

Teaching End Times Prophecies - Part 3

by Derek Prince

The sermon discusses the Great Tribulation, the elect, the sign of the Son of Man, and the rapture, emphasizing the importance of Scripture and the warning against trusting in supernatural signs and wonders.

Duration: 29:11

Scripture: Matthew 24:22, Ephesians 1:4

Topics: "End Times", "Eschatology"

Description

This sermon by Derek Prince delves into the concept of the end times, discussing the signs that will precede the return of Jesus Christ. It emphasizes the importance of understanding God's chosen ones, the role of the church, and the significance of being prepared for the events that will unfold. Derek Prince highlights the need to discern the truth from deception, especially in the face of false prophets and supernatural occurrences, urging believers to anchor themselves in the Word of God for guidance and protection.

Transcript

Derek Prince Ministries. Proclaiming the inspired Word of God around the world. Derek Prince is an internationally recognized Bible teacher and author.

Through books, audios, videos, and radio broadcasts, Derek seeks to reach the unreached and teach the untaught. In over 50 years of ministry, Derek has reached over 100 nations in more than 50 languages. And now, Derek Prince.

Now, when you consider what's happened, even in our days, you consider the Holocaust. Six million Jews cruelly murdered, burned in ovens. And you consider what Stalin did, responsible, I believe, for the death of seven million people in the Soviet Union.

Or Mao Zedong, who acknowledged responsibility for the death of 60 million Chinese. And something's going to happen that's worse than all of that. Something that has never happened until now, and never will happen again.

Now people used to laugh at this statement. Jesus went on to say, Unless those days were shortened, no flesh, no human being would be saved. But for the elect's sake, those days will be shortened.

I can remember, as a young preacher, when people just pointed out, that's ridiculous. It could never be. But scientists tell us today, there is enough nuclear explosive material in existence, on earth, to destroy the entire human race 50 times over.

I'm not saying that's the way it will happen. But I'm pointing out that it's not a ridiculous impossibility. It's a very real possibility.

And notice the word elect, which occurs altogether in this passage three times. Very important word. Elect means chosen.

I don't know whether you can accept this, but I have become convinced from the Bible. And I'm not a Presbyterian. I wouldn't mind being a Presbyterian, but I'm not.

And I'm not a follower of Calvin, although I have a respect for Calvin. But I have concluded from the Scripture that God has those whom He has chosen. And He chose them before the foundation of the world.

Like you and me. You know that about us. You read Ephesians chapter 1. God chose us in Christ, before the foundation of the world.

You're not an afterthought. You're not an accident looking for somewhere to happen. You're part of an eternal plan.

And that eternal plan includes a whole lot of people that are not yet believers. And God knows each one of them. And God will not rest until He has gathered every single one in.

That's why I'm so deeply impressed by the words of Paul in 2 Timothy chapter 2 verse 10. Therefore I endure all things for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. Paul had a vision.

God's got His chosen ones in every age, in every nation. And I'm willing to go through whatever it takes to gather in the chosen ones. Because he said the age will not close, until all the chosen ones have been gathered in.

So unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved. But for the elect's sake, those days will be shortened. In other words, if the tribulation, and this is the great tribulation.

We'll look at it in Scripture in a moment. If God had not shortened the actual period, no human being would remain alive. The word that's used for shortening, I'm told is used for cutting off the tail of a dog.

You know, some dogs have to have their tails docked. Well it's not much of the dog that's cut off. But it's just the last little bit.

And it seems to me, that's what Jesus is saying. Just the last little bit, I'll spare you. But some may be left alive on earth.

Now let's look at the theme of the great tribulation for a moment. Revelation 7, verses 13-14. We've already looked at this throng from all peoples, nations, tribes and tongues.

That's gathering before the throne. And then it says, One of the elders answered, saying to me, Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from? And John was very wise. He said, Sir, you know.

If God asks you a hard question, that's the way to answer. Sir, you know. So he said to me, These are the ones who are coming out of the great tribulation.

It's not have come out, who are coming. John was actually seeing them streaming out of the great tribulations. They've washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

The great tribulation. The English language, by the use of the, indicates that it's only once. This is unique.

Never happened before, will never happen again. Exactly as Jesus said. And then it says, wonderful words, Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple.

And he who sits on the throne will dwell among them. As Scott said, not just visit, but dwell. That's a beautiful picture, isn't it? We need to focus on that, because we're going to have to go through a lot.

Let's not lose sight of the clothes. Otherwise we'll get wearied. And as the Bible says, faint in our minds.

Never lose sight of God's planned clothes for the age. It's worth going through everything, to end there. All right.

One other scripture that impresses me is Romans chapter 2, verses 9 and 10. I would like to say, as just an objective matter, I was not interested in the Jewish people when God saved me. I had a couple of Jewish friends.

They were almost totally assimilated. They didn't live very different from Gentiles. But God, through circumstances and through his working in us, has compelled me to become involved with the Jewish people.

I am an unusual person. I have six adopted Jewish daughters. Not many people have that.

I didn't plan that. God did. But I want to say that an understanding of God's dealings with the Jews will give you a far clearer insight into all of scripture, than you will ever have if you don't understand that.

So, Paul says in Romans 2, verses 9 and 10. And this is the middle of one of his rather long sentences. Tribulation and anguish on every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek or the Gentile.

But glory, honor and peace to everyone who works what is good. To the Jew first and also to the Greek. So there is an order in which God deals.

When it's tribulation, it's to the Jew first, but then to the Gentile. See, that makes me tremble when I think about the Holocaust. Because if that happened to six million Jews, what is going to happen to Gentiles? It will never end with the Jews.

They're the starting point. It's to the Jew first, then to the Greek. All right, let's go back to Matthew 24.

We get to verse 23, another then. Then, if anyone says to you, look, here is the Christ, the Messiah of that, do not believe it. For false messiahs and false prophets will arise and show great signs and wonders.

So as to deceive, if possible, even the elect. Notice, the chosen ones. My personal opinion is the reason they cannot be deceived is because God has chosen them.

He'll keep his hand over them. Otherwise they would be deceived. That may not be the way you see it, but that's the way I've come to understand it.

And let me point out that the ability to perform dramatic signs and wonders, does not always attest the truth. Satan is capable of many dramatic signs and wonders. Charismatics tend to have this feeling, well, if it's supernatural, it must be from God.

That is not true. Please bear that in mind. In Acts 16, there was this fortune teller girl who was a slave.

And she followed Paul and Silas in the streets saying, These men are the servants of the Most High God, who show to us the way of salvation. She was the first person in Philippi to know who they were. But she was a servant of Satan.

She had a satanic word of knowledge. How did Paul react? Did he make her a member of the church of Philippi? No, he cast a demon, a fortune telling out of her. Let me tell you, all fortune telling is demonic.

And they do often come out with the truth. Ruth has given me permission to say this, but before she was saved, somebody advised her to go to a fortune teller. She went to this lady who had never seen her before, and never saw her afterwards, knew nothing about her.

And this woman told her three things. Your husband has left you, you have three children, and you are barren. You cannot have children.

Every one of those statements was true. But it was Satan who was telling her. What was Satan's purpose? To get Ruth hooked on the satanic supernatural.

By the grace of God, she never went back. And a little later, she met the Lord. But please, I want to warn you, because I see so many charismatics are absolutely set up for the Antichrist.

There's only one sure guarantee of what is true, and that is the Scripture. If you go away from that, you'll end up in trouble and deception. Let me show you what it says in Revelation chapter 13.

Revelation 13. This is about the false prophet, who is the main supporter of the Antichrist. And it says in Revelation 13, verse 13.

He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven on the earth, in the sight of men. And he deceives those who dwell on the earth, by those signs which he was granted to do in the sight of the beast. Telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast, who was wounded by the sword, and live.

Now listen, this man will be able to make fire come down from heaven. I don't know any charismatic preacher today that can do that. And yet he's a servant of Satan.

And he uses these supernatural signs to deceive people. So please do not merely trust the signs. There are many, many signs that are used to confirm the truth of God's word.

But the truth is not established by signs. It's established by the word of God. Jesus said, your word is truth.

That's all you need to know. God's word is truth. Anything contrary to the word of God is not true.

And it's not from God. All right. Now we come to verse 20.

Well, Jesus says in verse 25, See I've told you before. In other words, you can't say you haven't been warned. And I say that to everybody here tonight.

You'll never be able to say from now on, you haven't been warned. Because I've warned you. And so has Jesus.

Verse 26, Therefore if they say to you, Look, he's in the desert, do not go out. Or, Look, he's in the inner rooms, do not believe it. Why? Because when the Lord comes back, it's going to be something visible to the whole world.

Now there has been a teaching that there'll be a secret rapture. I'm not interested to argue with people. But to my observation, the last word that describes the rapture is secret.

I don't know of anything more public that will ever take place in human history. Let me show you. Verse 27, For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.

That's not secret. Now let me go ahead a little bit and look at what follows. I'll go through and then I'll follow.

For wherever the carcass is, there the vultures will be gathered together. How many of you have seen vultures? Some of you from the southwest have at least. The first time I saw vultures was in Egypt.

And it was dramatic. I saw this speck right up in the blue sky hanging there. And it was a bird.

And it circled slowly and began to come lower and lower and lower. And then other specks joined it. And as they circled, they came lower and lower.

And you know what I knew immediately? There's something dying down there. They're just waiting for the death throw and they'll descend on it. And the first thing they'll go for is the eyes.

Jesus said, when you see all the vultures circling around, you know where the carcass is. Now this is simply a theory of mine and I may change it. But I'm inclined to think it refers to the way people are going to relate to the city of Jerusalem.

All the vultures are already up in the air circling and coming lower. Because everybody wants a piece of the pie. The United States, Britain, the European Confederation, the Muslims, Soviet Russia, the Pope.

I mean all the vultures. Well, you don't have to believe what I say. I could be wrong, it's happened before.

But this is so vivid to me. All right, we've got to go on. Press on.

Now, please note, verse 29. Note the word immediately. Immediately after the tribulation of those days, the sun will be darkened, the moon will not give its light, the stars will fall from heaven, the powers of heavens will be shaken.

Now, you can understand the stars falling various ways. But I'm inclined to think it means the satanic angels in the heavenlies will be dethroned. They will be cast down.

I don't think it means the stars we see at night. Let me give you two quick examples of this. Revelation chapter 8, verse 10.

Then the third angel sounded, and a great star fell from heaven burning like a torch. And it fell on the third of the rivers and on the springs of the water. And the name of the star is Wormwood.

So that's a satanic angel, dislodged from heaven. And then at the beginning of chapter 9, verse 1. Then the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fallen from heaven to the earth. And to him was given the key to the bottomless pit.

And he opened the bottomless pit, and so on. So, satanic angels are stars in the heaven. And I don't say this is necessarily true, but I don't envisage the whole body of the constellations falling.

I envisage the powers of heaven, that Satan's throne, kingdom in the heaven is being shaken to the point where his angels start to be shaken out of it. Now that's just offered as an indication. Verse 30.

Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven. And then, notice two thens in that verse. Then all the tribes of the earth will mourn.

And they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. Hallelujah! May we be privileged to see that sign. Now, I want to go on with this theme of the secret rapture.

I'm not interested in attacking anybody's theology, but I really am interested in finding out the truth. If we turn to 1 Thessalonians chapter 4, it seems to me this is a more full description of what's going to happen at that point. 1 Thessalonians chapter 4. Beginning at verse 13.

But I do not want you to be ignorant brethren. Not ignorant brethren, but ignorant brethren. Concerning those who have fallen asleep, as Christians who have died, lest you sorrow as others also who have no hope.

For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep, those Christians who have died, in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who are asleep. In other words, we'll have no advantage over those who have died.

On the contrary. For the Lord Himself, praise God, the Lord Himself, will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel and with the trumpet of God. Now, to me that is anything but secret.

I can't think how anybody could be unaware that something's going on when you've got the Lord shouting, the archangel speaking, and the trumpet of God sounding. And then it says, Thus and we shall be caught up together with them in clouds to meet the Lord in the air. There are two Greek words for air.

One is aither, which gives us ether. The other is air, which gives us air. And air is the word for the lower air contiguous with the earth's surface.

This is the word that's used here. In other words, Jesus is going to be pretty close to earth. When we're caught up to meet Him.

We're going to meet the Lord in the air. Now some people say, the word rapture isn't in the New Testament. That's quite true.

It depends on what translation you use. Because the New Testament was not originally written in English. And you could easily translate this, We shall be raptured to meet the Lord in the air.

It would be a perfectly legitimate translation. Now what about this word rapture? I want to tell you it's a fascinating word. It has gripped me.

The Greek word is harpazo. Don't worry about that. I'll give you about 15 different passages in the New Testament where it's used.

So this will give you a pretty clear picture of what it's going to be like. First of all, in Matthew 10, three times in that chapter, it's used of a wolf snatching a sheep from the fold. Alright, that's violent sudden.

In Matthew 13, it's used of a bird coming down, picking up a seed and carrying it off. It's used several times in the New Testament of people caught up to heaven. Philip, well not up to heaven, but caught up from the earth.

After Philip had baptized the eunuch in Acts chapter 8, he was caught away. He was raptured. Paul speaks of a friend of his who mentions twice in 2 Corinthians 11, he was caught up to the third heaven.

And in Revelation 12, 7 it says the man-child will be caught up into the air. And four times in other passages it's used of taking somebody by force from a crowd or from some situation. So I made a little list of the features that it implies.

It will happen without warning, sudden and forceful. That's how the rapture will be. Without warning, sudden and forceful.

And there will be no time to be getting ready. If you're getting ready, you'll be too late. You have to be ready.

All right. Now let's go on to verse 29 again. I want to point this out.

I am not interested in knocking down people's theories. But there are some things that I have to say, because I don't think some theories agree with Scripture. It says immediately after the tribulation of those days, the Lord is going to come.

Now there is a theory that the church is going to become so powerful politically, that it will take over the world, set the world neatly in order, and offer it back to Jesus when He comes. I have to say this is not in line with what we say. Immediately after the tribulation, Jesus will come.

If the church is going to be responsible for the condition of the world before Jesus comes, then the church is going to be responsible for the tribulation. There is not the least indication that the world will be in good order when Jesus comes. On the contrary, it will be in the worst order that it's ever been in.

And it will take Jesus and not the church to put it right. All right. Then, verse 30, the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven.

I don't know what that is. Then all the tribes of the earth will mourn. And if you read in Zechariah chapter 12, it says all the tribes of Israel will mourn when they see their Messiah, and recognize that they were the ones who crucified Him.

Apparently it will extend to all the tribes of the earth. I love to think of the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. There's a verse in Luke chapter 9, I think.

This is just one of my favorite passages. Be patient with me. Luke 9 verse 26.

For whoever is ashamed of me and my words, of him the Son of Man will be ashamed when He comes. Now listen. In His own glory, and in His Father's, and of the holy angels.

So when Jesus comes there's going to be a triple glory. His glory, the Father's glory, and the glory of the angels. And it says in Isaiah 24, the sun and moon will be embarrassed.

Because their light will be so dim and ineffective by comparison that they just have nothing to talk about. Now this appeals to me. I can envisage it.

And furthermore, that light so brilliant will not hurt your eyes. That's what I'm looking forward to. I don't know about you, but I am looking forward to that.

If I've died, I will be aroused. If I've not died, I will be there to see it. That's worth waiting for.

Can you say amen to that? It's worth enduring for. If we lose sight of that, we're going to get into a slough of despond. Because things are going to get worse.

The birth pangs are not going to diminish, they're going to increase. The question is, as I said before, do you really want the baby? And you can find out by your own reaction. All right.

Verse 31. And he, the Lord, will send his angels with the great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. That is not the church being caught up.

That's those who remain on earth who are God's chosen ones. And they're preserved because he has chosen them. I know this isn't easy for some people, but we are saved not because we chose Jesus, but because Jesus chose us.

Do you recognize that? Jesus said to his disciples, you have not chosen me, I have chosen you. Now, when God has chosen you, you have to respond to his choice, but you never initiate the choice. And God knows everyone whom he has chosen.

And I understand that the age will not close till everyone is there. Amen. Now, we've got one more passage we can deal with, and that's marvelous.

I never thought I'd get so far. Because tomorrow we have to get through the whole of chapter 25. Now, verse 32.

Learn this parable from the fig tree. When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near. So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near at the very doors, or he is near.

Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things are fulfilled. Now, that's a parable about the fig tree. But in Luke 21, it's taken a little further.

Luke 21, verse 29. He spoke to them a parable. Look at the fig tree and all the trees.

Now, living in this part of the world, if you do live anywhere near here, you're familiar with the fact that we have four seasons. Spring, summer, autumn, and winter. There are parts of the world where they don't have seasons.

I was in East Africa for five years, teaching African students. And I wanted to get them interested in this passage. But I had to explain to them, first of all, in some parts of the world, the trees lose their leaves, stay bare, and then put on their leaves again.

And Jesus said, when you see the trees put on their leaves, you don't have to go to the public library to find out what's happening next. You know summer is near. And when you see this happening in the world, you don't have to go to the church to ask the pastor, because he might not give you the right answer.

But you see and know for yourself that summer is now near. So you see and know. You understand? This is one of the great signs of the close of the age.

It's the dwindling of colonialism and the rise of nationalism. And it's almost universal. And we haven't seen the end of it yet.

But when we see that, we know summer is near. We see and know for ourselves. We don't have to go to some theologian to find out.

He might not give us the right answer. But Jesus said, you can know for yourself. For more information, visit www.fema.org

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