

Israel in the Last Days

by Derek Prince

The sermon emphasizes the significance of Israel in the last days, highlighting God's purposes for Israel, the debt we owe to the Jewish people, and the fulfillment of prophecies related to Israel.

Duration: 1:17:46

Scripture: Matthew 7:21, 1 Peter 2:9

Topics: "Last Days"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of aligning with God's purpose for Israel. He urges believers to bless and not curse Israel, as shown in Numbers 23 with the story of Balaam. The speaker highlights several predictions about Israel's future, including the gathering of all nations against Jerusalem, a supernatural revelation of Jesus as Messiah to the people of Israel, and the return of the Messiah to establish His kingdom on earth. The sermon concludes with the reminder that those who do the will of God abide forever and are unshakable.

Transcript

From Psalm 33, verses 8 through 12, the Continental Hymn starts. Blessed be the Lord. No, no, no.

Let all the earth. All right, we're just rehearsing, that's all. We're going to say the same scripture at the same time.

Are you ready? Let all the earth fear the Lord. Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him. For He spoke, and it was done.

He commanded, and it stood fast. The Lord brings the counsel of the nations to nothing. He makes the plans of the peoples of no effect.

The counsel of the Lord stands forever. The plans of His heart to all generations. Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord.

The people whom He has chosen as His own inheritance. Amen. So, we're going to begin now with the theme, Israel in the end time.

And first of all, we need to define and identify Israel, which has been the source of endless confusion. Unbelievable confusion. Especially in the light of the fact that the Bible is so clear.

Let me say who Israel is or are. They are the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The nation that came to be known by the second name given to their forefather Jacob.

That is Israel. Now in bringing forth this nation, God twice made a decision to set aside one person and choose another. Of the sons of Abraham, He set aside Ishmael and chose Isaac.

Of the sons of Isaac, He set aside Esau and chose Jacob. So, we have to be very precise. Israel is the nation descended from Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

God also made provision for people from other nations to be united with the people of Israel and to be reckoned as Israelites. And that is still true today. A lot of people don't realize this.

There has always been a way for people of other nations to become legally and scripturally identified and accepted as part of Israel. Now the thing that I want to say again, I've already said it once. According to the clear language of the Bible, the Church of Jesus Christ is not Israel.

The phrase spiritual Israel is never used in the New Testament. Nor is the phrase the new Israel. Though that language goes back to church fathers such as Origen and Augustine.

And they were free to say what they had to say. But we have to judge everything, I believe, by Scripture. If you've ever studied Augustine's view on sex, I think you'd agree that we don't want to accept everything that Augustine says.

I don't know whether you know it, but by his standards all sex was a sin. It was a pardonable sin if its sole purpose was to procreate children. Otherwise it was an unpardonable sin.

So I mean if you, if you can accept that, you may be able to accept what he says about Israel. I cannot accept either. But his name is greatly respected and I don't want to detract from the good that he said and that he did.

As I've said in this book, there are 77 examples of the word Israel or Israelite. Now since this book was published, I have to acknowledge, just with some embarrassment, that I've discovered two more. So there are altogether, that I know of, 79.

But never are they, is the word Israel used as a name for the church. Never once in 79 times. In all but two of those occasions it's used in exactly the same way as it is in the Old Testament.

In fact nine passages are direct quotations from the Old Testament. And in every one of them the usage in the New Testament is the same as the usage in the Old. There are two passages, and I'll tell you them but we won't go into them.

Romans 9 6 and Galatians 6 16, where Israel is used in a restricted sense. And Paul applies it only to those Israelites who by faith have received Jesus as their Messiah. But in the New Testament Israel is never extended beyond the natural meaning of the word Israel.

It is never extended to include believers from other backgrounds. It is a total error to make that use of the word Israel. And people who use that in that way, their conclusions are not in line with Scripture.

Because their language is not in line with Scripture. Now what God is doing for Israel is the most significant single indication that we are in the end time. I've spoken in previous talks about other

indications.

I've spoken about wars and pestilences and famines and lawlessness and false prophets and so on. But none of those are unique. They have occurred at various times throughout human history since the time of Jesus.

So by themselves you could argue, well they're not necessarily an indication from the Bible that we are in the end time. But the restoration of the Jews to their land and the recreation of the Jewish state is a unique event. It never happened in the last 19 centuries.

And it is uniquely associated in the Bible with the end times. I'll give you just one passage taken from Jeremiah chapter 30. And I'll read verses 3 through 7 and then I'll read the comment on them at the end of that chapter.

Jeremiah 30 3 through 7. 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. I suggest to anybody who has even a meager familiarity with the Bible.

There is only one land that answers to the description the land that God gave to the forefathers of Israel and Judah. And that is the land which mistakenly is called Palestine. I say mistakenly because the name Palestine was coined by the Romans in the first or second century of this era.

To blot out every association of the Jewish people with their land. They did it deliberately and it has been gladly accepted and adopted by those people who hate Israel. And dispute their claim to that land.

But as a believer in Jesus I prefer not to use the name Palestine. If I use it it's a concession to the understanding of people. In the Bible both the Old Testament and the New Testament the name for that land is the land of Israel.

It was originally the land of Canaan. It became the land of Israel and it is still the land of Israel. It's the land of Israel whether the Jews are there or not.

Because God gave it to them by an everlasting covenant. Now concerning this return of the Jews to their father's inheritance Jeremiah continues. 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. As I mentioned the other evening a quite well-known minister in this country once commented that the return of the Jews to the land of Israel could not be from God. Because if God were responsible there would have been peace.

He obviously hadn't studied Jeremiah chapter 30. Because God says at the time of return we have heard a voice of trembling of fear and not of peace. And he goes on with an even stronger expression.

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 turn pale. It depicts a situation so terrible that even males behave like women in childbirth.

And then the next verse continues alas for that day is great so that none is like it. And it is the time of Jacob's trouble but he shall be saved out of it. Notice not saved from it but saved out of it.

He will have to go through it but God will save him out of it. That's the prediction and at the end of that chapter a final comment in verse 24. The latter part of the verse it says in the latter days you will consider it.

In other words this prophecy will not have full application until we're in the latter days. So the restoration of the Jewish people to the land of Israel which has taken place in this century is a divine attestation that we are in the latter days. It's a unique event which is without parallel in any of the previous 19 centuries.

In a certain sense I could say this is my understanding. The Jews are the minute hand on God's clock. And as you watch that minute hand move you know just how near we are to midnight.

And I would say by human counting we're about two minutes from midnight right now. Now let's consider for a little while God's purposes for Israel. In 1st Chronicles 17 David prayed a prayer to the Lord.

And I'm only going to quote a little part of it. In 1st Chronicles 17 verse 21 he said to the Lord who is like your people Israel. The one nation on the earth whom God went to redeem for himself as a people.

So David says Israel is a unique nation. There is no other nation like it because it's the only nation that God went to redeem as a people for himself. What were God's purposes in redeeming Israel? We look at just a few of them.

In Exodus 19 verses 5 and 6 God speaks to the people of Israel. Now gathered at the foot of Mount Sinai after the Exodus. And he instructs Moses to tell them his plan for them.

And this is what he says Exodus 19 5 and 6. Now therefore if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant. Then you shall be a special treasure to me above all people for all the earth is mine. So God chose Israel to be a special treasure to himself.

And then he went on and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. So God's destiny for Israel was to be a special treasure set apart to himself. A kingdom of priests and a holy nation.

Now I've commented many times in connection with different things. Satan can often delay God's purposes but he can never ultimately thwart them. Satan has delayed God's purposes in the lives of many of us here tonight.

But if you align yourself with his purpose ultimately Satan cannot thwart them. And that is true of Israel. Satan has sought by every means in his power to thwart God's purposes for Israel.

And apparently he has achieved much success. But in the last resort at the end of the story God's purposes will have been fulfilled. A special treasure, a kingdom of priests, a holy nation.

And then we turn to the New Testament for some special features of Israel. In Romans chapter 3 verses 1 and 2 Paul raises the question. What advantage then has the Jew or what is the profit or benefit of circumcision.

That is being Jewish and his answer is much in every way. Chiefly because to them were committed the oracles of God. I prefer to use the word entrust.

God entrusted the Jewish people with the revelation of his word. The oracles of God, the words that came from the mouth of God. And that is again they're completely unique.

No other nation can make any claim whatever to that. It's solely true of the Jewish people of Israel. But I understand it that they were not the possessors of God's word.

They were the stewards of God's word. They would be held accountable for what they did with the word of God. And one Israelite at least, the Apostle Paul, clearly recognized his tremendous solemn responsibility in connection with the word of God.

And so he says in Romans 1:14, I am a debtor both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to wise and to unwise. So as much as is in me I am ready to preach the gospel to you who are in Rome also. In other words Paul said I am under a divine obligation.

I have a stewardship. The word of God was committed to us. Not that we should keep it to ourselves, but that we should make it available to all nations.

And you'll have to agree Paul was faithful in his stewardship. And then in Romans 9 verses 4 and 5, Paul lists seven distinctive honors bestowed upon Israel by the Lord. And then one final supreme honor.

Seven plus one. Here are the seven. He says of his kinsmen according to the flesh who are Israelites, to whom pertain or belong the adoption.

Number one their God's adopted people. Number two the glory. I understand the word glory to mean the presence of God manifested to human senses.

I'm very interested in this word because of my background in Greek philosophy. But I can't go into it. But the word for glory in the New Testament is doxa.

In the philosophy of Plato it means that which appears or seems or is seen. So you put the two together and the glory of God is that which is revealed of God to human senses. And this was granted to Israel.

The pillar of fire and cloud was always over them. A unique distinguishing feature which no other nation enjoyed. That's number two.

Number three the covenants. And notice the word is plural. Both the old covenant and the new covenant were given to Israel.

There were only Jews present when the new covenant was given by Jesus. For the service of God. But the word service means the priestly service of God.

They were called to serve God as priests in his temple. I'm sorry I missed one out. The giving of the law.

The law of Moses was given uniquely to one people. Israel. The services or the priestly service of God.

That's number five. Number six the promises. All the promises of God's word were given initially to Israel.

Number seven of whom are the fathers. That is all the patriarchs belong to one people. Israel.

So that's seven distinctive privileges and honors. And then the greatest of all. Of whom according to the flesh Messiah came.

Israel were chosen by God to be the channel through whom he would send his son Messiah to the world. And he had to prepare Israel carefully for that. I don't know whether you've ever realized that.

I was preaching once in Singapore to a crowd of Chinese people. Just about the same number that are here this evening. And as I looked at them I thought to myself.

There's scarcely one of them. If you go back three generations. Whose ancestor was not an idolater.

It was their whole national history. And then I thought God could never have sent his son. To be born of the Chinese.

Why? Because had he obeyed his parents. He would have been involved in idolatry. So they had to be a very specially prepared people.

To whom God could send his son. I think we overlooked that many times. And all this is summed up in one very short simple statement by Jesus.

Made to a Samaritan woman. In John 4 22 he said salvation is from the Jews. That's an indisputable objective historical fact.

No Jews, no salvation. Because had there been no Jews. There would be no patriarchs, no prophets, no apostles, no Bible.

And no Savior. So every other nationality on earth. Owes its total spiritual inheritance to one people.

Which is Israel. We, I'm an, I'm not Jewish I'm a Gentile. I speaking for all Gentile believers say this.

We owe to the Jewish people a debt that we can never repay. Furthermore it cost them as a nation tremendous trouble and suffering. To make that inheritance available to us.

The awful aspect of history is. That so far from acknowledging our debt and expressing our gratitude. Basically we have persistently persecuted and ostracized.

And mistreated the Jewish people for at least 16 centuries. And most of the time it has been done in the name of Jesus Christ. You may feel shocked by that statement.

But you need to talk to some Jewish people sometime. You wonder why they're slow to acknowledge Messiah. When Ruth was converted to Judaism.

Which was in 1952. The rabbi said to her you don't need to be converted. You're married whether you're converted or not.

But you better think carefully about becoming Jewish. Because it means you could easily find your way to the gas chamber. You don't have to do it.

And her mother-in-law a wonderful Jewish woman said to her. When Ruth was converted. Now you may object to this statement but it was made.

She said you can't trust Christians. Because they'll speak very nicely to you. But one day they'll send you to the gas chamber.

You have to bear in mind that in the thinking of the Jewish people. Hitler and all the Nazis were Christians. Hitler was a baptized Catholic.

And unfortunately even many quote born-again Christians endorsed and supported Hitler. My first wife who was Jewish. Danish.

Danish thank you. Let me correct that. She was definitely not Jewish.

She was very much of a Dane. And she recalled that her country Denmark had been invaded twice in living memory by the Germans. And she said the only reason the Germans turned against Hitler was he failed.

If he'd succeeded they would have supported him. Now you may consider that cynical. But I'm quoting to you the opinions of intelligent educated people.

And unfortunately the great majority of professing Christians today have no idea of the history of anti-Semitism. But basically it's a Christian phenomenon. There's not been anything like the same amount of anti-Semitism in Muslim nations.

They haven't treated the Jews particularly well. But they've never had a Holocaust. So we are faced with a very solemn responsibility.

As I've said we can never repay the debt we owe. And we can never undo all the harm that was done in the name of Christianity. But we ought to do something about it.

Would you agree with that? Now one of the unique features of Israel was that their whole history was foretold before it took place in the prophecies of the Bible. Again there's no other nation that has anything to compare with that. And I want to give you a list here of 16 specific predictions made about Israel in the prophecies of the Bible.

I won't give you the reference because it'll take too long. But I have a reference for every single one. First of all their enslavement in Egypt was predicted to Abraham.

Second their deliverance with wealth out of their enslavement was also predicted to Abraham. Third the fact that they would take possession of the land of Canaan was predicted to Abraham. Fourth Moses and others predicted that they would turn to idolatry in the land of Canaan.

And they did. Fifth it was predicted that God would establish a center of worship in the city of Jerusalem. Which he did.

Sixth the captivity of the northern kingdom into Assyria was clearly predicted and exactly fulfilled. Seventh the captivity of the southern kingdom into Babylon was equally clearly predicted and fulfilled. Eighth the destruction of the first temple was clearly specifically fulfilled, predicted and fulfilled.

Nine the return of a remnant from Babylon was predicted and fulfilled. Ten the destruction of the second temple, Herod's temple, was clearly predicted and fulfilled. Exactly fulfilled, not one stone left upon another.

Eleven the fact that they would be scattered among all nations was predicted and fulfilled. And it's estimated in Israel that Jews have returned to that nation from approximately 100 other nations. Twelve it was predicted that during their dispersion they would be persecuted and oppressed.

And that has been exactly fulfilled. If you want one scripture that says most of it clearly you'll find it in Leviticus chapter 26. Thirteen their regathering from all nations was clearly predicted and is being fulfilled.

Wake up if you don't know that. You are a witness of the fulfillment of biblical prophecy. It's happening before your eyes.

It's recorded in the newspapers and on the television. In the last two or three years approximately 400,000 new immigrants have come to Israel from the former Soviet Union, from Eastern Europe, from Ethiopia and from the Balkans. Now that's approximately 10% of the Jewish population of the state.

I've shocked Americans by saying if you had 10% of the population of the United States coming you'd get 25 million new immigrants. Even a nation as powerful and as diverse as the United States would reel under the impact of 25 million new immigrants. Mostly without money, without clothing, without any form of subsistence.

What's the population of Britain today? Somebody tell me. 50? 58 million. All right.

So come on somebody with a mathematical mind. Nearly 6 million new immigrants in two years. How would Britain respond to that? You say but we're in a time of recession.

Dear friends you know nothing about recession by comparison with Israel. You see it's a breathtaking event. God actually said that the time would come when people would no longer talk about the first exodus.

Because it would be so totally superseded by the exodus in the last days from the North country which is the Soviet Union and other nations. Then there are three more prophecies. And this is not an exhaustive list.

It's predicted that all nations will be gathered together against Jerusalem. And if you want more about that there's something about it in here. It's also predicted that there will be a supernatural revelation of Jesus as Messiah to the people of Israel collectively.

And finally number 16. It's predicted that the Messiah will return to the Mount of Olives in power and glory to establish his kingdom on earth. Now of those 16 predictions 13 have been all of them holy except the last one perhaps partially fulfilled.

So if your mathematics are the same as mine 13 out of 16 is about 81%. Think of what that means. If 81% of the recorded predicted prophecies of Israel have already been fulfilled.

Are we fanatical or unreasonable to expect that the remaining 19% will also be fulfilled. To me it would be unreasonable to doubt it. This is not fanaticism it's common sense.

You know what somebody said about the common sense. The trouble is it's so uncommon. All right now then.

I want to take just a little while to look at some passages of Scripture which actually predict the end time regathering of Israel in their own land. There are at least 50 separate passages of Scripture. It is one of the main themes of all biblical prophecy.

I could not possibly take the time to go into that. So I'm going to deal only with two passages. The first one is in Hosea.

Hosea chapter 1 and verse 10. Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea which cannot be measured or numbered. And it shall come to pass in the place where it was said to them you are not my people.

There it shall be said to them you are the sons of the living God. Now Hosea is the prophet through whom God said you are not my people. Where did God say that? In one place which was the land of Israel.

And this prophecy says in the same place where it was said to them you are not my people. In that place it will be said to them you are my people. In other words the place from which they were scattered because of their disobedience will be the place to which they will be regathered and in which God will accept them back to himself as his people.

The fact that they are being regathered gives every reason to believe that the rest will follow. And then I want to turn to one other passage of prophecy which is Ezekiel chapter 36. And I'm going to start at verse 16.

If you have a Bible open you could try to follow. I'm economizing on time so I'm not going to read every verse or every word. But I want to show you that this is a stage by stage prediction of God's judgment on Israel, the dispersion of Israel, the regathering of Israel and the real, the various successive stages of their regathering.

The other night we went through Matthew 24, most of it. And I pointed out to you the key word there is then. And we get a succession of successive phases of what will take place prior to the coming of the Lord Jesus again in glory.

Ezekiel 36 is somewhat similar in that it's a stage by stage presentation of the regathering of Israel in their own land. So we'll begin in verse 16 of Ezekiel 36. Moreover the word of the Lord came to me saying, Son of man, when the house of Israel dwelt in their own land they defiled it by their own ways.

Notice it was their own land. So God says because of that in verse 18, Therefore I poured out my fury on them for the blood they had shed on the land and for their idols with which they had defiled it. He judged them in fury for bloodshed and idolatry.

How, what was the judgment? Verse 19. So I scattered them among the nations and they were dispersed throughout the countries. Verse 20.

When they came to the nations wherever they went they profaned or disgraced my holy name. When they said to them these are the people of the Lord and yet they have gone out of his land. God was saying in effect I was embarrassed by the fact that they were my people.

First of all they had to go out of their land because of their bad behavior. And then the way they acted in their exile embarrassed me because they were my people. But he never denied that they were his people.

Some of us maybe have had children who embarrassed us maybe by some of their actions. Could happen that there are one or two parents here like that. You know what it is to be embarrassed.

But you never denied that they were your children. And if anybody else started to criticize your children you probably got pretty indignant. And remember that when you talk about the Jewish people.

If you start to criticize them you provoke God's jealousy. Even though all you say may be true. Verse 21.

God says but I had concern for my holy name which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations wherever they went. God said I'm going to intervene not because they deserve it but to redeem the glory of my name. And that you have to understand is the primary motive of all that God does for Israel.

There was an article published in a British magazine called Christian a year or two ago which listed all the, not all, but many of the failings of contemporary Israel. In this book of mine my comment on it is the prophets of Israel did a much more thorough job. There was nothing they left out.

But the same prophets who pronounced the condemnation predicted the restoration. It's totally illogical to accept the condemnation and reject the restoration. Now verse 22.

Therefore say to the house of Israel that says the Lord God I do not do this for your sake of house of Israel but for my holy name's sake. Don't imagine that you deserve it. You don't.

The reason I'm doing it is to redeem the honor of my name and the truth of my word. Verse 23. And I will sanctify my great name which has been profaned among the nations which you have profaned in their midst.

And the nation shall know that I am the Lord says the Lord God when I am hallowed or sanctified in you before their eyes. In other words I'm going to get glory to my name by what I'll do for you that the nations will see. But never does God suggest they deserve it.

Let me ask you this question. How many of you deserve to be saved? Some of you think you did. But you didn't.

I remember when I was first saved having a background at Cambridge and various academic qualifications. I had the impression that God was pretty lucky to get me. I didn't ever say that.

But the longer I lived with myself the more I realized God took on an awful responsibility when he took me. In fact if I'd been God I wouldn't have done it. And the same is true of every one of you dear brothers and sisters.

You've got nothing to boast about. And you have no marriage to claim which could cause your salvation. By grace we have been saved through faith and that not of ourselves.

It is the gift of God not of works lest anyone should boast. For we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works which God ordained beforehand that we should walk in them. So don't start to boast.

And don't boast against Israel. Paul specifically warns us of that in Romans 11. Don't adopt a superior attitude.

Say well they deserve it. Brothers and sisters if you and I had got what we deserve none of us would be here tonight. Is that true? I think it's good to remind ourselves sometimes that we didn't deserve God's grace.

Actually grace cannot be deserved. If it's deserved it's not grace. All right.

Verse 24. Now God is going to explain how he's going to do this. For I will take you from among the nations gather you out of all countries and bring you into your own land.

Notice it's their own land. It's their land whether they're in it or not. It never has belonged to any other human group from the day that God made his covenant.

Lots of other people have lived in it. But it didn't belong to them. Verse 25.

Then I will sprinkle clean water on you and you shall be clean. I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. Now a lot of Christians had the impression it's changing somewhat.

Well if the Jews are to go back at least they've got to be converted first and accept Jesus as Messiah. Not so. God says I'll bring you back in filthiness and with all your idols.

And when you're back I'll deal with you. There's a practical reason for that which we don't often appreciate because we're so individualistic in our view of Christianity. But God has always dealt with Israel not just as a group of individuals but as a single people united by covenant to him and by covenant to one another.

And so when God is going to deal with Israel he's going to deal finally with the whole people as one. And to do that he has to get them back in one place. And there's only one logical place and that is their land.

Now I believe that process of sprinkling clean water has begun. I think it's the word of God. The word of God is compared to clean water.

Jesus said to his disciples you are clean because of the word I've spoken to you. And I've been associated with Israel more than on since 1942. And I've seen some remarkable changes take place.

In the 1940s many times if you would speak to a Jew about Jesus and mention the name of Jesus he would spit in your presence as a sign of his contempt and hatred. But that attitude has largely changed not totally. And the time it really began to change according to my observation was 1967.

Which was the year of what? The Six Day War. When Jerusalem again came under Jewish control. That was one of the most critical dates in this century.

Now, first of all let me say that for centuries Jews would not use the Hebrew form of the name of Jesus. Which is Yeshua. Because they refused to admit he was Jewish.

They said he's Gentile. He's the Gentile Messiah. He's got nothing to do with us.

And you would find that they would use the name Yeshu. Leaving out the last letter, the ein. But this has changed.

And in many magazines today they freely use the name Yeshua. Jesus. Which means Savior.

That's exciting. Ruth and I have a number of secular Jewish friends. And some not so secular.

And we've observed that when they're around us they hang around waiting for something. And sometimes we think well why don't they go, you know. And we've come to understand they're waiting for us to tell them about what Jesus has done in our lives.

And specifically how he answers our prayers. Don't use religious language to Jewish people. Because they're a very practical down-to-earth people.

They want to know if the thing works. If you can show them something works, they'll listen. But the number of Jewish believers in Israel is increasing every week.

Fifteen years ago if you met one new Jewish believer that would be for one year. And all the missionaries would squabble over them. Now there are some every week.

I wouldn't say we have anything that you could call like revival. But there is a great spiritual change taking place in Israel. I wouldn't say we have anything that you could call like revival.

But there is a great spiritual change taking place in Israel. God is doing it his way. So let's go on.

Verse 26. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you. I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.

So that indicates that in the eyes of God the Jewish people have had a heart of stone. I think for 18 centuries. Now a heart of stone cannot respond to the Holy Spirit.

It's impossible. But when God takes out the heart of stone and replaces it with a heart of flesh then they can respond to the Holy Spirit. That's just precisely I believe where we're at right now.

God is taking out the heart of stone replacing it with a heart of flesh. That doesn't mean they're converted. But it means they have the ability to respond.

And then God goes on in the next verse. I will put my spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes and you will keep my judgments and do them. Notice God says once you've got a heart of flesh if you'll respond I'll put my Holy Spirit within you and then you'll walk in my ways.

How many of you know you cannot walk in God's ways without the Holy Spirit? Whether you're Jew or Gentile it makes no difference. It's only when the Holy Spirit is in you that you can do it. And you see whether you're Jew or Gentile you cannot keep God's laws by your own effort.

It's only by the supernatural grace and power of the Holy Spirit within you. So if you've been trying in your own strength give up. Turn to God and ask Jesus to fill you with the Holy Spirit.

All right now we've come to the climax. Verse 28 Then you shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers. Now everybody knows what that land is.

There's no possibility of doubting it. And you'll dwell there. You'll not merely come there you'll dwell there.

You shall be my people and I will be your God. Now that's the end purpose of God. Everything that goes on in the Middle East and in Israel and with the Jewish people is all being orchestrated by God to one sovereign supreme purpose.

You will be my people and I will be your God. Be patient with God. Let him do it his way.

Don't criticize him. Don't have an attitude of unbelief. God spoke to me recently after I'd been sick for quite a long while.

He told me he was restoring me. But he said this. It really was so tender and delicate.

He said be patient with me as I've been patient with you. So let's let God do it his way. Let's not stand back and criticize and say these Jews they don't deserve it.

They don't deserve it. That's true. But you don't deserve it either.

I baptized a dear friend of mine who's remained a friend of mine in the Sea of Galilee could many years ago now. When he came up out of the water he was just filled with the joy of the Lord. And he said why did God choose the Jews? So I said why did God choose you? And he never, he never asked any more questions.

See God's choice is sovereign. He doesn't consult anybody. He doesn't consult the World Council of Churches.

He doesn't consult the United Nations. And I personally believe God always makes the right choice. You've got to decide that for yourself.

I've been married twice. My first wife is with the Lord. And each of my marriages has been generally speaking happy and successful.

But I never chose my own wife. In both occasions God sovereignly showed me whom I was to marry. Now I'm not saying you've got to have it the same way.

But I think God knew that I was not a good judge of character. So he didn't trust me with that responsibility. And I'm so grateful for the wife he's given me now.

God bless her. Amen. Now we are probably running out of time.

I've no idea what the time is and I'm not going to bother to look. But there are a number of further promises in this chapter which you can read for yourself. But one day I read it through in Hebrew where you can pick out the forms of the words more easily.

And I discovered that between verses 23 and 30 God in the Hebrew says I will 18 times. Never once does he give any other reason for what's happening except I will. See when you come to grips with Israel you come to grips with the sovereignty of God.

And that's very little taught in the contemporary church. I define sovereignty this way. God does what he wants, when he wants, the way he wants and he asks no one's permission.

The humanists are very angry with God because he didn't ask their permission. I'm glad he didn't. They might not have recommended me.

We come to the last two verses of this chapter and we could spend much more time with this. Verse 37, 38. Thus says the Lord God I will also let the house of Israel inquire of me but the old King James was more vivid.

I will also be inquired of for the house of Israel to do this for them. I will increase them with men as with a flock. There's a remarkable secret about prayer.

God has made up his mind. He's written it down centuries ago what he's going to do. But he says to Israel that's what I'm going to do but I won't do it until you pray.

That's the real secret of successful praying is asking God to do what he's committed himself to do. What's the greatest miracle that ever happened in the life of any human being? We could give various answers but in my opinion the birth of the Son of God from the Virgin Mary was the greatest single miracle that ever took place. How was it released? She said be it unto me according to thy word.

You cannot ever pray anything greater than what God has promised me. And so God says concerning Israel I'm going to do it but I'll bring them to the place where they'll ask of me and I won't do it until they ask. And there may be many things in your life that are in the same category.

God is waiting to do them but he won't do them until you ask. And he won't do what you think he ought to do. He'll do what he's decided to do.

Amen. All right. Now I want to complete some statements and wind up.

But it'll take me a little while. Romans 9 27 I have said or God says all Israel will be saved. God never said all Britain will be saved or all Russia will be saved or all Zimbabwe will be saved but he said all Israel will be saved.

There again they're unique you see. But the all Israel that will be saved will be the remnant whom God has chosen. And so in Romans 9 27 Isaiah quotes Jerry I'm sorry Paul quotes Isaiah and he says this though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea the remnant will be saved.

The remnant. Those whom God has chosen and appointed for salvation. I don't know how you get on with the doctrine of divine election but it's right there in the Bible.

You can't get away from it. You know why you got saved? Because God chose you. If God had chosen you you couldn't have been saved no matter what you did.

And why will God save all Israel? That remnant? Because he's chosen them. You have to one ask yourself do I believe God makes the right choice? I do. I'm happy with God's choice.

I don't criticize. I don't question. I don't try to tell him how he should have done it better.

See I don't read the Bible to check on God's theology or on his ethics but there's many many people today that are doing that. And the Anglican Church in New Zealand have produced a prayer book that doesn't contain the name Israel. Apparently they think God was wrong.

I've also read that the Roman Catholic Church is producing a prayer book in which God is sexless. They're going to have a sexless version of the Lord's Prayer. I suppose it will start our parent who is in heaven.

I'm not interested in that see. I think God knows what he's doing. I think he knows what he's talking about.

I'm impressed by what he's done in my life. He's done things a lot better than I would ever have been able to do them if I'd been making the choices. So I'm content with God's choice.

I don't criticize. I might say sometimes God I don't understand but I say but I still trust. And then in Romans 11 25 and 26 which I quoted the other day Paul says and this is addressed specifically to believers from

Gentile background.

That means people like you and me. For I do not desire brethren that you should be ignorant of this mystery this unrevealed or this revealed secret. Have you ever studied how many times God says I don't want you to be ignorant? There must be probably half a dozen passages.

You know the remarkable thing I've observed is almost everything that he says to the church I don't want you to be ignorant about the church is ignorant about. The situation hasn't changed in 19 centuries. Well I do not desire brethren that you should be ignorant of this mystery unless you should be wise in your own opinions that hardening in part has happened to Israel.

Remember it's never been total. In all generations there have been Jews who have acknowledged Jesus as their Messiah. But as I pointed out the other day whenever it speaks about the rejection or the judgment of Israel there's always a word that follows like until.

It's not going to be permanent. So hardening in part has happened to Israel until the full number of the Gentiles has come in. So God has an order.

I'm not sure that I understand all the implications but he says we're going to gather in the whole harvest of the Gentiles from every nation and then right at the end all Israel will turn to me. So you may not be actually very excited about the salvation of Israel but if you are working to proclaim the gospel to other nations you are indirectly working for the salvation of Israel. Because Israel will not be saved as a nation many of them being saved as individuals until every Gentile appointed by God for salvation has come in.

Jesus said the first will be last and the last will be first. So Israel were the first and as a nation they rejected. They've become the last.

But the last are going to be the first. You can't figure that out. It's much too profound.

But I believe it. So then Paul says in verse 26 so all Israel will be saved. And he quotes a passage from Isaiah If you really believe the Bible I would like you to say that with me.

As an act, a profession of faith and as an act of self humbling. It's only four or five or six words. All Israel will be saved.

Say it again. All Israel will be saved. Once more.

All Israel will be saved. If you go out of this camp with that conviction and act according to it. God will bless you.

Amen. Now I want to speak. Don't let me say briefly because it doesn't mean anything.

How do we respond to the revelation of God's plan for Israel? And my answer is one that's been given several times today. Align with God's purpose. Don't try to change God's mind.

Find out what he plans to do and do it with him. That's the key to success. Every believer who does that ultimately will be successful.

Doesn't follow that you won't have problems or opposition. But ultimately if you align yourself with the will of God and the plan of God, you will be successful. The Apostle John says he who does the will of God.

How does he go on? Abides forever. Let's say that again. He who does the will of God abides forever.

So if you do the will of God you're unshakable. You're unsinkable. Nothing can ever overcome you.

You are as sure and as steadfast as the will of God itself. All right. How do we respond? We align with God's purpose.

First of all we bless and we don't curse Israel. That's very important. I've just been speaking in Germany and I gave them the same scriptures there and there was a certain solemnity but there was an attitude of humility.

They didn't answer back. They just repented and turned to God for mercy. Numbers 23.

You remember about Balaam. He was summoned to curse Israel and he was going to get a big fee for doing it. And he went off to the assignment with a full intention of cursing Israel.

And everybody knew if Balaam cursed you you were cursed. But when he got there it all changed. And so he says in Numbers 23 19 and 20.

God is not a man that he should lie nor a son of a man that he should repent or change his mind. Has he said and will he not do it? Or has he spoken and will he not make it good? He will. Behold I have received a command to bless that's bless Israel.

He has blessed and I cannot reverse it. You cannot reverse God's blessing on Israel. So don't try.

And then in the next chapter speaking to Israel in verse 9 of Numbers 24. He says blessed is he who blesses you and cursed is he who curses you Israel. So when you curse the Jewish people God curses you.

But when you bless the Jewish people God blesses you. How do we align ourselves with God's purpose for Israel? And I want to suggest some very simple things. First of all in Isaiah, Isaiah chapter 40 verses 1 and 2. God says comfort yes comfort my people says your God.

Speak comfort to Jerusalem and cry out to her that her warfare is ended that her iniquity is pardoned for she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins. Now I've analyzed that verse and when it says my people comfort my people because of the immediate reference to Jerusalem I understand it means the Jewish people. Because the Jewish people cannot be comforted apart from Jerusalem.

Their hearts are totally bound up with the city of Jerusalem. So if I'm right and my people is the Jewish people. Then to whom are those words are spoken? They're not spoken to the Jewish people.

They're spoken in the plural in Hebrew to somebody and say comfort my people. Now they must be spoken to people who accept the God of the Bible and the authority of his word. Who can that be? You and I. That's right.

People like us. Believing Christians. And so what does God say? He says comfort my people Israel.

So God requires us to comfort Israel. Now I am friendly with a number of fine Jewish young men, young by my standards who are believers in Jesus. And one of the things they will point out to me is the church worldwide spends much more time criticizing Israel than comforting Israel.

We were not called to criticize. But we have been commanded to comfort. Will you accept that responsibility? And then a very profound and important thought about the judgment of God on the nations.

Joel chapter 3 verses 1 and 2 God says or the prophet says Joel 3 1 and 2. Behold in those days and at that time when I bring back the captives of Judah and Jerusalem notice this is again the period of Israel's regathering. I also will gather all nations, that means Gentiles and bring them down to the valley of Jehoshaphat. And the word, the name Jehoshaphat means Jehovah judges.

It's the valley of God's judgment. And I will enter into judgment with them there. Now what is going to, God going to judge the nations about? One specific issue.

On account of my people my heritage Israel whom they have scattered among the nations. They have also divided up my land. God says my people, my land.

And I'm going to hold the nations accountable for what they've done to the Jews. And he says they've scattered them and they've divided my land. When he says my land what land is he talking about? The land of Israel, which he always calls my land.

Now what's the modern word for dividing up the land of Israel? There's a political phrase that's used. Begins with P. Partition. That's right.

So God is going to judge the nations who have partitioned the land of Israel. And I'm sorry to say that Britain will be number one on that list. Because after World War One, Britain received a mandate to watch over the Bible land of Israel and to prepare the way for it to become a national home for the Jewish people.

This was a mandate from the League of Nations. And in 1922 the British, I think Home Secretary, or Foreign Secretary, now his name was well known, Winston Churchill, made a plan by which he divided up that land. And he allotted 76 percent to a totally Arab state, which was called Transjordan, which is now called Jordan.

So, of the total land, only 24 percent was left available to the Jewish people. Because no Jews may live in the state of Jordan. And then in 1947, the United Nations decided to divide up the 24 percent.

And I think they left Israel less than 12 percent. And God says, I'm going to judge the nations that have partitioned my land. Because he says, it's my land.

I'm the one who determines what happens to that land. I'm the one who determines to whom it belongs and who will live there. And it is presumption on the part of the nations to take away from me that right.

Now a lot of people don't realize, but in Matthew chapter 25 the last section of that great chapter, Jesus refers specifically to this prophecy of Joel chapter 3. There's no doubt about it. He says in Matthew 25 verse 29 Matthew 25 verse 31 When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory, and all the nations will be gathered before him. That's the scene of Joel chapter 3 verse 1. When he comes as king and you have to bear in mind that in the Bible order the king is always the judge.

In our political systems we separate between the the secular authority and the judge. But in the Bible the king is always the judge. So when he comes as king, one of the first things he will do is judge the nations

remaining alive on earth at that time.

And his judgment will be to determine one thing. Which nations will be admitted into his kingdom, and which nations will be excluded from his kingdom? The nations to be admitted are the sheep nations, whom he sets on his right hand. The nations to be excluded are the goat nations, whom he sets on his left hand.

What is the principle of division? Exactly what Joel says. The way they've treated God's people, Israel. And so he says to those who have shown kindness to the Jews, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me.

And then he says to those who did not show kindness, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did not do it to me. The sheep nations will go away into everlasting life, and the goat nations will go away into everlasting punishment. Can you see how close that is? Because probably the major political issue that dominates discussion today is Israel.

About 40% of all United Nations resolutions concern Israel. That's ridiculous when you consider that it's a nation of 5 million people. And a territory that's so small that it could be included in most American states.

Each individual state. It's no larger than Wales. Why is there such an emphasis in the political world on Israel? Well the answer is, it's God's doing.

Because the nations are going to be judged by the way they have responded to what God is doing for Israel. Now I want to share something personal which relates to this. Jesus said, my brethren.

And he was talking about the Jewish people. After all, according to the flesh, they are his brothers and sisters. And remember even in eternity he's going to be called the lion of the tribe of Judah.

He never loses that identity. Well, I want to share something that's subjective and personal. But a few years ago in Jerusalem, I woke up about 2 a.m. in the morning with a strange sense of excitement.

I felt really excited. So I said to myself, what am I excited about? And I got the thought, you're excited because all heaven is excited. And you're participating in the excitement of heaven.

So I thought, well what is all heaven excited about? And I got the answer, heaven is excited because Jesus is excited. So then I said to myself, well what is Jesus excited about? And I got a clear answer because the time for his reconciliation with his brothers is so close at hand. Can you imagine what it means to him that he's been disowned and disallowed by his own brothers for 19 centuries.

And he has really had very little access to them. They've shut him out. But now he's excited.

Can you believe that Jesus gets excited? I do. What's he excited about? He's very soon going to be reconciled with his Jewish brothers and sisters. And in the story of Joseph, in the book of Genesis, you get a wonderful picture which illustrates this.

I wonder how many of you have appreciated the fact that the story of Joseph is really a beautiful parable of the life of Jesus. Joseph was the chosen son. The son who bade his father.

The son who was adorned with a special uniform to mark his position in the family. But his brothers were jealous of him, you know that. And they eventually sold him to slave traders and he went into Egypt and disappeared.

And as far as they were concerned he was gone. They just wrote him off. In Egypt, after going down into prison, he was exalted to the highest position in the Egyptian Empire.

In one day. Doesn't take God long when his time comes. And he was complete control of the whole system of Egypt.

And then God permitted a famine to come in the land of Canaan. And eventually Joseph's brothers had to go down to Egypt to beg for corn. And when they got there, whom did they have to interview? Joseph.

But he was dressed like an Egyptian. He spoke Egyptian. They had no idea he even understood Hebrew.

They didn't have any idea of who he was. And the first time he dealt with them, sent them away and got them back the second time. And then when they were under real pressure I want to read this passage.

I have never been able to read the story of Joseph since I was saved up to this day without crying. In fact, when Ruth and I read it together, at this point I say, you have to take over. I can't read it.

And then I think it's the witness of the Holy Spirit to something. So, Genesis 45. Then Joseph could not restrain himself before all those who stood by him.

And he cried out, make everyone go out from me. So no one stood with him while Joseph made himself known to his brother. He wanted a very intimate, personal family scene.

He didn't want anybody outside the family to be there. And that's how Jesus is going to deal with Israel. He's going to reveal himself individually, personally, to them as a people.

I don't know whether you've talked with Jews who've become believers. If you do, ask them to tell you their testimony. How they met Jesus.

And I think you'll find more than 50% of them had a private, personal encounter with Jesus. That was true of Ruth. And it's true of most of the Jewish believers that I know.

I think in a way, if I can say it right, Jesus is jealous of the privilege of revealing himself to his brothers and sisters. He says, this is a family matter, I'll do it myself. Now that's not always true.

I've led Jews to the Lord. But I generally expect I'll tell them the truth, I'll pray and Jesus will do the job. And then it says, verse 2, he wept aloud, and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard it.

He was so emotional that though he'd sent them out, they could hear him crying. Then Joseph said to his brothers, I am Joseph, does my father still live? But his brothers could not answer him, for they were frightened at his presence. Then Joseph said to his brothers, please come near to me.

And they came near. And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom you sold into Egypt. But now do not therefore be grieved or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here.

For God sent me before you to preserve life. What a gracious spirit that was, wasn't it? And you see, you may not be familiar with the Jewish attitude to Jesus, but for him he's been a Gentile. He doesn't, they don't think of him as Jewish.

They don't see him in a Jewish context. All the illustrations in our Bibles and all the way we talk about him, all are gentilized. Some of them will say, yes he's the Gentile Messiah, but Jewish, no.

And that's how Joseph appeared to his brothers. He appeared to them as an Egyptian. They didn't even know that he understood Hebrew when they spoke amongst themselves.

But at that moment they suddenly realized who he was. And I believe that's what's going to be the climax of history in this period. The revelation of Jesus personally to his brothers.

I'm sorry to say that that is all there is of this recording.

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