



Part 3: Hoping Still...  
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**Biblical prophets all told a similar story:**  
they challenged people to return to God

### **Prophecies can be...**

Forth-telling (declaring what was wrong and how God wanted it made right)

Foretelling (revealing future events)

### **How can we know if an Old Testament prophecy is a foretelling?**

Jesus or the apostles confirm it

### **A Foretelling of Hope: Isaiah 9:6-7**

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.

### **This foretelling is confirmed in Luke 1:26-33**

God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."

Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end."

- A son has been given
- Son of Most High—that is, God's Son
- He has the throne of David
- His kingdom will never end

This gives us joy, but we also carry the weight of hope because the prophecy isn't done yet.

Jesus gave us a reminder of this hope: Holy Communion. He even proclaimed that he too was waiting—until he would return again.

“I tell you, I will not drink from this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.” – Matthew 26:29

### **Next Steps**

Though Christmas is all about the hope of a Savior, not everyone experiences that assurance during the holiday season. That’s why it’s so important for those of us who know Jesus to spread his hope by including others in the Christmas traditions we enjoy. Ask God who he wants you to invite to the Christmas concert or Christmas Eve, and make those invitations in person. Pick up free printed invitations or purchase chocolate bar invitations for \$2 each in the Commons.

### **Small Group Questions**

- 1) What’s one of your favorite childhood Christmas memories? Tell us about it.
- 2) Hope has been described as expectation, desire, or longing. Do you still have that type of anticipation for Christmas? Why or why not?
- 3) Read Isaiah 9:6-7. Try to imagine what it would be like not knowing who Jesus is. With that in mind, what do these verses invoke in you?
- 4) Read Luke 2:1-21. Imagine the wonder. What stuck out to you about these verses for you?
- 5) Jesus came as light for all mankind. This Christmas we have an opportunity to share the love of Christ with others. Who have you invited to our Christmas Eve services?
- 6) Pray for each other and for the people that group members have invited to Christmas Eve.