

God's Three End Time Purposes (Part 3)



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by Derek Prince

Previously we looked at signs, now we look at the sign.

> "This gospel of the kingdom will be preached [or proclaimed] in all the world as a witness to all the nations and then the end will come."

What is the final, conclusive sign? The proclamation of the gospel of the kingdom in all nations.

That is not a popular message. It says in Acts 17 about the apostles in Corinth, the enemies criticized them and they summed up their message this way. First of all they said, "These people have turned the world upside down." And then they said, "These all say there is another King, one Jesus." That was how the unbelievers summed up the message. I want to ask you, is that how unbelievers would sum up the message of the gospel as we proclaim it today? I don't think so. Mostly we go with the approach God will meet your need. It's true, He will meet your need but the problem with that is it leaves people with the impression that God is there to meet their needs. That is the attitude of most American Christians today. God is a good God and He'll meet my need. The truth of the matter is God doesn't exist for you, you exist for God. The most important thing is not to have your need met, it's to glorify God. There has to be a different presentation.

But this is the sign:

> "This gospel of the kingdom shall be proclaimed in all the world as witness to all the nations and then the end will come."

That's an absolutely specific answer to a specific question. Do you agree with me? Let me just turn for a moment to a picture of the harvest in Revelation 7:9–10. It says in verse 9:

> "After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number of all nations, tribes, peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a

> loud voice saying, 'Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne and to the Lamb.'"

And notice there had to be people there from all nations, tribes, peoples and tongues. So people of every tongue, every tribal background, every ethnic group, have to be reached with the gospel. I believe God is jealous for the glory of His Son. In the end Jesus will not have died in vain for any ethnic group, any linguistic group. There will be at least one representative there before the throne.

But, they will never hear unless someone preaches. I would say in a way that priority number one for the church of Jesus Christ is the proclaiming of the gospel of the kingdom in all the world to all nations. And, you'd have to acknowledge that really in most religious groups in this nation at this time that has a very low priority. In fact, I think a whole lot of Christians aren't even aware that it's on the list. We need a tremendous adjustment. We need a change. We need what they used to call an awakening. We, people like you and me. Not the people out in the street, not the people in the, quote, old line denominations, but people like you and me. We need an awakening. The Bible says a son who sleeps in harvest causes shame. Our churches are full of sons asleep in harvest.

We'll come on to the second thing that has to be achieved before the end can come, and that is the restoration of Israel. When I say Israel I mean Israel and not the church. Endless confusion has come into the church because a lot of people have started to apply the name Israel to the church. There are 79 places in the New Testament where the word Israel is used—I've investigated every one of them. And my personal conclusion is Israel is never used as a synonym for the church. The truth is very simple: Israel is Israel and the church is the church. God has a plan for each and He has enough for both. He doesn't need to rob one to bless the other.

Probably there is no greater source of confusion in the church today than the misunderstanding about the identity of Israel. Actually, it's interesting because the Jewish people have a corresponding misunderstanding about the identity of the church. When they talk about the church they mean people like Adolf Hitler. He was a baptized Roman Catholic. They lump all of us together until God begins to speak to them and deal with them.

And let's say it honestly, the people that the Jews fear most is the Christians. Does that shock you? Well, a Jewish person with some knowledge of his own people could stand here for an hour and give you simple, basic, historical facts why the Jews fear the Christians more than any other group on earth.

But now turn to Matthew 24 again and I want to point out to you a dramatic change of focus. It's like we've had a video screen that embrace basically the whole world. And suddenly the focus changes to one very small area of the earth's surface which is Jerusalem and the land of Israel. Because verse 15 goes on:

> "Therefore, when you see the abomination of desolations spoken of by Daniel the prophet standing in the holy place…"

And as far as I'm concerned, in the light of scripture there is only one holy place and that is the temple area.

> "…then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains…"

Notice it doesn't say the West Bank. So, our focus has suddenly changed from all nations and the whole world to the city of Jerusalem and to the Jewish people in the land.

This corresponds to a passage in Romans 11:25–26. Paul is writing here to believers from Gentile backgrounds and he says:

> "For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion [or lest you think too highly of yourself]…"

Now, what is the mystery?

> "…that hardening in part has happened to Israel until the full number of the Gentiles has come in. And so, all Israel will be saved."

There is the transition from Matthew 24:14 to verse 15. First of all, the full number of the Gentiles has to come in. Every Gentile elect by God from eternity for salvation has to be brought in. Then all Israel will be saved. Israel is the only nation of which the Bible promises that an entire nation will be saved. But, you need to bear in mind what we perhaps should look at for a moment in Romans 9:27.

> "Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, the remnant [the remnant] will be saved."

Not a remnant but the remnant. That is the remnant chosen and foreknown by God. When it says all Israel will be saved, all Israel will be the remnant. That will be the entire nation that is left. Israel has to go through a lot before that happens, what scripture calls the time of Jacob's trouble.

I think it's very important for all of us to realize the special position that the Jews occupy in the purposes of God. It's a very hard fact for a lot of Gentiles to swallow because most of us who are not of Jewish background have been brought up in varying degrees to despise the Jewish people, to make snide remarks about them, et cetera. It's really bred into most Gentiles. Paul says we better be careful. He says we're not the root, we're the branches. Remember, the branches don't bear the root, the root bears the branches. The root is Israel. There's going to have to be a tremendous change in the thinking of multitudes of Christians in this respect because God is going to judge the nations on the basis of their attitude to the Jews.

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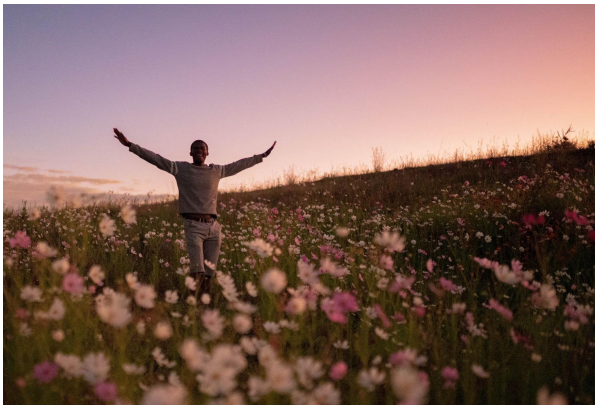

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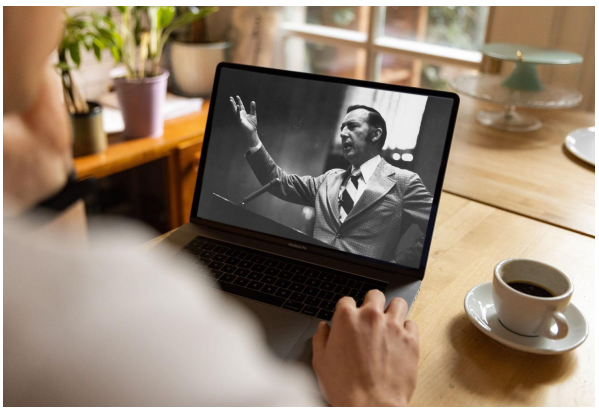

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