

The Fig Tree



Restoration (Part 3)
by Derek Prince

It's good to be with you again as we continue today to look together at the situation in the world, viewing it not from the standpoint of the media but viewing it instead from God's perspective.

Yesterday I continued to unfold God's end-time purpose for His people summed up in the one word, "restoration."

Today I'm going to show you how many centuries ago God appointed a special time in history for this process of restoration and, more important still, I'm going to tell you why I believe that we today are actually living in that appointed time.

I'm going to turn first to Psalm 102. Now, the opening part of this psalm is a personal lament by the psalmist. Everything seems to have dried up and withered all around him. He sees nothing to encourage him. He feels, in a sense, all hope is lost. He's in a condition of despair, personally. But then, at the 12th verse, he turns his eyes away from himself and his own situation, lifts them up to the Lord, focuses on the Lord and what the Lord is doing, and immediately his whole attitude changes to one of optimism and joy. And that's a good pattern to follow. When you feel depressed and hopeless and without any source of encouragement, stop looking at yourself and your own situation, lift up your eyes to the Lord and hear what he has to say—and that can change your mood.

All right, now we'll read from verse 12 onwards in Psalm 102, what the psalmist says as he focuses his eyes upon the Lord. Verse 12:

> "But you, O Lord, sit enthroned forever; your renown endures through all generations. [It's good to remember that God rules on His throne and He never abdicates from it. He's there all the time. Then the key verse in a way is verse 13:] You will arise and have compassion on Zion, for it is time to show favor to her; the appointed time has come."

Zion, I believe, is one of the scriptural titles for all of God's covenant people, all those who are related to God through a covenant. Notice that there is an appointed time when God is

going to show favor on His covenant people. The word "favor" is directly related to the New Testament word for "grace." It always means something which we cannot earn or cannot deserve but comes to us simply because it's God's will to give it to us.

> "For her stones are dear to your servants; her very dust moves them to pity. [Even in desolation, we should be deeply concerned about the condition of God's covenant people. Their desolation should move us to pity. Verse 15:] The nations will fear the name of the Lord, all the kings of the earth will revere your glory."

God's going to intervene on behalf of His people in such a way that it will make a deep impact on all the nations of the world and their rulers. They will stand back in awe and amazement when they see what God does for His people. Verse 15:

> "For the Lord will rebuild Zion and appear in His glory."

Rebuild is just another word for restoration. God is going to restore Zion, He's going to rebuild Zion. And when He does so, He's going to appear in His glory. You'll remember that I said yesterday about the time of the restoration of all things that will be the period in which Jesus will again appear in His glory. So these two passages agree exactly. Verse 17:

> "He [that's God] will respond to the prayer of the destitute; he will not despise their plea." (NIV)

Sometimes we think people are praying and praying and praying and there seems to be no answer. But there's a day coming when God is going to answer many, many prayers in a very short time.

Just recently, I was at the Western Wall in Jerusalem, a place I usually go to each time I'm in the city. And I was just quietly worshiping the Lord at the wall, and I looked at all the innumerable little pieces of paper stuck into the cracks which represent prayer requests of thousands of God's people. And I thought, "People keep on putting those prayer requests in the wall and sometimes there seems to be no answer." But the Spirit of God came over me and it was as though God said to me, "There's a day coming when I'm going to answer all those prayer requests in just a very brief period of time." Verse 18:

> "Let this be written for future generations, that a people not yet created may praise the Lord..." (NIV)

You see, those words were written for our benefit because I believe we're in that generation.

Let me share this with you: I believe God's people over the centuries have been so slack to praise God the way that He deserves that God says at the end of the age, "If I'm going to be praised the way I deserve, I'm going to have to create a people to do it." And do you know what I believe? I believe God, through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit today, is creating a people. We're part of that generation that's created to praise the Lord because we see His intervention on behalf of His people.

Let me just point out certain simple facts about that prophecy that I've read. First of all, in God's prophetic calendar there is an appointed time to have compassion or show favor or grace to His covenant people. Secondly, it will take the form of a divine intervention that will speak to all nations. Thirdly, the Lord's rebuilding or restoring Zion immediately precedes His appearing again in glory. Fourthly, it will be the answer to countless prayers. And fifthly, at this time the Lord is creating a people especially to praise Him.

Now I'm going to show you how this time or period of restoration or the appointed time of God's favor applies particularly to the fig tree, that's to Israel. I'm going to give you just a brief outline of significant dates in Israel's recent history, going back to just the close of the last century. My theme is that the process of restoration of Israel significantly began just about the turn of the present century. Let me give you briefly these dates:

> 1897 "The first Zionist world conference was held in Switzerland."

> 1904 "Theodore Herzl, the visionary prophet of Zionism, died at the age of and on his deathbed he declared, 'Men call me a visionary and a dreamer but within fifty years my vision will be fulfilled.' It was fulfilled 44 years after his death when the state of Israel was born."

> 1917 "Is another key date. It marked the end of four centuries of Turkish desolation of the land of Israel and also the Balfour Declaration, by the British government, declaring that they viewed with favor the creation of a national home for the Jewish people in the land of

> Israel."

And then we move on to perhaps one of the two most significant dates:

> 1948 "The actual rebirth of the state of Israel as an independent, sovereign state and, lastly,"

> 1967 "The time at which, for the first time in 2,500 years the Old City of Jerusalem, the original city of Jerusalem, once again came under the government of Israel. Note that Israel totally possesses it but that they are again the governing agency for that little piece of territory which is the key to so much of human history."

Reminding us of the words of Jesus in Luke 21, "Jerusalem [that's the old city area] shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled."

I had the personal privilege of being present in the land of Israel when some of these key events took place. I went there as a soldier in the British Army in 1944. After my discharge from the British Army I remained living in Israel into 1948, through the period of the first Arab-Jewish war. So, I'm speaking about things that I witnessed first-hand and I just want to give you my personal opinion. I believe that in this period of restoration of Israel we have witnessed a greater exodus, a greater miracle, a greater demonstration of God's sovereignty and power than in even the exodus of Israel from Egypt under Moses. Furthermore, I believe that the prophetic Scriptures declare that it will be so.

Let me read to you from Jeremiah 16:14 & 15:

> "'Therefore behold, days are coming,' declares the Lord, 'when it will no longer be said, 'As the Lord lives, who brought up the sons of Israel out of the land of Egypt,' But, 'As the Lord lives, who brought up the sons of Israel from the land of the north and from all the countries where He had banished them.' For I will restore them to their own land which I gave to their fathers.'" (NAS)

The exodus was a tremendous miracle. For many, many, many centuries Israel has lived in memory of that exodus, celebrating it each year at the Passover. But their own prophetic Scriptures declare that a greater exodus is to come. Not just from Egypt, not just from one nation or from one situation of persecution and bondage, but from the north country (and that primarily, is Europe and Russia, because it's north of the land of Israel), but from all the countries where God had banished them. And God says, "I will restore them to their own land which I gave to their fathers." Notice again that key promise, "I will restore." We are living in the days that were predicted here in this prophecy in Jeremiah. What an excitement and what a privilege.

But remember that restoration for Israel is initially geographical and political but ultimately spiritually.

So, our time is up for today. I'll be back with you again tomorrow at this time. Tomorrow I'll be speaking about the other part of God's plan of restoration for His people, the restoration of the vine, the church.

Radio Program

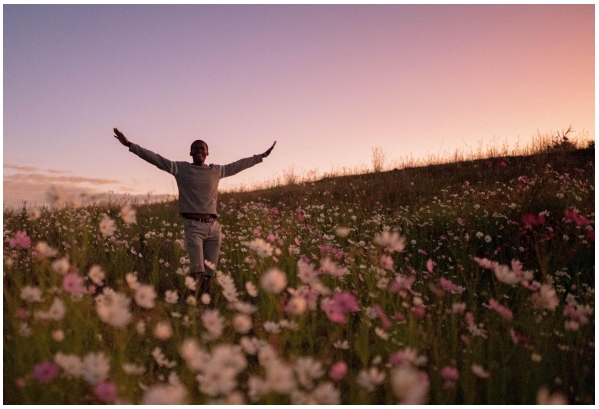
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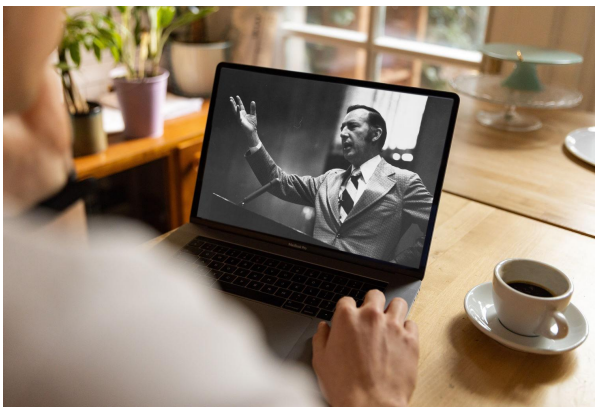
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