

Christ in Prophecy
Q&A 16: Q&A About the Bible

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Opening

Dr. Reagan: How can we be certain that the Bible is the Word of God? For the answer to that question, stay tuned.

Part 1

Dr. Reagan: Greetings in the name of Jesus, our Blessed Hope, and welcome to Christ in Prophecy. I have two staff members on the set with me today. And one is of course the co-host of this program and that is Nathan Jones. All of you who are regular viewers are very familiar with Nathan because he serves as an Associate Evangelist, and he also serves as our Web Minister. Now, the other person who's on the set with us today you may not be so familiar with, he serves also as a part-time Associate Evangelist, and this is Tim Moore. For those of you who are not familiar with Tim he is a retired Air Force Colonel. He currently serves as a pilot, and pilot instructor for UPS. And he is in his 12th year as a member of the Kentucky State Legislature where he is one of the leaders of the Conservative Coalition in the House of Representatives. In his spare time, Tim goes out on weekends and speaks at churches, and conferences in behalf of this ministry. Well, welcome fellas to Lamb & Lion Ministries.

Tim Moore: Thank you.

Dr. Reagan: And, Tim welcome to God's country down here in Texas.

Tim Moore: Well, I am glad to be here regardless of it being in Texas.

Dr. Reagan: Well, folks, today's program is the first in a series where the three of us are going to focus on responding to the most frequently asked questions that we receive, and we are going to break them up into categories. In this program we're going to consider the integrity of the Bible. In programs to follow we'll consider questions about Bible prophecy in general, and then specific topics like the Rapture, the signs of the times, the Tribulation and the Millennium. Okay, guys, let's get started. And the first questions, one that we receive more and more is: How do we know that the Bible is the Word of God? How do we know about the integrity of the Bible? And one of the reasons I think we're getting this question so often is because the closer we get to the coming of Jesus, the more intensely Satan is trying to disprove everything in the Bible. I want to give you an example of what I'm talking about, of what's happening in the popular realm. In January of 2015 "Newsweek Magazine" published a cover story on the Bible. And the subtitle of the cover story was, "So Misunderstood it's a Sin." And he started out by attacking people who believe in the Bible. Look at this, "They wave their Bibles at passersby. They scream their condemnation of homosexuals. They fall on their knees worshipping at the base of granite monuments to the Ten Commandments while demanding prayer in school. They

appeal to God to save America from their political opponents, mostly Democrats. They gather in football stadiums by the thousands to pray for the country's salvation. They are God's frauds. They are cafeteria Christians who pick and choose which Bible verses they heed with less care than they exercise in selecting side orders for lunch. They are joined by religious rationalizers, fundamentalists who unable to find scriptures supporting their biases and beliefs, twist phrases and modify translations to prove they're honoring the Bible's words. No television preacher has ever read the Bible. Neither has any evangelical politician. That's you. Neither has the Pope. Neither have I, and neither have you. At best we've all read a bad translation. A translation, of translations of hand copied, copies of copies, of copies, of copies, of copies, and on and on a hundred times." He goes on for 12 single spaced type written pages, attacking the Bible viciously as I've never seen it attacked before. This is in "Newsweek Magazine." And then he ends after 13 pages of this he ends by saying, "Now, this examination should not be taken as an attack on the Bible, or on Christianity. I'm trying to save the Bible." And then he ends with this statement, "The Bible is a very human book. It is full of flaws, contradictions, and theological disagreements." At most seminaries in America today, the majority they are teaching the students that this book is man's search for God, and therefore it is full of myth, legend and superstition. It is not God's revelation to man. What do you got to say?

Tim Moore: Wow, well that obviously was a fair, and balanced assessment of both the Bible, and those of us who believe in it.

Nathan Jones: Haters got to hate, right?

Tim Moore: Yeah, haters got to hate. Where do you begin? Obviously we believe that the Bible is the inerrant Word of God. It is the revealed--

Dr. Reagan: What does that word inerrant mean?

Tim Moore: Inerrant means that it was delivered through a variety of different authors, but without error. And so any misunderstanding is on our part. But the Word of God as revealed in Scripture is not with error.

Dr. Reagan: And incidentally that is very different from the Koran because the Koran has many, many contradictions in it. And they recognize that as such, and they say, "Any later revelation overrules a previous revelation." We don't have that in the Bible.

Tim Moore: Exactly. No, we do not. And so a lot of folks, and it sounds like that author as well would accuse us of having blind faith in the Bible. And really our faith is based on our ability to trust, and yet verify. There are many verifications of the Word of God being valid and true. We can look at the various promises; that is one of the things about prophecy, it is a demonstration that what God says will happen, has happened, and will continue to happen. And it is a validation of the Word of God itself. I'm just aghast at someone being so closed minded as to why those of us who believe in Scripture believe whole heartedly.

Nathan Jones: Well, that guy has no understanding of the Bible because there is nothing like the Bible. The Bible is not just one book, it is 66 books written by over 40 authors, over 1,500 years. And throughout the book from beginning to end there is unifying theme of God bringing man back to reconciliation with Him.

Tim Moore: Exactly right.

Nathan Jones: It is throughout. And you can't have all these different authors, and all these different people writing a book and have it cohesive over that amount of time. That's why I love 2 Timothy 3:16-17 which says, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. That the man of God may be completely, thoroughly equipped for every good work." There is nothing like the Bible, you can't the Hindu Vedras, as you said the Islamic Koran, the Buddhist writings, whatever they don't have the inspiration of God in them.

Tim Moore: Well, and I'll just contrast obviously being the Web Minister your Word is available on an electronic device, I still go back to the hardcopy being a little old school.

Nathan Jones: Oh, I've got plenty of those too.

Tim Moore: I know you do too, I'm just kidding. I love the fact that Peter writing in 1 Peter chapter 1, and actually referencing Isaiah says, "That since you have an obedience to the truth purified in your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart, for you have been born again, not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is through the living and enduring Word of God." And he quotes Isaiah to say, "For all flesh is like grass, and its glory like a flower or grass, the grass withers, and the flower falls off, but the Word of the Lord endures forever." And we have to trust in that.

Dr. Reagan: Well, how do we know it's the Word God? Now, you alluded to something but you just passed over it very quickly.

Tim Moore: Okay, let's go back.

Dr. Reagan: Let's talk about prophecy.

Tim Moore: Yes, that is where we're going to focus.

Dr. Reagan: Why can we point to prophecy as absolute evidence this is the Word of God?

Tim Moore: Well I'll give you an example of a book I'm sure we've all read, and many of our viewers are familiar with and that is Lee Strobel, "The Case for Christ." He sought out much like the writer of the article as a journalist to disprove the deity of Christ, and really to undermine the claims of Scripture. And what he found as he began to investigate is that all of the evidence pointed to the validity of the case for Christ. That all of the prophecies made; that Jesus would be born in a little town called Bethlehem and specifically Bethlehem that was close to Jerusalem. That He would be born of a virgin, of a young woman who had not been married, or known a man. And all of the other evidence was born out in the life of Christ. It was inconceivable that could have been just happenstance. And so this man who began as a skeptic became a fervent believer based on fulfilled prophecy in the life of Christ, and it is documented elsewhere.

Nathan Jones: And that's Jesus Christ. Three-hundred general prophecies, 109 specific prophecies about Jesus Christ. We talk about Peter Stoner all the time he was a mathematician.

Tim Moore: Yes.

Nathan Jones: He said, don't just take the 109 just let's do 8, and he calculated the chances of 8 being fulfilled in the life of one man is 1 in 10 to the 17th power. I mean the Bible is, whether it is in paper, or electronic is the only book that has fulfilled prophecy. And that is just about the

Messiah. There's thousands of other prophecies concerning the return of Jesus Christ, Jerusalem, the Millennial Kingdom. And even in our day and age the signs of the times which we speak about frequently are all being fulfilled. No other book out there, religious book has fulfilled Bible prophecy.

Dr. Reagan: What about his argument about copies, of copies, of copies, of copies, of copies, and therefore it is full of all kinds of typos and so forth?

Nathan Jones: Nobody doubts that Homer wrote, *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*. But *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey* are the only ancient books that have the most copies. Matter of fact if you look at *The Iliad* 643 copies but they were written, the closes we can get is 500 years after Homer. *The Odyssey* 1,500 years is the closes copy. Now, the Bible, 120 AD, only 30-40 years after John finished Revelation. There's 2,400 copies of the New Testament dating from the First and Second Century. We have the Dead Sea Scrolls. Now, this is where this guy really got it wrong because the Dead Sea Scrolls which were written about 200-100 BC we can look at the Dead Sea Scrolls today, which are like Isaiah and all the other books of the Bible except for two, and we can see that the versions we have today are direct translations of the Hebrew from that time period.

Dr. Reagan: If anybody knows how those scribes worked.

Tim Moore: Exactly.

Dr. Reagan: They were so careful that they counted the letters all the way down, and letters all the way across and had all kinds of ways of checking to make sure for typos.

Nathan Jones: And if they messed it up they threw it out, right?

Dr. Reagan: That's right.

Tim Moore: And to this day that continues. People who come with us to Israel, we go to Masada. And at Masada there is a man, a scribe, who sits in a room there in that ancient fortress transcribing the Scripture, the ancient Scriptures and he is so painstaking that if he makes an error, just like Nathan said, he reverently destroys the errant copy. And so--

Dr. Reagan: Because they are dealing with what they consider to be the Word of God.

Tim Moore: It is the Word of God.

Dr. Reagan: That's right.

Tim Moore: And that is the tradition that was so painstaking that they prevented any kind of error from being introduced and carried through into future copies.

Nathan Jones: Tim, I like that you brought up Masada, because Masada is one giant archeological excavation. And that is another argument for Bible prophecy. You can read through the Bible, Old Testament and New and every time you go to Israel and dig up a spade of dirt, you're pulling up proofs that the stories in it. Now you can read the Book of Mormon and there is no proofs for the battles he was talking about and all that.

Dr. Reagan: Or the cities.

Nathan Jones: Or the cities.

Tim Moore: The greatest archeologists to this day use the Bible as their manual for where to go start digging. And they have been able to find things based on just reading the Word of God, and knowing where all these things truly occur.

Dr. Reagan: Well, I'm constantly amused at archeologists because the vast majority of archeologists in the world are Atheists and Agnostics. And a lot of them focus on Bible archeology because they want to prove the Bible wrong. And every time they turn over a spade of dirt they find that the Bible is correct.

Tim Moore: Exactly.

Dr. Reagan: It's amazing, they can find some little piece of information on a papyrus in Egypt and they'll take it as yeah that's true. But they won't take the Bible as any truth whatsoever. And yet when you turn over there and you read. For example this morning in my private readings I was reading about the number of people who came back from Babylonian captivity, it even had their names. Now, you don't find this kind of stuff in--

Nathan Jones: Yeah, super detailed. I think the greatest argument is changed lives.

Tim Moore: Here, here.

Nathan Jones: Think of the people that we have known through life. I have friends who are Christians now that tell you what they were BC, before Christ, and you're like: You were that person? And they can't believe it either. The Bible changes people's lives. Not in the dozens, or the thousands, but the millions of people.

Dr. Reagan: Like the man who was the featured singer on our television program, Jack Hollingsworth for so many years. Lived on the streets 20 years, homeless in an alcoholic daze found the Lord, and was immediately delivered of alcoholism and became an evangelist.

Tim Moore: Well, we don't have to look even further than right here. Short of the Scripture and the Word of God indwelling in my life, I know that I would be an absolute reprobate. All of us would.

Dr. Reagan: I certainly would be.

Tim Moore: So, it is living proof. We are living testimonies of the validity.

Dr. Reagan: Okay, well we're going to come back after a break and we're going to talk about this question that we get all the time: Is it really necessary to study the Old Testament?

Part 2

Dr. Reagan: Welcome back to Christ in Prophecy and our discussion concerning the Bible, and questions that we've received about the Bible. We'll fellas lets jump right into fast.

Tim Moore: Great.

Dr. Reagan: One question we often receive is about the Old Testament. They usually run like this: Is it really necessary to study the Old Testament? After all wasn't it just given to the Jews? And wasn't it replaced by the New Testament? Should we as Christians focus on the New Testament?

Tim Moore: Well, I think that many of us came to faith understanding the message of the Gospel. But it is built on the foundation of the Old Testament. So, many of the analogies and many of the beautiful illustrations are not understandable unless you understand the foundation. The Old Testament really informs a believer in Jesus Christ because it is the foundation that He pointed to repeatedly. Over and over again Jesus referenced the Old Testament, as did the other writers of the New Testament.

Dr. Reagan: He sure did.

Nathan Jones: I think it depends on what church background you come from. If you come from a church that is say Covenant Theology, in other words they divide all of history in two; you've got the Old Testament and the New. We are in the New therefore get rid of the Old. But if you've like me and I like Dispensationalism it is eight different time periods where God reveals a little more about Himself until we are back to that Garden of Eden scenario again. Well, you don't just in a progressive revelation skip to this time, you have to see how did man fall to begin with? What was our state? And how did God slowly reveal Himself more and more? It also answers too should we be following the Mosaic Law? If we are supposed to be following the whole Bible? Well, no, because we've got the new. And we know that this age is going to end because it's going to have the Millennial Kingdom, and then the Eternal State. And then we are back with the Father again having intimate relations, so to speak, spiritually obviously with the Heavenly Father; we walk, and talk, and have fellowship with God again. So, you can't get rid of the other parts, and fully know God's plan unless you read the Old Testament.

Tim Moore: Well, Jesus Himself said He did not come to replace the Law, but to fulfill the Law. So, if we don't understand what the Law was, and what the prophecies pointing to Him were, then that statement has no relevance. And so, we have to delve into the Old Testament, again, to expand our awareness, and our understanding of even the truths that He and the writers revealed.

Dr. Reagan: Well, I would be so bold to say pointblank you cannot even understand the New Testament unless you know the Old Testament.

Nathan Jones: Yeah.

Tim Moore: I agree.

Dr. Reagan: You just can't understand it.

Nathan Jones: How did when Jesus said I am the sign of Jonah basically, how would you know unless you read Jonah?

Dr. Reagan: Or over in Hebrews where he says that Jesus is the high priest of our confession. What does that mean, high priest?

Tim Moore: What does that mean?

Nathan Jones: Yeah, what is a high priest? Or that He is the ultimate sacrifice. He's the Lamb of God.

Dr. Reagan: Or he talks about the sacrifice in Hebrews of bulls, and goats, and so forth not covering the sins. Well, how do you know what that is talking about unless you know something

about the Old Testament? The book of Revelation has over 350 allusions to the Old Testament, and not a single one is identified; not one time does it say, "As it says in Jeremiah."

Tim Moore: Right.

Dr. Reagan: But you go to the book of Matthew which was written to the Jews and every other sentence it seems like it is saying, "As Jeremiah said." "As Isaiah said."

Nathan Jones: Wasn't Peter's speech at Pentecost in Acts 2 one giant reiteration of the Old Testament?

Tim Moore: It was.

Dr. Reagan: Just one prophecy after another, and saying Jesus fulfilled them.

Tim Moore: Demonstrating the validity again of Jesus claim as Messiah based on the fulfillment of those Old Testament prophecies. Over and over again Paul and other writers talked about the first Adam and Jesus being the fulfillment as the final Adam. I mean none of these things make sense unless you understand the Old Testament.

Dr. Reagan: Okay, well that brings us to another question that people ask about the Old Testament: Should we believe the book of Genesis the first chapter about Creation, when the scientist have proved that the universe is 100's of billions of years old?

Tim Moore: Oh, I would state that they have not proven that to me by any stretch of the imagination. No, I don't have enough faith to believe in their theories. Yes, absolutely the first three chapters of Genesis really establish again the foundation that point to the end of the Bible because Jesus is the Creator, a theme we are going to be touching on in our upcoming edition of the "Lamplighter" is the same person of God who is evident throughout Scripture and who will come to reign as King of kings. So, if you don't believe in the very beginning of Scripture you're probably not going to have much acceptance of the end of time as revealed in Revelation.

Dr. Reagan: How about it?

Nathan Jones: I think the question is yes, of course. I mean it is the very foundation. It establishes the fact that we are who we are. And to get back to your other question should we look at the Old Testament, well doesn't Hebrews and Peter and all refer back to the time that the scoffers at the end time would scoff at the fact that there was a Flood, they would scoff at the fact there is Genesis.

Dr. Reagan: Oh, yes. A fulfillment of prophecy.

Nathan Jones: Fulfilled prophecy. That is all we hear is evolutionist scoff at Creation and scoff at the Flood. The Bible knew back then that people would be scoffing about it today. They took it as fact.

Dr. Reagan: Well, you know people didn't have any trouble with that until the end of the 19th Century, the late 1800's early 1900's, and suddenly it seemed like Christian leaders were just overwhelmed by the theories of science, the theories not the proof, but the theories. And so they came up with the Gap Theory. They said, "Well, okay the way we can conform the Bible to what science says is that God had an original creation, and they had this pre-Adamic civilization and they all died off, and all the animals died off and Satan corrupted the whole thing. And then

that's the fossil record. And then we had to start all over again. And we do believe that recreated in six days. But and you know it is giving up the Bible to the theories of science.

Tim Moore: Yeah, they contort the Word of God to fit the current popular theory and that's all it is.

Dr. Reagan: Well, my point too is if you can't believe what God says in the very first chapter about Creation, why should you believe what the Bible says about the resurrection?

Tim Moore: Exactly.

Dr. Reagan: Why should you believe what the Bible says about the Second Coming of Jesus?

Tim Moore: Well, here again Jesus Himself cited the Creation and pointed back to those first chapters as true history, not as just some kind of myth or allegory. And in the first few chapters the Bible explains why man is fallen. Why man is corrupt and without hope, save for the grace of course.

Dr. Reagan: It even contains the promise in Genesis 3:15 that one day God will redeem it all.

Tim Moore: Yes it does.

Nathan Jones: I had a Catholic priest actually once tell me that we cannot believe the Bible as inerrant because there is two renditions of the Creation account in Genesis 1 and 2. I was like, well, no Genesis 2 just fills in more details about mankind. It isn't a totally separate rendition. But this is what the ministers, the priests are teaching.

Dr. Reagan: Well, let's jump to a different topic here. People are always asking: Why is a scary book like Revelation in the Bible?

Tim Moore: Well, is it scary? It's not scary if you are a Believer.

Dr. Reagan: No, it is filled with wonderful promises.

Tim Moore: Exactly right, it is a book of promise and of assurance that in the end it all works out to the glory of God, and to the deliverance of those who believe in Him. So, not a scary book if you are a Believer. I think that people misunderstand when they claim that this is a revelation of John. Why would John put this in there? But the very opening verse of Revelation declares that this is a revelation of Jesus Christ.

Dr. Reagan: Amen.

Tim Moore: And He determined that it was worth revealing His plan and the end of time to those who have faith in Him.

Nathan Jones: Well, I mean absolutely right. And you go just two more verses to 1:3, Revelation 1:3 it's the only book in the Bible that offers a blessing if you read it. "Blessed is he who reads, and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keeps those things which are written in it for the time is near." You read the book of Revelation you will get a blessing.

Tim Moore: Exactly so.

Dr. Reagan: Well, we have several questions here concerning the Bible. And I'm going to jump to one of the ones that I have at the end because I want to make sure we get it in here. One of

the most commonly asked questions: What is the best version of the Bible? Which version should I use?

Nathan Jones: Oh, we get that a lot, yes.

Tim Moore: What do you think, Nathan?

Dr. Reagan: We are going to let you go first.

Tim Moore: Electronic or whichever one you are going to use.

Nathan Jones: It's the Hebrew and Greek. But none of us can read Hebrew and Greek. I used to have this professor who sat in our Bible study and he read from a Greek Bible. He had the right Bible. Folks, you know if the King James works for you, great. If the NIV, which I used for years work for you. I use now the New King James. Dave, I know you use the NASB. Tim?

Tim Moore: I use the NASB or the ESV, but I would say whatever Bible you will read.

Dr. Reagan: That was what Billy Graham always said.

Tim Moore: Because if you will read it you will be blessed.

Dr. Reagan: Whatever Bible you'll read, read it!

Tim Moore: Exactly, don't get caught up. I do think that there are some that are more accurate to the ancient text. But, as Nathan said very few of us can read in the original Hebrew, or the Latin Vulgate, or the Greek Septuagint. So, pick one and read it. And then you will be hungering for more, and maybe you try a different version.

Dr. Reagan: I look forward to every new version that comes out because even though I may not agree with it, it may be too liberal in its interpretation and all, I learn things from it. I get insights that I hadn't had before. In fact when I was growing up the only Bible we had, I'm this old, the only Bible we had was the King James. And to me it was like reading Shakespeare, as a kid I just couldn't get excited about it. And when I was a freshman in college in 1956 my parents sent me a Bible for Christmas and it was the J.B. Phillips paraphrase of the New Testament. I started reading that I could not put it down; I read it all the way through. And then the paraphrase that came out later on by Tyndale Press, the Living Bible I loved it. Paraphrases are not for serious study, not at all. But, they are wonderful for helping you to better understand some things. In fact when we had Charles Ryrie on this program he produced the *Ryrie Study Bible*. He highly recommended paraphrases for people, particularly who are just starting out to read the Bible, and particularly for the Old Testament that they get a feel of it before they get into a serious study with a Bible like the New King James, or the King James, or the New American Standard. But folks, you know just get a Bible and read it.

Tim Moore: Exactly so.

Dr. Reagan: Okay, well let's go to another question and that is: What in the world is the Apocrypha? And why is in the Catholic Bibles but not in Protestant Bibles?

Tim Moore: Well, that is a good question. And many Protestants are mystified as to these books that are included, again as you said in the Catholic version. There were books that were produced after the early years of the Church, that were found to be not as valid in their source, or in their doctrine, and that really became the Apocrypha. There are actually apocryphal books

from the Old Testament, some of them are referenced. But I would point out that for the Apocrypha that is included in some versions of, again, Catholic Bibles, none of those books is ever referenced by any of the writers of the New Testament as we have.

Dr. Reagan: That's right. Nor were they ever recognized as Canon or Scripture by the Jews themselves.

Tim Moore: No.

Nathan Jones: And you can tell when you read the Apocrypha. I read the Apocrypha it is six books: Tobit, Judith, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, and 1 & 2 Maccabees.

Dr. Reagan: It's like reading fairy tales.

Nathan Jones: Yes, it is. They added Bel, they added a dragon to the story of Daniel. Clearly the early Church Fathers knew that these books were not inspired by God. But they provided good history, and they left--especially 1 & 2 Maccabees they left them in so we get the history part for it.

Dr. Reagan: Okay, very quickly, what about the book of Ecclesiastes? I mean come on this reads like it is written by a carnal man. What's going on here?

Tim Moore: Well, I think Ecclesiastes is a demonstration to me that the Bible is faithful. How many times do we see in Scripture evidence of some of the heroes of the faith who are fallen? David himself. If we were writing a book and wanted to create a hero figure we wouldn't include anything that was negative about that person in their life, their biography. But the Bible is honest. Ecclesiastes is clearly written by a person who is honest in testifying to how they thought in a wrong manner. But they come back at the end of the book.

Dr. Reagan: At the end, yes.

Tim Moore: Yes, and we think this was Solomon that wrote it. But at the end of the book Solomon writes this: "The conclusion when all has been heard is; fear God and keep His commandments because this applies to every person, for God will bring every act of judgment, everything which it is hidden whether it is good or evil." How many of us could testify over the scope of our lives at time we were misguided in our living out of truth, but we came to a realization. I think it is a beautiful footnote to a book of honesty.

Dr. Reagan: Well, it certainly is. And I praise God for the book because again it shows the fact that this man tried everything in the world to fill the vacuum in his heart, and it didn't work.

Tim Moore: Yes, the God shaped vacuum.

Closing

Dr. Reagan: Well, fellas, I want to thank you for your help today in answering these questions. Next week we're going to take a look at Bible prophecy in particular. Well, folks, that is our program for today. I hope it's been a blessing to you, and I hope you'll be back with us next week when we focus on these questions related to Bible prophecy. Until then this is Dave Reagan speaking for Lamb & Lion Ministries saying, "Look up, be watchful for our redemption is drawing near."