

Glimpses of the Future - Part 3

by Derek Prince

Derek Prince explores prophetic glimpses of the future concerning Israel, emphasizing God's judgment, mercy, and the role of young believers in evangelism.

Duration: 28:14

Scripture: Isaiah 63:1-6, Ezekiel 20:32-38, Hosea 2:14-16, Revelation 14:1-11, Revelation 14:14-20

Topics: "Eschatology", "Evangelism"

Description

This sermon delves into various prophetic glimpses from the book of Revelation and other biblical passages, highlighting the significance of young people in evangelism, the role of angels in proclaiming the gospel, the final harvests of earth, the judgment on the wicked, and the preservation of Israel in the wilderness. It emphasizes the importance of obedience to Jesus' commands, the protection of God's chosen remnant, and the ultimate restoration of Israel into a covenant relationship with God.

Transcript

Now the picture that this gives me is a group of young men, probably teenagers, maybe between the ages of fifteen and eighteen. Because it says they had not been defiled with women. They had kept themselves pure.

Also they were totally honest. There was no lying them up. 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 twenty. And they say 25,000 Chinese are being saved every day.

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 another angel followed, saying, Babylon is 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.

Now what impresses me is at this point the proclamation of the gospel is committed to angels, which never has been previously. My suggestion is the situation on earth has become so totally out of order and confused that no longer is it possible for human beings to preach. So angels are given the job just temporarily.

This is an opinion. Now we come to the two last harvests of earth. In Revelation 14, verse 14, I looked and beheld a white cloud, and on the cloud sat one like the Son of Man, having on his head a golden crown and in his hand a sharp sickle.

And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him and sat on the cloud. Thrust in your sickle and reap, for the time has come for you to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe, but the Greek says is dry. In other words, if it's not reaped it will be lost.

So he sat on the cloud, thrust in his sickle on the earth and the earth was reaped. As I understand it, this is the last great harvest of mercy, the harvest of salvation. Then which is true to the order in the land of Israel, the grain is followed by the grapes.

And the final judgment is described here. Then another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. And another angel came out from the altar who had power over the fire.

He cried with a loud cry to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe. God doesn't reap until things are ripe. So the angel thrust his sickle into the earth and gathered the wine of the earth, the vine of the earth, and threw it into the great winepress of the wrath of God.

You do understand what I mean when I say wrath, don't you? A lot of Americans have a problem with that, w-r-a-t-h. So this great winepress was the winepress of God's angry judgment on the wicked. And it says the winepress was trampled outside the city, which is presumably Jerusalem, and blood came out of the winepress up to the horse's bridles for 1,600 fennons, which is about 184 miles.

Now to those people who spiritualize prophecy and make it metaphorical, I always ask this question. Was that metaphorical blood or was it real blood? Because it's important to know. I believe it's real blood.

Now, there's a little passage in Isaiah chapter 63 which relates directly to that. Isaiah 63, just the first six verses. Who is this who comes from Edom with dyed garments from Bozrah? Bozrah was one of the main cities of Edom.

And Bozrah means the grape harvest. That's the meaning. This one was glorious in his apparel, traveling in the greatness of his strength.

The answer is, I who speak in righteousness, mighty to say. That's the Messiah. And then the question is given, why is your apparel red and your garments like one who treads in the winepress? And the answer comes from Messiah.

I have trodden the winepress alone and from the peoples no one was with me. For I have trodden them in my anger and trampled them in my fury. Their blood is sprinkled upon my garments and I have stained all

my robes.

You know that in a winepress, in biblical times, they put the grapes in this rock pit and then the people jumped up and down on it. And as they did that, the grape juice splattered their robes. So this is the picture.

I have trodden them in my anger and trampled them in my fury. Their blood is sprinkled upon my garments and I've stained all my robes. For the day of vengeance is in my heart and the year of my redeemed has come.

So it's vengeance on God's enemies, the redemption of God's people. And then he goes on, I looked but there was no one to help. And I wondered but there was no one to uphold.

Therefore my own arm brought salvation for me and my own fury it sustained me. I have trodden down the peoples in my anger, made them drunk in my fury, and brought down their strength to the earth. To me there's no question that that depicts the Lord Jesus himself coming as the judge of the nations and trampling underfoot the enemies of his people.

One thing we tend to forget, we churchgoers, is that Jesus is not only the Savior, he's also the judge. And he's just as faithful and efficient and thorough in his judgment as he is in salvation. And everyone has a choice.

You may confront him as Savior or confront him as judge. But in one character or the other, everyone will ultimately confront the Lord Jesus Christ. I don't know how it is with you but there's no way that I can spiritualize those prophecies.

They're very vivid descriptions of actual scenes that will take place on earth. And incidentally, if you study the prophetic word, Edom is a nation appointed to total desolation. For eternity the smoke of Edom's destruction will go up.

All right. Now, we're going to go on to glimpse number three, which I entitle Israelites flee into the wilderness. You remember that Jesus said when you see the abomination of desolation, take off, run, flee.

I think I'll read those words again because it's so important to emphasize them. Matthew 24. Therefore when you see the abomination of desolation, etc., then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, etc.

Now it doesn't tell us which mountains. You're entitled to form your own opinion. But Jesus commands to flee.

Now there is a historical precedent to that. Because in Luke 21, keep your finger in Matthew 24 if you've got enough fingers, and turn to Luke 21. Speaking about the destruction of Jerusalem that took place by the Roman armies in 70 A.D., Jesus had been asked, What will be the sign of your coming and of the fulfillment of your prophecies concerning Jerusalem, its destruction? Now that is not answered in Matthew 24.

But it is answered in Luke 21. And here's the answer, verses 20 and following. But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near.

Then let those in Judea flee to the mountains. Let those who are in the midst of her depart, and let not those who are in the country enter her. For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.

Whose vengeance? God's vengeance. All things that are written, written where? In the Scriptures. And if you want to find one place, read Leviticus 26.

And then He goes on. But woe to those who are pregnant, to those who are nursing babies in those days. For there will be great distress in the land.

What land? The land of Israel. And wrath upon this people. What people? The Jewish people.

And they will fall by the edge of the sword and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. Now as I understand it, that was fulfilled in 70 A.D. The Roman armies under Vespasian attacked Jerusalem, surrounded it and began to lay siege.

Then Vespasian received news that he had been elected emperor. He had to go back to Rome to take the position. Temporarily he raised the siege and the armies of the Romans withdrew for a short period.

Now those Jews in Jerusalem who acknowledged Jesus as a prophet saw this as the warning sign. Get out while you can. And they left.

That is basically the Messianic believers in Jerusalem. History records that they went east of the Jordan to a place called Pella and there were preserved. The rest of the Jews who didn't accept Jesus remained in Jerusalem.

Titus, the adopted son of Vespasian, returned, laid siege to the city a second time and did not raise the siege until the whole city had been destroyed and the temple thrown down so that not one stone was left upon another. Now that, I believe, was at the beginning of the age in 70 A.D. What we're talking about in Matthew is at the end of the age. But the principle is the same in this, that those who know Jesus and acknowledge His authority will obey.

Those who don't acknowledge His authority probably will not obey and will get caught in the trap. So Jesus says that those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. And He doesn't say which mountains.

That's an interesting theme for speculation but I'm not going to go into that. Now, I believe there's a parallel passage in Revelation chapter 12. Now this is my belief, I could be wrong.

Revelation chapter 12 begins with a very vivid double sign in heaven. It says, A great sign appeared in heaven, a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet and on her head a garland of twelve stars. Now that's a biblical picture of Israel.

It goes back to the dream of Joseph when he saw Jacob and Leah as the moon and the sun that came to bow down to him and his brothers as the stars. So it's directly related to that. Then being with child she cried out in labor and in pain to give birth.

And another sign appeared in heaven, behold, a great fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns and seven diadems on his head. His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them down to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to give birth to devour her child as soon as it was born.

So here is a direct confrontation between Israel and the dragon who is Satan. Now, many people believe that the child referred to is Jesus. But I don't, because it doesn't fit in, in the whole time scheme.

You have to make your decision. It says she, that's Israel, bore a male child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. And her child was caught up to God and to His throne.

Now that could apply to Jesus. But it also could apply to any Jewish ruler whom He appoints. As, for instance, the prince in Ezekiel chapters 40 through 48.

And Jesus does say earlier in Revelation, He who is faithful to me will share my throne with me and rule the nations with a rod of iron. Incidentally, in the Millennium, which we're talking about, Jesus rules with a rod of iron. It's not altogether a sweet and lovely time.

The nations deserve to be ruled with a rod of iron and they'll get what they deserve. God is going to exercise very strict authority. Now, it says in verse 6 of the woman after the child was born, Then the woman fled into the wilderness where she has a place prepared by God that they should feed her there 1,260 days.

Now that's why I don't believe that refers to Jesus because this is the period right at the close of the age. And there are three ways in which it's given. 1,260 days, 42 months and 3 1/2 years.

And if you're a mathematician, that tells you that a biblical year is how many days? 360. See, that's why I have some reservations about all these calculations about the year 2000. Because I don't believe that God calculates by the Gregorian calendar.

He has his own calendar. And what might seem a very significant year to us may not be the real significant year. That's just by the way.

But notice that this time period is given in three ways. 1,260 days, 42 months and 3 1/2 years. It's three different ways of specifying the same period.

And in my opinion, whatever way it's given, it's the same time period that it's referred to. And it's the period during which Israel will be protected in the wilderness from the wrath of Satan. Now, I have to determine where I'm going to go because I don't want to go too far.

We'll turn on to verses 13 and 14 of the same chapter. Which says, Now when the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male child. But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle that she might fly into the wilderness to her place where she is nourished for a time, times and half a time.

One year, two years and half a year. Three and a half years. From the presence of the dragon.

Now, this is the reason why I cannot believe that the child was Jesus because Israel was never nourished at that time for three and a half years from the presence of the persecutor. On the contrary, Israel was exposed to tremendous persecution. So, we have this interesting question.

Where was the woman Israel preserved? And as I say, as far as I know the Bible doesn't tell us. But there are certain references to the wilderness in connection with the period immediately prior to Israel's final restoration. And I want to direct your attention to two of them.

The first is in Hosea. Those of you that have been here with me before, you've got to find out where Hosea is, haven't you? Hosea chapter 2, verses 14 through 16. Now, the her or the she is Israel.

You have to accept that but it's clear from the context. God says, Therefore behold, I will allure her, Israel, will bring her into the wilderness and speak comfort to her. Speak to her heart.

God has a place where He's going to deal with the remnant of Israel and speak to the heart, which is always speak words of comfort. And I will give her her vineyards from there and the valley of Achor as a door of hope. So God says, It's from the wilderness that I will bring her back into inheritance and the valley of Achor, which is trouble, will become the door of hope.

Which in Hebrew is Petach Tikva, which is the name of the suburb of Tel Aviv. She shall sing there as in the days of her youth, as in the day when she came up from the land of Egypt. So there is a parallel to the deliverance of Israel out of Egypt.

And then it says, And it shall be in that day, says the Lord, that you will call me my husband and no longer call me my master. Master is ba'ali, husband is ishi, my man. In other words, Israel will come into a totally new relationship of intimacy with the Lord.

Ba'al means master. And it's the standard Hebrew word for husband. But God says, That's not going to be the kind of relationship that I'm going to have with Israel.

I am going to relate to her as a loving husband. And then, this is the final Scripture, be patient with me, in Ezekiel chapter 20, verses 32 through 38. This all relates to God's dealings with Israel.

Ezekiel chapter 20, beginning at verse 32. God is speaking to the Jewish people and He says, What you have in your mind shall never be when you say, We will be like the Gentiles, like the families in other countries, serving wood and stone. What is the aim of the Jewish people at that time? In one famous word, assimilation.

It's exactly what Prime Minister Rabin said the first day of his prime ministership. We are a people like all other people. Let's get out of this awful position of being specially chosen and set apart because we've had nothing but trouble from it for 2,000 years.

Now I can truly identify with that reaction. But God says, It's not going to happen the way you plan. It's not going to come that way.

And apparently this passage indicates that that attitude provokes the anger of God. God says it won't be. And then God goes on in verse 33, As I live, says the Lord God, surely with a mighty hand, with an outstretched arm, and with fury poured out, I will rule over you.

I will bring you out from the peoples and gather you out of the countries where you are scattered with a mighty hand, with an outstretched arm, and with fury poured out. And I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples. Again, what wilderness is that? I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples and there I will plead my case with you face to face.

I'm going to deal with you face to face in this particular appointed place. Just as I pleaded my case with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so I will plead my case with you, says the Lord God. And Ezekiel, like Hosea, says it's going to be closely parallel to the deliverance of Israel out of Egypt.

And then God says, I will make you pass under the rod and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant. Now you know the metaphor of passing under the rod is the way a shepherd counted his sheep back into the fold. And as each sheep came he lowered the rod, checked that it was his sheep and admitted it to the fold.

So God says that's how I'm going to deal with you Israelites. I'm going to check every one of you before I let you into the fold. And only those that truly belong to me will come in.

And then He says I will bring you into the bond of the covenant. I'll bring you back into a covenant relationship with me. And we will be related from then on in the bonds of a covenant with one another.

And then He says something which I hesitate to explain. I will purge the rebels from among you and those who transgress against me. I will bring them out of the country where they sojourn but they shall not enter the land of Israel.

Then you will know that I am the Lord. That's one of the repeated phrases of Ezekiel. Then you will know that I am the Lord.

As I see it, there's a consistent picture. At a certain period when the Antichrist has set himself to destroy all the Jews, a chosen remnant who obeyed Jesus will escape into a place which isn't revealed. I don't know what it is.

I'll tell you, I have a sense, a sort of feeling that it could be the Negev. About twenty years ago I took a journey with my first wife through the Negev with a Jewish believer. As we traveled through there I had such a sense that there's a destiny for this place that is not yet fulfilled.

But that's purely a subjective reaction, that's all. But whatever happens, God is going to bring Israel back out of the wilderness into a covenant relationship with Himself in the land. So that's the third of these glimpses.

I'll just recapitulate them. And we're left with five more for tomorrow morning. So, chasak ve'ematz.

Be strong and of good courage. This is what the Jewish people say each time they finish a book of the Bible. So, you're going to need to be strong and of good courage.

I've got five more glimpses to give you. But let me just repeat the three that we've looked at. A period of unique tribulation.

A hundred and forty-four thousand young Jewish males sealed to become God's ambassadors. And Israel collectively fleeing into the wilderness, protected there for three and a half years. God speaks to them, deals with them and brings them out into their own land giving them the valley of Achor, which is the valley of trouble for the door of hope.

Amen.

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