? Babel. Egypt. Babylon. The Incan Empire. The Roman Empire. The British Empire. The United States. The European Union. What do all those nations and empires have in common? They're empires, yeah. Wow. Good. I love teaching fresh things. Ok. They have failed. They are absolute total failures, either in the past, or they are failing right now. And why are these governments and nations, and empires failing? It's because of this, they have been unable to fulfill the government's primary role and that is to protect its citizens. They have failed to protect their citizens from lawlessness. From dealing with disasters. From dealing with hunger, providing for their people. From dealing with the diseases that are ravaging the world. They failed because they cannot keep the peace and are always at war. There are 38 wars going on right now as I speak. They haven't put an end to human suffering. Again, and again, and again human government has failed to achieve what its purpose is.

Now in my book, *The 12 Faith Journeys of the Minor Prophets*, which I co-wrote with Pastor Steve Howell we write about the lessons that the Minor Prophets learned when their faith was challenged. They're lessons that I believe are applicable to us today, especially as we go along our own faith journeys. Now, when it came to the Prophet Micah, Micah had to learn how to keep the faith when government had failed. Now, he was lamenting about how failed government, he wailed this passage he said, "The faithful man has perished from the earth, and there is no one upright among men. The prince asks for gifts. The judge seeks a bribe. The great man utters his evil desires, and so they scheme together. So I ask you this: Is there any hope whatsoever that mankind will be freed from the failure that is our flawed human government? Or are we just destined to forever suffer under its weight? Will we ever be free of it?"

Well, God revealed the answer to the prophet Daniel. In Daniel chapter 2 King Nebuchadnezzar was given a vision, this dream and he couldn't interpret it but Daniel was able to interpret it. And the dream basically was this, it was great massive statue with a head of gold, and the gold represented Nebuchadnezzar and his Babylonian Empire. And that would be one day be replaced by the chest of silver, and that was the Medo-Persian Empire and that government would fall, and to rise up would be the Greek Empire which is the belly and thighs of bronze. And eventually that would be replaced by the legs of iron, the two sides and that was the Great Roman Empire. And the Roman Empire wouldn't quite go away but it would dissolve and it would get weak, and be like iron mixed with clay. And so it would be divided into 10 regions, but eventually they would have be strong but also weak. And in this vision he saw something that was even more amazing than that statue and that was this, a rock, a stone not cut out by human hands came crashing out of the sky and it hit the statue and it blew it up. The statue was so blown up that it dissolved into dust and blew away. And the stone not cut by human hands grew, and grew, until it was a mountain that filled the whole earth.

Now, we are told by this that human government will be no more and that it will be replaced by what's called the Kingdom of Christ. That one day human government will end, and it will be

replaced by the Kingdom of Christ. Now, you're probably saying, "Nathan, what is this Kingdom of Christ that you are talking about?" Well I'm going to let Cotton Mather explain it to you. Cotton Mather was a Puritan Pastor in New England late 1600's, early 1700's. And if you want to know why his momma named him Cotton just check out that hairdo there. Now, Cotton explained the Kingdom of Christ as the three-fold Kingdom of Christ with a fourth one yet to come. So the first one was a Spiritual Kingdom, and he described it as this, "Wherein His Word," God's Word, "the Grace Rules over the Consciences of Men." In other words there is a spiritual Kingdom of Christ and it rules over the consciousness of men. There is also the Providential Kingdom wherein Christ's Government is over all the affairs and motions of the World. In other words God is sovereign right? Therefore there is a Providential Kingdom. But the third-fold of Christ's Kingdom is this, an ecclesiastical kingdom, wherein Christ appoints and prospers the ordinances of a Church State. In other words Christ rules through His body, the body of Christ, the Church. And we are folks, that aspect, that fold of the Kingdom. But Cotton said this there is a fourth one yet to come and that is called the Davidic Kingdom and he said, "That belongs unto our Lord Jesus Christ."

So when I talk about the Kingdom of Christ I'm actually talking about all four of those aspects. And I think a lot of confusion comes because people believe in one, or two, or maybe three but they leave out this fourth aspect of the Kingdom of Christ. Matter of fact this kingdom, this Davidic Kingdom is established on God's promise to King David in 2 Samuel 7, "'I will set up your seed after you and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever,' so Nathan spoke to David." Now, God meant in this passage that when you hear a man named Nathan speak, you should listen. And especially if your name is David. No, no, no. Now you get it, ok, good. Ok, so what I want to know is was Jesus talking about a literal kingdom? An actual literal seed? On a literal throne? With a literal kingdom that would last literally forever? Or is the Davidic Kingdom just rolled up in the other three that I just mentioned?

Part 3

Dr. Reagan: At this point in his presentation, Nathan proceeded to present scriptures from both the Old and New Testaments regarding the reality and the nature of the Lord's coming reign upon this earth.

He focused on what the Bible says will be the characteristics of the Lord's kingdom such things as worldwide peace, righteousness and justice. Two of the characteristics of the Lord's reign that he mentioned were the exaltation of the Jewish people and the participation of Church Age Saints in the reign. Let's return to his presentation for those two points.

Nathan Jones' Presentation

Nathan Jones: Another aspect of the Kingdom of Christ is that the Jewish people will be exalted. "I will heal their backsliding. I will love them freely, for my anger is turned away from him, their scent shall be like the wine of Lebanon." Now, do you remember that the Jewish people during the Kingdom of Christ they'll be believers, there won't be unbelievers, the Jewish people will be saved. They'll be healed from their backsliding and they will be a priestly people to the world. The Lord will bless them and in turn the Jewish people will be a blessing to the world.

"Thus says the Lord of host, 'In those days ten men from every language of the nations shall grasp the sleeve of a Jewish man saying, 'Let us go up with you for we have heard that God is

with you." Isn't that cool? The righteous Jewish people during the Kingdom of Christ will be a priestly people connecting the Gentile world to Jesus Christ.

"And at that time I'll bring you back even at the time I gather you, for I will give you fame, and praise amongst the people of the earth. Then I return your captives before your eyes,' says the Lord." Now such a priestly position comes with the esteem of the world and the Jewish people will be honored for their services to God. "Kings shall be your foster fathers, and queens their nursing mothers, they shall bow down to You with their faces to the earth and lick up the dust of your feet, then you will know that I am the Lord." So, even earth's king and queens will show respect to Christ's Jewish priesthood. Ezekiel 38 even tells us that the land promised to Abraham will stretch, not that little sliver they got now, but from the Nile River all the way to the Euphrates River.

Now, I just said kings, right? Who are these kings they're talking about? Folks, it's a time when the saints reign. Daniel 7 says, "But the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever, and ever. And then the kingdom and dominion and the greatness of His Kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High." Who is Daniel talking about here? Us. He's talking about us. We're the saints. We're called the saints. We return with Jesus Christ at the Second Coming. We remain in our glorified bodies, and we will serve God as kings, queens, administrators, teachers, and law enforcement.

Now, how many out there are retired? Don't get comfortable, you're going back to work. But at least you will look more like that, maybe a little older, OK. So there is a benefit there. Now so too will the Tribulation Saints who were killed during the Tribulation. We read in Revelation 20, "And I saw thrones and they sat on them and judgement was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who were beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the Word of God. Who would not worship the Beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads, or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished, this is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he who is part of the first resurrection, over such the second death has no power. For they shall be priests of God and of Christ and shall reign with Him a thousand years." So the Tribulation Saints at the end of the Tribulation they too will be resurrected and they will be in glorified bodies and they will reign with us, the Church, throughout the Kingdom of Christ.

Part 4

Dr. Reagan: After continuing to provide an in-depth survey of the characteristics of the Millennium, Nathan asked, "Do these characteristic exist today?" The obvious answer was, "No!" And that brought him back to his original question.

Nathan Jones' Presentation

Nathan Jones: So, I want to ask you again, is the Kingdom of Christ literal or symbolic? Will there be a literal seed of David? A literal throne of God? A literal Kingdom on this earth that will literally last forever? Literally. It will literally last. There is a way to interpret Bible prophecy. And you heard it there is a golden key. I say it a little differently than Dr. Rhodes, when the plain sense makes sense, look for no other sense, lest you end up with nonsense.

And folks to spiritualize prophecy, to spiritualize the Bible is to say that you know what the Bible means more than God knows what the Bible means. And that has made our churches, our pastors, our preachers, our theologians god. I would even say the Amillennial view is almost blasphemous to do that. But when you take the plain sense meaning of the Bible, don't look for any other sense. Sure there are symbols, and there are literary devices and all, you accept that, you take it for its plain sense. But if you don't you'll be like the Amillennialism and end up with nonsense. So, as I close let me ask you this: Will you be a citizen of the Kingdom of Christ? How does one become a citizen of the Kingdom of Christ? They have given their hearts to Jesus Christ. They have accepted Jesus as their Lord and Savior and have asked for repentance of their sins. They have prayed from their heart, "Dear Jesus, Please forgive me of my sins and be my Lord and Savior." And when you are forgiven. When the punishment of your sins rest upon Jesus Christ, you are guilt free. You can stand before the Father, holy, and pure, forever, and you will be a citizen of the Kingdom of Christ.

Closing

Dr. Reagan: What you have seen of these two presentations in this program is only a small portion of each one. The complete presentations, together with four others are on the conference video album, and in a moment, I will tell you how you can get a copy of that album.

Next week, the Lord willing, I will share with you the presentation made by Ron Rhodes, a prolific Bible prophecy writer and conference speaker. He spoke about the debate about the timing of the Rapture, will it be before, during or after the Tribulation.

Well, folks, that's our program for this week. I hope it has been a blessing to you, and I hope, the Lord willing, that you will be back with us next week when we will share some of Ron Rhodes' presentation with you. 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