

Glimpses of the Future - Part 2

by Derek Prince

The sermon discusses the return of Israel to their land, the warning of tribulation, and the importance of knowing prophecy, highlighting the significance of the 144,000 sealed and God's sealing of His people.

Duration: 28:24

Scripture: Jeremiah 30:3, Matthew 24:21, Revelation 7:14, Revelation 14:1, Revelation 14:6-10

Topics: "Biblical Prophecy", "End Times"

Description

This sermon delves into the prophecies of Jeremiah, Matthew, and Revelation, focusing on the return of the Jewish people to Israel, the unique period of tribulation known as Jacob's trouble, and the significance of the 144,000 sealed servants of God. It emphasizes the importance of understanding biblical prophecy, the role of the Jewish people in God's plan, and the distinction between the true Messiah and the false Messiah in the end times.

Transcript

Music Music Music Music Music So this is what the message is from Jeremiah chapter 30, beginning at verse 3. For behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, that I will bring back from captivity... or from exile, my people Israel and Judah, says the Lord. And I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers... and they shall possess it. As I pointed out earlier, there's only one land that answers to that description.

The land of Israel. God says at the close of the age He will cause the Jewish people... to return to that land and they shall possess it. No matter what Yasser Arafat may say, or the United Nations, or the American administration.

The bottom line is, they shall possess it. God is right and the rest are wrong if they disagree. All right, now having introduced the scene, the return of the Jewish people to their land... after nineteen centuries of exile, God gives a warning of what's going to happen.

Now these are the words that the Lord spoke concerning Israel and Judah. For thus says the Lord, we have heard a voice of trembling, of fear and not of peace. In other words, the return of Israel is not going to be followed by immediate peace.

Exactly the opposite. Now Israel has been a nation for forty-how many years? Forty-four, forty-five years. They haven't known one month of peace.

So you have to admit, the Bible is accurate. Ask now and see whether a male is ever in labor with child. So why do I see every male with his hands on his loins like a woman in labor... and all faces turned pale? The Lord says something is going to develop so frightening and terrifying... that even men will lose all their color and behave like women in childbirth.

And then it goes on, alas, for that day is great so that none is like it. It's a unique period in the history of Israel. There never has been a period like it, there never will be.

And then it says, it is the time of Jacob's trouble, or Jacob's tribulation. But don't miss out the last line. But he, Jacob, shall be saved out of it.

Not from it, but out of it. So there is a very clear prediction of a unique period of tribulation and anguish... awaiting the Jewish people after their return to their land. Some of you are not looking as happy as you were.

Now I want to turn to the greatest of all the Hebrew prophets, whose name is Yeshua. And bear in mind, Jesus was not merely a teacher, not merely the shepherd, not merely the Savior, He was also a prophet. The greatest of all the prophets.

In Matthew 24, which is His last prophetic discourse given from the Mount of Olives, Jesus outlines a series of events that will take place. The key word in understanding this chapter is the word then, which occurs nine times. There was a great Jewish believer of a previous generation named Meyer Perlman, who was a student of prophecy.

And basically, most Jews have a clearer insight into prophecy than most Gentiles, unless God has helped them. And he said if you want to study prophecy, it's like putting a body together out of the bones. And if you want to succeed, you've got to start with the right part of the body, which is the spine.

Don't start with the left toe, because it doesn't give you any clue about where the rest is to go. But if you start with the spine, basically all the other members fit in one way or another to the spine. Then he said the spine of biblical prophecy is Matthew 24.

That has been an invaluable help to me over many, many years. If you want to approach prophecy, start with the spine. Get to know thoroughly what Jesus taught in Matthew 24, which is paralleled in Luke 21 and in Mark 13.

There are three versions of the same discourse. So, we're going to go now to Matthew 24, and the Scripture that I've quoted several times already, verse 14, is the answer of Jesus to what will be the sign of your coming. It says, This gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.

Now, that's a very broad perspective. The gospel of the kingdom to all nations in all the world. But in verse 15 there's a total change of focus, dramatic.

And it parallels exactly Romans 11, 25 and 26, which says when the full number of the Gentiles has come in, then all Israel will be saved. So Matthew 24, 14 focuses on all the Gentiles, the coming in of the full

number. Matthew 24, 15 changes the focus totally to a tiny little strip of territory at the east end of the Mediterranean and to one city, Jerusalem.

That exactly parallels the transition from Romans 11, 25 through 26. First of all, the whole world, all the nations, and then God's final focus is on the land of Israel. Now I'll read the words and then comment on them.

Therefore, when you see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet standing in the holy place, whoever reads let him understand. In other words, it could be politically dangerous if the identity of the person was given. It could lead to persecution of Christians, which is not necessary.

Now I will give you my frank opinion. The holy place is the temple area. It's the one place on earth which was specifically sanctified and set apart by God for His dwelling place and His glory.

The abomination of desolation, I believe, is some particular sign and it could be various things, that the antichrist has now taken over and declared himself to be God and requires total submission and worship from everybody. And this is going to pose Orthodox Jews with the worst crisis that they've ever faced. Because one reason they have rejected Jesus is they say, Jesus is just a man, not God, and we worship only God.

Now they're going to be confronted by a man who says he is God and if you don't worship me, I'll put you to death. I believe personally God has ordained this situation because the Orthodox Jews have to be confronted with the issue. Now Jesus says, and here we get one of our thens in verse 16, Let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.

He doesn't say the West Bank, notice He says Judea. But you understand the focus is now on Jerusalem and the little strip of territory called Judea. And then He talks with tremendous urgency.

Let him who is on the housetop not come down to take anything out of his house. You know in that part of the world the houses have flat roofs and very often there's an outside staircase leading up to the roof. And Jesus says if you're on the roof, come down the outside staircase and take off.

Don't go back inside the house, you don't have time. And then He says let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes. Again, tremendous urgency.

You don't have time to go back and get your main items of clothing. Take off. I mean, there's no way that Jesus could make it more dramatic and more urgent.

But woe to those who are pregnant and to those with nursing babies in those days for obvious reasons. A pregnant woman or a woman with a nursing baby is going to find it difficult to go through this flight. And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath.

Now that is a very vivid example of the importance of knowing prophecy. Because if you were confronted by that situation, you would naturally pray, God, don't make us flee. But Jesus says you don't have that option.

You're going to have to flee. But you can pray that you won't have to flee in winter or on the Sabbath day. See, this is a little specimen of how important it is to know prophecy.

Because many, many times people are praying for things that are outside the revealed will of God. Now why was it important that it didn't happen on the Sabbath day? This is interesting too, because I lived in that country when it was still under the British mandate for four years. And it wouldn't have mattered the least bit if people had had to flee on the Sabbath.

But since the state of Israel came into being, the Sabbath is treated as a totally distinct day. And there is a very strong move to prevent most forms of public transportation on the Sabbath. In fact, it's already there.

So people trying to flee on the Sabbath would have special difficulties and would be particularly conspicuous. So Jesus says, Pray that that won't be your problem. But He doesn't say pray that you won't have to flee.

He says you're going to have to flee just as quickly as you can. See how important it is for the people that are going to be there at that time to know prophecy. I'm not saying any of you will be there, but who knows? Then He goes on to verse 21.

Then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. Again Jesus says there will be a period of unique tribulation without any precedent beforehand and without anything that will ever parallel it in the future. And it is directly connected with events in the state of Israel and in the area of Jerusalem.

And then He goes on to say, Unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved. Humanity would perish. Now a scientist that I know was talking to me some time ago and he said there is enough material for nuclear explosion on earth at this time to kill the entire human race 250 times over.

People used to laugh and make fun of that statement that no flesh could survive. Today it's a threatening reality. No, I'm not saying that it will be a nuclear war.

I'm just saying that is a scientific fact. But for the elect's sake, those days will be shortened. For the sake of those whom God has chosen.

And you really will not fully understand biblical prophecy concerning the end of the age unless you grasp the fact that God as is elect. People don't like it, but it doesn't change God. He has it.

The humanists object strongly that God didn't consult them. And you'll find the word elect is used twice in this chapter. In a certain sense, God's primary concern in the midst of all this is with those whom He has chosen for Himself.

You see, most contemporary Christians have got it all wrong. They say, I chose Jesus. You didn't.

Jesus chose you. Jesus said to His disciples, You did not choose me. I chose you.

We're like the people who believe that the sun revolved around the earth. We think we're the earth and everything revolves around us. That's not so.

Everything revolves around the sun who is Jesus. And we have to take our place in that relationship. All right.

But what I'm pointing out to you is there's going to be a time of trouble that is without parallel in the history of humanity, never has been up till now, and never will be repeated. Now in Romans chapter 2 and verse

8 and 9, Paul gives one of the principles of God's judgment. He says in the middle of the sentence, But to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth but obey unrighteousness, God has appointed indignation and wrath.

That's God's reaction. Tribulation and anguish, that's the result of God's reaction. Tribulation and anguish.

Two of the strongest words in the Greek language. On every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek or the Gentile. So there is an order of tribulation.

Tribulation begins with the Jew and moves over to the Gentile. That should frighten us Gentiles. Because if you think of what happened in the Holocaust, it gives an awful picture of what's going to happen to the Gentile nations.

I'm inclined to think the situation that's developing in Eastern Europe and Russia will be the outworking of that principle. Because those were the areas that most harbored anti-Semitism. And I believe they're coming under the judging hand of God.

Anyhow, this is the picture. Now, going on into Revelation chapter 7, we have a further Scripture which I think must refer to the same period. Revelation chapter 7, verses 13 and 14.

John had a vision of a tremendous company of people coming up before the throne of God with palms in their hands and crying salvation and glory to the Lamb. Then it says in verse 15, One of the elders answered, saying to me, Who are these arrayed in white robes and where did they come from? And John gave a very wise answer. He said, Sir, you know.

So he said to me, These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. There again is the great tribulation. The old King James Version used to say great tribulation.

But the more accurate text is the great tribulation. So we trace something from Jeremiah 30 through Matthew 24 to Revelation 7. And though it begins with the Jews, its ultimate impact will be on all nations. All right, now then.

Our next glimpse is entitled, 144,000 Sealed. We go on or back in Revelation to chapter 7, verses 1 through 8. Now, the exact relationship of this to what I've been describing is not clear. They may be simultaneous or one may slightly precede the other.

But in Revelation chapter 7, verse 1, John says, After these I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth or on the sea or any tree. Four angels were holding back the judgment of God for a brief period. Then I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God.

And he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea, saying, Do not harm the earth, the sea or the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads. In other words, there must be a special company of sealed servants of God before this tribulation finally explodes. John says, I heard the number of those who were sealed, 144,000 of all the tribes of the children of Israel.

And then he lists twelve tribes and there were 12,000 out of every tribe. One tribe is missing. You know that? How many of you know which tribe is missing? Dan, that's right.

Why? You could speculate, but I'm not going to offer any theory. Now you know what I believe? I believe there will not be 143,999, and there will not be 144,001, there will be 144,000. I believe God is exact.

If you study the things which God plans, they are planned with the utmost exactitude. In the tabernacle and in the temple of Solomon, every dimension was exactly specified and nothing was left to human decision. I believe that's the God that controls history.

So we have these 144,000 Israelites sealed. And then we have what we've already just glimpsed at in Revelation 7, verse 9 and following. After these things I looked, and behold a great multitude which no one could number of all nations, tribes, peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hand.

Now I'll offer you a suggestion. Because of the order in which these events are described, I believe myself that God is going to save 144,000 young Jewish men and He's going to send them to all the nations of the earth and the fruit of their ministry will be a multitude which no man can number. That's my interpretation.

Because you see, I believe it's God's plan always to bless the Gentiles through the Jews. Did you ever hear that little saying which was given by a Jewish believer of a previous age? God has two principles of judgment. He blesses the Gentiles through the Jews but He judges the Jews through the Gentiles.

If you look at history that's happened again and again and again. Now, let's go on to Revelation 14 which is the climax of the 144,000. John says, beginning at verse 1 of Revelation 14, Then I looked and behold the Lamb standing on Mount Zion and with Him 144,000 having His Father's name and His name written on their foreheads.

Undoubtedly that must be the 144,000 who were sealed on their foreheads. And the seal was the name of God the Father and the name of Jesus the Messiah. It's interesting because one of the themes of Revelation is people getting sealed.

And there are two sources. One is the true Messiah, the other is the false Messiah. Those who are the servants of the true Messiah are sealed on their foreheads with the name of the Father and the Son.

Those who submit to the false Messiah are sealed either on their forehead or on their hand with His name or His number. And His number, you all know, everybody knows this, is 666. Let me mention something in passing which is interesting.

Both Greek and Hebrew, the letters of the alphabet have numerical value. So you can write any number in letters. So, I thought to myself, if the false Messiah in Greek has the number 666, what about the true Messiah? So I took the name Jesus in Greek, wrote it vertically, wrote the numerical number of each letter opposite, added it up.

You know what it came to? 888. Now that kind of convinces me I'm on the right track because that would be an amazing coincidence if it weren't planned by God. Now what I want to point out here is God will only seal His people on their foreheads.

He requires a willing, understanding submission. But the antichrist will seal them either on their forehead or on their hand. In other words, whether they're willing and understanding or not, as long as they obey, that's all He wants.

God requires intelligent cooperation and submission. All right. Now then, let's go on.

Well, we haven't read the whole of Revelation 14. Let's go on. I'm going on to the next verse.

I heard a voice from heaven like the voice of many waters, and like the voice of loud thunder. And I heard the sound of harpists playing their harps. I love the old King James, if you remember it.

It said, I heard the sound of harpists harping with their harp. And there's something about repeating that three times that makes an impact. And they sang, as it were, a new song before the throne, before the four living creatures and the elders.

And no one could learn that song except the 144,000 who were redeemed from the earth. As I understand it, at this point they have completed their earthly task and they are in heaven before the throne. And I believe they got there through martyrdom.

I believe every one of them laid down their lives. This is my opinion. Now it says of these, These are those who are not defiled with women, for they are virgins.

These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from among men, being firstfruits to God and the Lamb, and in their mouth was found no falsehood. Now, the picture that this gives me is a group of young men, probably teenagers, maybe between the ages of 15 and 18.

Because it says they had not been defiled with women. They had kept themselves pure. Also, they were totally honest.

There was no lie in their mouth. But let me tell you, you'd have to search a long while in Israel today to find 144,000 that answered that description. You see, more and more the Holy Spirit is singling out young people for the work of evangelism.

In China most of the effective evangelists are well under the age of 20. And they say 25,000 Chinese are being saved every day. I'm glad I have a little part in that, because I think it's worthwhile.

But I see a picture of young Jewish boys or men, sovereignly chosen by God, set apart to the task which the whole Jewish nation should have been engaged on, proclaiming the good news of Messiah. So it blesses me. Now, after this John says, I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth, saying with a loud voice, Fear God and give glory to Him.

Then it says another angel followed saying, Babylon has fallen. Then a third angel followed them saying with a loud voice, If anyone worships the beast and his image and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand, he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, etc. And then there's a warning of the judgment that will come on all those who worship the beast.

The End

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