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Prophecies of Dispersal



Restoration (Part 11)
by Derek Prince

It's good to be with you at the beginning of a new week, sharing with you out of truths that life has taught me, truths that have made the difference between success and failure in my life and can do the same for you.

First let me say "Thank you" to those of you who have been writing to me. Before I finish this talk, we'll be giving you a mailing address to which you may write. Feel free to share with us your personal needs, your problems, your prayer requests.

For the past two weeks I've been sharing with you how, in our world situation today, God is working out His purposes of restoration for the two peoples to whom He has committed Himself by a covenant that He will never break; that is, Israel and the church.

Last week I focused on the restoration of the church. This week I'll be focusing on the restoration of Israel. In each case have defined restoration as the process of putting things back in their right place and their right condition. The very fact that restoration is needed indicates that the things to be restored have not been in their right place and condition.

However, there is an important difference in the order of restoration for Israel and for the church. The restoration of the church is primarily spiritual, although this, in turn, will inevitably produce results that will be manifest in the natural realm. On the other hand, the restoration of Israel is initially political and geographical, but it will not be complete until it reaches a climax of spiritual fullness.

In my talk today I will deal with the situation that has made restoration necessary for Israel as a people; that is, I will explain how they got out of their right place and their right condition.

In the book of Deuteronomy, before Israel ever entered the land of their God-given inheritance, Moses clearly predicted three things: first, that Israel would be disobedient and unfaithful to God; second, that as a judgment, God would uproot them and scatter them among the Gentiles, the other nations; third, that the land itself would then become barren and desolate.

Here is one of many such predictions found in Deuteronomy 28, beginning at verse 58 and following:

> "If you are not careful to observe all the words of this law which are written in this book, to fear this honored and awesome name, the Lord your God, And it shall come about that as the Lord delighted over you to prosper you, and multiply you, so the Lord will delight over you to make you perish and destroy you; and you shall be torn from the land where you are entering to possess it. Moreover, the Lord will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other end of the earth; and there you shall serve other gods, wood and stone, which you or your fathers have not known. And among those nations you shall find no rest, and there shall be no resting place for the sole of your foot; but there the Lord will give you a trembling heart, failing of eyes, and despair of soul. So your life shall hang in doubt before you; and you shall be in dread night and day, and shall have no assurance of your life." (NAS)

Now let's look for a moment at the history that's involved in the fulfillment of these prophecies. Historically there have been two major dispersals of Israel into exile out of their own land. The first took place between about 720 and 600 B.C. In this dispersal, which was in two stages, first of all the northern kingdom (known as Israel) was taken into exile by Assyria, and then the southern kingdom (known as Judah) was taken into exile by Babylon. From the exile in Babylon there was a partial return about 530 B.C. and in the years following.

The second major dispersal, by far the greater, took place about 70 A.D., when virtually the whole Jewish nation resident in the land of Israel was either killed or driven into exile by the Romans. The majority of the Jewish people remained in dispersion until the State of Israel was reborn about the middle of this century. But even now only about one-quarter of world Jewry are again resident in their own land.

For most of the period of this second dispersion, the one that began in 70 A.D., the condition of the Jews has corresponded exactly to the prediction in Deuteronomy 28 in the verses that I read.

Just let's look again at some of those words that Moses spoke to Israel.

"You shall be torn from the land."

"The Lord will scatter you among all people, from one end of the earth to the other end of the earth."

"Among those nations you shall find no rest."

"No resting place for the sole of your foot."

"The Lord will give you a trembling heart, failing of eyes, despair of soul, you will be in dread night and day and have no assurance of your life."

Anyone familiar, even in general terms, with Jewish history during the past two thousand years who is honest would have to admit that those prophecies have been exactly and repeatedly filled in nation after nation and country after country all around the world. Furthermore, we have to acknowledge that the fulfillment did not cease in biblical times or even many centuries ago, but that it has continued right into the present century.

A similar prediction is found in Leviticus 26 from verses 13 to the end of the chapter. I'll just take a few verses out of this total prophetic passage. In verses 32 and 33, the Lord says:

> "'I will lay waste the land, so that your enemies who live there will be appalled. I will scatter you among the nations and will draw out my sword and pursue you. Your land will be laid waste, and your cities will lie in ruins.' 'As for those of you who are left, I will make their hearts so fearful in the lands of their enemies that the sound of a wind-blown leaf will put them to flight. They will run as though fleeing from the sword, and they will fall, even though no one is pursuing them. They will stumble over one another as though fleeing from the sword, even though no one is pursuing them. So you will not be able to stand before your enemies.'" (NIV)

Again, we have to observe that those prophecies have been exactly and repeatedly fulfilled in all the centuries of Israel's dispersal and among nation after nation and in continent after continent.

Now in this passage in Leviticus 26, verses 13 to the end, two basic reasons are given why God dealt with Israel with this severity. Each of these reasons is given four times in this passage. The first one is "you will not listen to Me." The second one is "you will be hostile to Me," or another translation says, "you will walk contrary to Me."

Let me just repeat those two reasons, and remember each of them is stated four times. These are the basic reasons for God's judgment on Israel. First of all, "you will not listen to Me," and second "you will be hostile to Me." I would sum that up in this expression: Stubborn, persistent opposition to God. And I would say this has been manifested in two main ways. First, disobeying their God-given law; second, rejecting their God-sent prophets. And I believe the last and greatest of those prophets was Jesus of Nazareth.

In general, the record of Israel is a lesson written across the pages of history, a warning to all races and all nations of the consequences of stubbornness and disobedience toward God and His messengers. And the same principles work out in the history of all nations. The history of Israel is recorded in the Scripture, but the same principles work out for all nations, for the United States included.

However, thank God Israel is also a demonstration of God's mercy and covenant-keeping faithfulness. Almost all the predictions in the Bible of judgment and dispersal for Israel indicate that these will never be total or irrevocable. Always the door is left open for God's mercy.

A good and a brief example of judgment and mercy combined closely together in two verses is found in Hosea 3:4–5:

> "For the sons of Israel will remain for many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred pillar, and without ephod or household idols." (NAS)

Note, in the day when Hosea made that prophecy the sons of Israel had every one of those six things that are listed. They had a king, they had princes, they had sacrifices, sacred pillars, ephods and household idols. And it was almost inconceivable to the natural mind that they would never be deprived of all those things. And yet the fact remains that for two thousand years and more the sons of Israel have been without all those things. That prediction has been exactly fulfilled.

Now let's look at the next verse:

> "Afterward the sons of Israel will return and seek the Lord their God and David their king; and they will come trembling to the Lord and to His goodness in the last days." (NAS)

Note the concluding revelation is not of judgment but of mercy, of God's grace, that will bring the people of Israel back to the Lord their God in repentance and in seeking Him.

Let me close by saying this. It would be most illogical to believe the predictions of dispersal but reject the predictions of restoration. That would be totally illogical. If the one had been fulfilled, then so will the other.

All right. Our time is up for today. I'll be back with you again tomorrow at this time. Tomorrow I'll be speaking about the prophecies of Israel's restoration.

Radio Program

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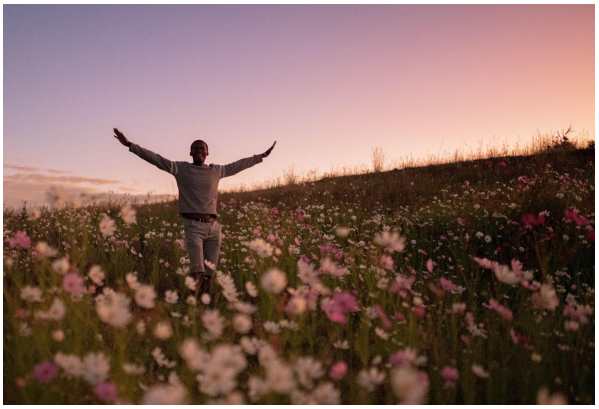

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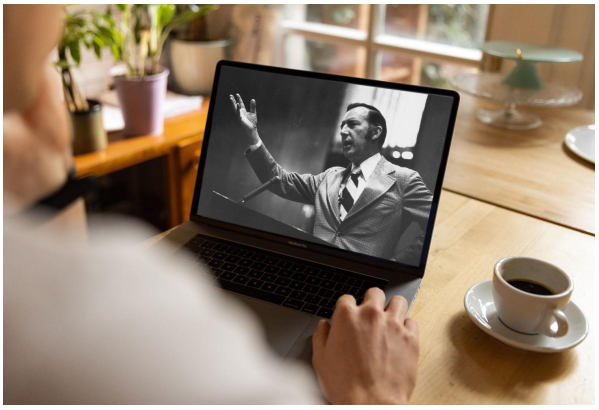

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