

DEREK PRINCE
MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL

Sermon

The Roman Pilgrimage (Part 14)



Part 14/20

The Roman Pilgrimage
By Derek Prince

This is the second of four sessions devoted to working through Romans, chapters 9–11, some of the most important and some of the most stretching chapters in the whole Bible. If you really want to be an intellectually educated person, just live in the epistle to the Romans. And by the time you really master that, you'll be educated, if you know nothing else.

I was a professional philosopher before I became a preacher. My considered opinion is that the epistle to the Romans is the most outstanding presentation of intellectual truth that hs ever come to the world. And it takes a whole heart and mind and the revelation of the Holy Spirit to enter into this understanding.

In our first session, the theme was "God's Choice Determines Who His People Are." You remember I spoke about sovereignty and choice. I think I'll give you my definition of sovereignty once more. Sovereignty means that God does what He wants when He wants, the way He wants, and He doesn't ask your permission or mine. We better live with that fact because it isn't going to change. So, God's choice determines who are to be His people. He began with Abraham. Abraham had two sons: Ishmael and Isaac. God rejected Ishmael and chose Isaac. Isaac had two sons who were twins: Esau and Jacob. Before they were ever born, before they ever had time to do anything good or bad, God rejected Esau and chose Jacob. And that's how God continues to work.

Then we considered the use of the word Israel in the New Testament and I presented to you my personal conclusion after a long period of study and examination. That, in the New Testament Israel is never a synonym for the church. Israel is one thing, the church is another. However, Israel is many, many times a type of the church. Many of the things that have happened to Israel, as Paul says in 1 Corinthians 10, are written for our warning, that we may not make the same mistakes that Israel made.

So let me just sum that conclusion up once again and we're going to move on. Israel in the New Testament is never used as a name for the church, Israel is Israel, the church is the church. In fact, in my opinion, to mingle the two produces confusion. On the other hand, Israel is all through the Bible a type of the church. The things that happened to

© 1990 - Derek Prince Ministries, International, Inc.

Israel contain very important lessons for us as Christians today.

Now, there has been in the church for probably at least 16 centuries a theory or a theology that because Israel was so rebellious and disobedient, and also because they, in a measure, were responsible for the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus—although, believe me, they were not solely responsible. Because of that, this theory evolved that God has set aside Israel and that he has replaced Israel by the church. This is a very popular theory today and a lot of people are propagating it. I just want to say that I cannot personally accept it. I want to give you three reasons why I do not accept it. Let me state the theory again that God has finally and forever rejected Israel as a people, and that in their place He has chosen and put up the church, and that all God's commitments and covenants and promises to Israel are no longer valid. That's the essence of that theology.

Now I will tell you three reasons why I personally cannot accept it, and I leave it to you to determine whether you agree with my reasons. First of all, it discredits the reliability of scripture. Because, the Bible contains many very clear specific statements of what God says He will do which will never be fulfilled if God has finally and forever set aside Israel. In other words, the Bible is no longer a reliable book. To me, that is a tremendously serious objection to any theology or theory. I want to go quickly through a number of scriptures, and for every one I give you I could give you ten more, which clearly state God's purpose and plan for Israel and what He's going to do. I want you to consider for yourself whether these could possibly be fulfilled if God had permanently set aside Israel.

Isaiah 11 is the first one. I want you to listen to these carefully and then determine for yourself. Isaiah 11:11–12:

> "Then it will happen on that day that the Lord will again recover the second time with His hand the remnant of His people, who will remain, from Assyria, Egypt, Pathros, Cush, Elam, Shinar, Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. And He will lift up a standard for the nations, and will assemble the banished ones of Israel, and will gather the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth."

Now, those words were written before the Babylonian captivity of Israel. But even then before that took place, Isaiah predicted there would be a second regathering. Not the regathering from Babylon, but a second regathering. And the fact that many places are mentioned there from which Jews never returned to Israel after the Babylonian captivity is also evidence that God did not have in mind the return from Babylon when He made that prediction. On the other hand, every statement there has been exactly fulfilled in this century in the regathering of the Jewish people now. Which means that God is still dealing with Israel as a nation.

And then we'll go on to Jeremiah 30:3. I think those of you that are familiar with Jeremiah will agree with me that he was not overindulgent to the sins of Israel. I mean, there are few prophets that have ever taken so much time to tell Israel all the evil things that they had done. He's certainly not biased. But he says in Jeremiah 30:3:

> "'For behold, there is a day coming,' declares the Lord, 'when I shall restore fortunes [or the captivity] of my people Israel and Judah.' The Lord says, 'I will also bring them back to the land that I gave to their forefathers and they shall possess it.'"

There's only one land that agrees to that description, the land that God gave the forefathers of Israel and Judah. God says, "I will bring them back and they will possess it." They never possessed it after the Babylonian captivity, they were always, as it were, tenants in a land at the discretion of a Gentile empire. Eventually, as you know, they were uprooted and driven out of the land by the Roman empire in 70 AD So, nothing in that period answers to these words. But again, everything that's written there has been fulfilled and is being fulfilled in our days. I personally, having lived almost 75 years, have witnessed these things. I was there right on the spot right in Jerusalem when the State of Israel came into being. I witnessed a miracle in modern history. So for me, this is very real. But that's not the primary reason. The primary reason is because God says it in His word.

Then in Jeremiah 31:10:

> "Hear the word of the Lord, O nations, [That's Gentiles, the nations other than Israel, goyim.] and declare in the coastlands..."

Or the continents afar off. Coastlands means all those parts of the earth that border on the oceans. So North America is a coastland in that sense.

> "...declare in the coastlands afar off, and say, 'He who scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him as a shepherd keeps his flock.'"

Again, being fulfilled in our day. And I have also had the privilege of serving as God's messenger in probably at least 20 nations, and making that proclamation, "Hear O nations, the Lord who scattered Israel is gathering." I've said to them and I've made the proclamation, "This day this scripture is being fulfilled in your ears." I can say that to you here, "This day this scripture is being fulfilled in your ears."

And then in Jeremiah 31:35–37:

> "Thus says the Lord, who gives the sun for light by day, and the fixed order of the moon and the stars for light by night, who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar; the Lord of hosts is His name: 'If this fixed order departs from before me [that's the fixed order of the sun and the moon and the stars and the sea],' declares the Lord, 'then the offspring of Israel shall also cease from being a nation before me forever.' Thus says the Lord, 'If the heavens above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out below, then I will also cut off all the offspring of Israel for all that they have done,' declares the Lord."

Very simply stated, that means that as long as you can go outside and look up in the sky and see the sun and the moon and the stars still in their divinely appointed order, as long as you can stand on the border of the sea and look at the waves roaring, by that alone you know that Israel is still a nation before the Lord with whom God is dealing.

There's one more in Jeremiah 32:37–42. This is specifically referring to Israel.

> "Behold, I will gather them out of all the lands to which I have driven them in my anger, in my wrath, and in great indignation; and I will bring them back to this place [which is where the prophecy was given, the land of Israel] and make them dwell in safety. And they shall be my people, and I will be their God; and I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me always, for their own good, and for the good of their children after them. And I will make an everlasting covenant with them that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; and I will put the fear of me in their hearts so that they will not turn away from me. And I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will faithfully plant them in this land with all my heart and all my soul."

When God does something with all His heart and all His soul, there isn't really much choice for anybody else as to what is going to happen. And notice this final verse, verse 42:

> "For thus says the Lord, 'Just as I brought all this calamity on this people, so I am going to bring on them all the good that I am promising them.'"

Well, the calamity that God has brought on Israel is a historical fact. The pages of history record it, it's happened, it was not metaphorical, it wasn't spiritual; it was very real and very actual. God says, "In just the same way as I brought the calamity upon them, I'm going to bring all the good upon them." It's not going to be spiritual, it's not going to be metaphorical; it's going to be real in the annals of history. And again, we live in an exciting time when we can see God doing the very thing He said He will do.

Then we'll turn to the prophet Ezekiel, chapter 20 and we'll read verses 40–44. Ezekiel 20:40–44:

> "'For on my holy mountain, on the high mountain of Israel,' declares the Lord, [And again, there's only one place that answers to that description] 'there the whole house of Israel, all of them, will serve me in the land; there I shall accept them, and there I shall require your contributions and the choicest of your gifts, with all your holy things. As a soothing aroma I shall accept you, when I

> bring you out from the peoples and gather you from the lands where you are scattered; and I shall prove myself holy among you in the sight of the nations.'"

God says, "My name will be glorified, my holiness will be demonstrated in what I do in you."

> "And you will know that I am the Lord, when I bring you into the land of Israel, into the land which I swore to give to your fathers. And there you will remember your ways and all your deeds, with which you have defiled yourselves; and you will loathe yourselves in your own sight for all the evil things that you have done."

Notice, God does not mitigate the evil. In fact, He emphasizes it. And then He goes on to say:

> "'Then you will know that I am the Lord when I have dealt with you for my name's sake, not according to your evil ways or according to your corrupt deeds, O house of Israel,' declares the Lord."

The Lord is very clear. He said, "You don't deserve it, I'm doing it that my name may be glorified and to prove my faithfulness."

And then in Ezekiel 36:22 and following. This is like a recapitulation of the history of Israel over the last 50 years or so, a little more than 50 years.

> "Therefore, say to the house of Israel, 'Thus says the Lord God, 'It is not for you sake, O house of Israel, that I am about to act, but for my holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you went.'"

Again and again God emphasizes, "You haven't deserved it. You've got no claim on it, but I'm doing it because I've committed myself to do it and I'm demonstrating who I am in the eyes of the nations because of my faithfulness to you."

I think we should all be glad that God doesn't remember all our corrupt deeds. I mean, how many of us would feel confident before the Lord if He wouldn't say, "I won't remember all the bad things you've done." See? These are very important principles because we need them just as much as Israel does.

> "And I will vindicate the holiness of my great name which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst. Then the nations will know that I am the Lord, declares the Lord God, 'and I prove myself holy among you in their sight.'"

This is God's testimony to all nations.

> "For I will take you from the nations, gather you from all the lands, and bring you into your own land."

Whose land is it? Why is it their land? Because God gave it to them and that settles it.

> "For I will take you from the nations, gather you from all the lands, and bring you into your own land. Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols."

Notice God says, "I will regather you still in your filthiness." A lot of people are taught that if Israel is to be regathered, first of all, they must repent and God will take them back. God says, "That's not the way I'm going to do it. I'm going to take them back and then I'm going to deal with them so they will repent."

> "Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh."

I don't believe that God has ever said to any other nation that they have a heart of stone. I don't think you can find it in the scripture. But He says to Israel, "You've had a heart of stone." What is a heart of stone? It's a heart that cannot

respond to the Spirit of God, it's incapable of doing it. And that was a judgment of God upon them. Verse 27:

> "I will put my Spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes, and you will be careful to observe my ordinances."

See, what Israel are going to discover is what you and I've discovered: The only way you can ever walk in God's statutes is when He puts His Spirit within you.

I remember when I was confirmed in the Anglican church at the age of 15, I said all the right things and made all the right vows and was very serious for about six months. But it didn't work out, you see, because God hadn't put His Spirit within me. About ten years later God put His Spirit within me and I began to do all the things I said I would do 15 years earlier. Do you understand? So exactly the same principles apply to you and me as to Israel. Let's go on.

> "And I will put my Spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes, and you will be careful to observe my ordinances. And you will live in the land that I gave to your forefathers..."

Again, there is only one land that answers to that description.

> "...and you will be my people, and I will be your God."

Notice the end purpose of all God's dealings with Israel is in that statement, "You will be my people, and I will be your God." And God knows how to bring it about. In a certain sense, God has taken special responsibility for dealing with the Jewish people. And since I've come to know them pretty well, I'm rather glad that it's God's responsibility!

Then we'll look for a moment in Amos 9:14–15. Let me point out to you that Amos is another prophet that didn't have much good to say to Israel. I mean, there's about nine chapters of condemnation and judgment. When you just think the situation is hopeless, the last two verses suddenly come out with what's like dawn after a long, dark, stormy night. God says in Amos 9:14–15:

> "Also I will restore the captivity of my people Israel, and they will rebuild the ruined cities and live in them, they will also plant vineyards and drink their wine, and make gardens and eat their fruit."

I want to say that I have witnessed every one of those things happening. I've seen it with my own eyes. They have rebuilt the old cities. There are at least nine Biblical sites that have been rebuilt in the last 50 years in Israel. One that's very near to us is ?Gelo? where Ahitophel used to live. It's a large sort of suburb of Jerusalem. Every time we look out of our back window in Jerusalem, we see ?Gelo?. And every time I see ?Gelo?, I say, "There you are. Amos 9:14."

They have also made gardens. If ever there's been an agricultural people, it's Israel. And they've also restored ? viniculture? which lapsed completely under the Muslims because they don't believe in alcohol. So, those three statements have been exactly and precisely fulfilled in front of my eyes. Why should I look for any other explanation than the obvious one, that God did it because He said He would do it.

And then it says:

> "Also I will plant them in their land, [Whose land? Their land.] and they will not again be rooted out from their land which I have given them, says the Lord your God."

So, I venture to say to you this present restoration of Israel, they will never lose the land again. I don't say that because there aren't innumerable forces arrayed against them—there are, they always have been since the day the State of Israel was born. Every day that Israel exists is a miracle. But that miracle is going to continue till God has fulfilled His work.

You see, there's never been any area of the earth or period of history about which experts have so often been wrong as the Middle East and the land of Israel in this century. So, I am not impressed by the experts. I will listen to what they have to say, but if they say something opposite to what God says, I'm going to believe God.

Then there's one passage in Zechariah 14 which is particularly real to me. I can't take too long over it, but it describes a situation, a geographical site where I lived for one year. That is, a certain area on the Mount of Olives. I was there because I was serving in a British military hospital which was occupying the main building on that. So, every time I read this, everything in my imagination, I can

pick out all the areas, all the positions. There's no other place on earth that answers to this description in Zechariah 14. It's either going to happen there the way God says it will or, it's not going to happen at all. There is no alternative. Zechariah 14, we'll just read 2–5:

> "For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city will be captured, the houses plundered, the women ravished, and half of the city exiled. But the rest of the people will not be cut off from the city."

Believe me, this is going to be a serious situation.

> "Then the Lord will go forth and fight against those nations as when He fights on a day of battle. And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in the front of Jerusalem on the east [which is exactly where I was living], the Mount of Olives will be split in its middle from east to west by a very large valley, so that half of the mountain will move toward the north, and the other half toward the south."

Now where I was living, there's a little saddle in the mountain, with one half of it to the north, the other half to the south. This saddle is exactly east of the temple area in Jerusalem. And furthermore, it's an earthquake area. In 1925 there was a minor earthquake which cracked the tower of the building in which I was living, and no one is allowed to go up the tower because it's dangerous. See how absolutely perfect the description is for one place on earth? And it doesn't begin to describe any other place. It's either going to happen here the way God says it will or, it's not going to happen at all.

And then at the end of verse 5 we get to the climax:

> "Then the Lord my God will come, and all the holy ones with Him."

So here is the clearest single prediction, in a way, of the place to which the Lord Jesus will return. From where did He ascend to heaven? From the Mount of Olives. And the angel that came and spoke to the disciples said, "This same Jesus which is taken up from you in heaven will so come in like manner as you have seen Him go [into heaven]." He went in clouds, He's coming in clouds; He went from the Mount of Olives, He's coming back to the Mount of Olives. Why make something simple complicated? See, that's the business of philosophers. I was a philosopher and that was my job, to make simple things complicated! But it's not the job of preachers and it's we're not permitted to do that.

Now, one of the words that you hear used is literal, meaning that God is literally going to do all these things. The answer, I mean, is, "Yes, He's literally going to do all these things." But you see, if you begin to question the literal truth of scripture, you've opened a plug that will let all the water out of the bottom, because you don't have to stop at just these statements about Israel. Do you believe Jesus literally turned water into wine? What was the use of that? A lot of Baptists would object! Do you believe Jesus literally fed 5,000 people with five loaves and two fishes? If He didn't literally feed them, they weren't very hungry. Spiritually feeding people is not going to satisfy their physical hunger. See what I'm saying?

And then you can go one step further. Do you believe that Jesus literally rose from the grave? You mean physically? There's a bishop in the Anglican church that dismissed that as a conjuring trick with old bones. Did you know that? A fearful thought, a bishop in the Anglican church. But, the Bible teaches very clearly that if you do not believe in the resurrection of Jesus, you cannot be saved. You see, what the devil is doing is whittling away the truth little by little. He doesn't start with one central truth about Jesus, he begins in another area. But the end result is discrediting the reliability of scripture. And I would venture to estimate that almost all the theologians and the ministers in the church today who don't believe in the resurrection of Jesus don't believe in the restoration of Israel. So there's a certain compatibility between the two.

The second reason why I cannot accept this theory of the replacement of Israel is that it discredits the faithfulness of God. And I'm just going to read one passage from the Living Bible. Jeremiah 33, beginning at verse 24. I read from the Living Bible because it's so particularly vivid.

> "Have you heard what the people are saying? —that the Lord chose Judah and Israel and then abandoned them! They are sneering and saying that Israel isn't worthy to be counted as a nation. But this is the Lord's reply: I would not more reject my people than

> I would change my laws of night and day, of earth and sky. I will never abandon the Jews, or David my servant, or change the plan that his Child will someday rule these descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Instead I will restore their prosperity and have mercy on them."

How exactly applicable that is to our day because people really are sneering at Israel and saying they're not worthy to be considered a nation, they crucified the Lord, that's the end of them. It just impresses me that the Bible is so perceptive, it looks ahead with divine telescopic sight and sees how things will be thousands of years after the words were actually written.

And then one more reason why I cannot accept this theory is that it undermines the security of the church. If God can replace Israel in the light of all the statements that He's made, all the covenants and commitments, then why not replace the church? What guarantee is there that the church won't be replaced? If I believe that God was replacing Israel, you know, I would be looking over my shoulder all the time to see who is going to replace us. Because, brothers and sisters, if you had to consider which group had been less faithful, Israel or the church, it would be very hard to pick the one.

Let me read just a few words of Jesus to two churches, in Revelation 3, the first three verses.

> "And to the angel of the church in Sardis write, 'He who has the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars, says this: 'I know your deeds that you have a name, that you are alive, and you are dead. Wake up and strengthen the things that remain which were about to die. For I have not found your deeds completed in the sight of God. Remember therefore, what you have received and heard, and keep it and repent. If therefore you will not wake up, I will come like a thief and you will not know at what hour I will come upon you.'"

That doesn't seem to differ, in many ways, from what the Lord said to Israel. It seems to me they're just about the same. But then again, in the last message to the church, the church of Laodicea in Revelation 3:14–16:

> "And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write: The Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God says this, 'I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot: I would that you were cold or hot. So because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of my mouth..."

That's very plain speaking. Could that be applied to sections of the church? Are there sections of the church that are neither cold nor hot? How many are there that are not like that?

Let me recapitulate my three reasons why I cannot accept what's called replacement theology. Number one, it discredits the reliability of scripture. Number two, it discredits the faithfulness of God. And number three, it undermines the security of the church.

Now, I want to go on and return to the New Testament, and I want to point out to you that everything that people have reservations about concerning Israel applies also to the church. God in His dealing with the church—and He has dealt with you and me in precisely the same way as He's dealt with Israel. The origin of all that God does is not our goodness, it's not our merits, it's God's sovereign choice. Let me say what I said last night once more. You are not a Christian primarily because you chose Christ. You're a Christian primarily because Christ chose you. And if Christ had never chosen you, you would never have been able to choose Him. The origin of everything is God's will, God's sovereignty and God's choice. And this is just as true of the church as it is of Israel. In fact, in studying God's dealings with Israel we get a very wonderful lesson of how God deals with us.

Let me just take a few scriptures from the New Testament and try and bring this out to you. 1 Peter 1:1–2:

> "Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who reside as aliens scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Capadocia, Asia, and Bithynia."

He's writing actually to believing Jews. That doesn't come out in this translation but the word that's translated "resided

aliens" in Greek is Diaspora. I don't know whether or not any of you are familiar, but Diaspora is the word that's used to describe Jews living outside the land of Israel. So, it's an interesting fact that although this letter applies to all Christians, it was primarily addressed to Jewish believers. Now it says of these people at the end of verse 1:

> "Who are chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father..."

So, why are we believers? Because God chose us. Why did He choose us? On the basis of His foreknowledge. He knew what He could make out of each one of us.

See, once you grasp this fact, your insecurity begins to dissolve. You don't have to try so hard, you have to believe. You have to accept the fact God chose you. I might not have chosen myself, but God chose me. Why did He choose me? According to His foreknowledge. In other words, God knew from eternity what He could do with me. God knows from eternity what He can do with each one of you. What a relief! It's not all your effort, it's not all your struggles. As Paul says, we've already looked, it's not of him who wills or him who runs, but of God who shows mercy. To me it's such a joy to present this good news to the church because most Christians today that I deal with have completely lost sight of this fact. You are a Christian because God chose you. He chose you knowing what He could do with you. So, don't complain about your inadequacies because God knew all about them and He chose you, in a certain sense, because of them. Because, God has chosen the weak things, the things that are despised, these things, to demonstrate His power in them. Your greatest problem is not that you are not good enough, but maybe you think you are too good.

Let's go on with this statement.

> "Who are chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit..."

So, when God has chosen you, His Spirit begins to work on you. And most of us, when it started, we weren't aware what was happening. Is that true? I can illustrate this very briefly. When I went into the British Army I started to study the Bible, not as a believer. Because I was seen reading the Bible every day, the chaplain asked me to read the lesson at Pentecost. Well, I was rather proud of my ability to read English and I had studied Shakespeare and so on. I said, "I'll really show them how this should be read." I mean, I went through it, I practiced the places to pause and breathe. When I got there, my whole body was like a bellows. I couldn't read three words without gasping for breath. I had no idea what was happening to me, it was humiliating. Do you know what it was? The Holy Spirit. You say, "Were you born again? No, I didn't know what it was to be born again. I hadn't got a clue, I wasn't even trying to be born again. But, God was moving on me. Why? Because He had chosen me, that's why.

All right. Going on with this.

> "...the sanctifying work of the Spirit, that you may obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with his Blood..."

You see, the Holy Spirit brings you to the place where you encounter Jesus Christ and obey Him. That's what He did with me. I read that lesson and I met Jesus in an army barrack room in the middle of the night at the end of July. But the Spirit of God was already working on me. And He brought me to Jesus. And because it was the Spirit, I obeyed Him, I submitted to Him. And then I was sprinkled with the blood. You understand, the blood is not sprinkled on the disobedient. You have to come to the place of obedience before you come under the sprinkling of the blood. And when you get out of the place of obedience, you're getting out of the protection of the blood. The blood is not sprinkled on the disobedient. Did you get that message, it's very important.

If we walk in the light as He is in the light, the blood of Jesus continually cleanses us from all sin. We get out of the light and into disobedience, there's only one solution: get back under the light.

Let's look at another scripture, Romans 8:29–30. Speaking about you and me:

> "For whom He [God] foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed in the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren; and whom He predestined, these He also called; and whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified."

Where does it begin? It begins as Peter said, with God's foreknowledge. And after God foreknew us, He chose us. He made this choice—listen—before creation. Before the

worlds came into being, God chose you and me. And having chosen us, He predestined us. That is, he planned the course that our life would follow. All this happened in eternity long before there was a people called Israel, long before there was anything called the church. God foreknew us, He chose us, He predestined us. I'd like you to say that but make it personal like this. "God foreknew me, He chose me, He predestined me." Now, take a deep breath and sigh it out. Relax. That's right. You don't have to be so worried and concerned. God has got the situation under control. He's made His choice, He's not going to change His mind. And everything in history is working out for the purpose of God. He's predestined you.

I tell people many times, "You're not an accident looking for somewhere to happen. You're part of God's eternal plan." See? All this is true of the church but it's equally true of Israel. If we discard these truths in regard to Israel, we will not retain them in regard to the church. We'll be the losers, not Israel.

Having done those three things: foreknown, chosen, predestined; then He called. Now, that's the vital moment in every life, when God calls you. I had no knowledge whatever of doctrinal truth and the gospel and all that. I was just a philosopher. But when this happened in my life, something inside me told me, "You better respond now, He may never speak to you again." And I did respond, thank God. I did respond. It was so clear to me, this was the moment that my destiny was being decided. I didn't know what was going to happen but I just knew this is my opportunity. And thank God by His mercy I took it.

Well, once God has called us and we respond, then He justifies us. He acquits us of all sin. Justified means not guilt. The verdict comes down from the supreme court of heaven on your life: not guilty. You were being tried for a capital offense. The mandatory penalty was execution. As you wait there nervously in the court, back comes the answer. Not guilty. See, Christians have lost the vision of what it is to be justified. It's not doing the best I can and hoping, it's being clothed with the robe of Christ's righteousness. When God gives us the garments of salvation, He adds something. Do you know what that is? The robe of righteousness. That's being justified. I've said it this way: I am justified means I'm just as if I'd never sinned. You didn't earn that. I didn't earn that. None of all our struggles and our religiosity will ever do anything towards that. It happens because God decided it would happen. I want to tell you I've come to the place where I trust God to make the right decision. I trust Him more than I trust myself. I've made a lot of silly decisions in my life. God has never made one silly decision. You can trust him. Take another deep breath, relax and breathe it out. You can trust Him, He's reliable. This is the message, you see, the church has lost the message partly because in its wrong attitude to Israel. God said, "The one that touches Israel touches the apple of my eye."

All right. Once you're justified, you're glorified. I cannot take time to go into this. In fact, I taught on this in the first part of this seminar on Romans. But glorified means you're on the throne with Jesus. He not only made us alive, Ephesians 2:4–6; He not only resurrected us, what did He do after that, who can tell me? He enthroned us. And all that's in the past tense. Physically you're seated in Ridgecrest Baptist Conference Center. Spiritually you're seated on the throne with Christ. See that? When we talk in those terms, I mean, it's ridiculous to think we could ever earn that or deserve it or be good enough. We only get it because God decided to give it to us. Really, the best you could do is say "Thank you." What about that? Why don't you just say "Thank you." See, thanking God is the purest expression of faith. When you can't do anything else, like Jonah in the belly of the fish, couldn't do anything. When he started to thank God, the fish couldn't hold him any longer. Some of you owe God about half a billion thanks. It would help you to start paying off. But you'll only do it by faith, faith in what God says He's done.

One other beautiful scripture in 2 Timothy 1:9. This is a breathtaking scripture, in my opinion. I tell people if you've never been surprised by the Bible, you've never really read it. It's an astonishing book. 2 Timothy 1:9, God is the previous verse:

> "...has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works [not on the basis of what we have done], but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted to us in Christ Jesus from all eternity."

Another translation says "before time began." So, God's purpose and grace was settled for us before time began. Your scenario was written in eternity. All you've got to do is play your part.

And then in 1 Thessalonians 5:23–24, one of the scriptures that Ruth and I recite:

> "Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit,

> soul and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Do you think you can achieve that by your efforts? And then it says:

> "He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it."

What do we depend on? The faithfulness of God. Not our efforts, not our righteousness, not our religiosity. What a revelation! It's breathtaking. You can spend a week contemplating the truths and not even begin to touch the reality that they represent. But you see, if the church ignores Romans 9–11, the church is the poorer, not Israel. God is responsible for Israel. But we lose a major part of our inheritance.

We've got to go back now. Let's turn to Romans 9 a moment, verses 14–15.

> "What shall we say then? There is no injustice with God, is there? May it never be! For He says to Moses, 'I WILL HAVE MERCY ON WHOM I HAVE MERCY, AND I WILL HAVE COMPASSION ON WHOM I HAVE COMPASSION.'"

You see, God's justice is settled, it's unwavering, you can't change one jot or one tittle. If you want justice, you can have it. I remember I heard a man say once, "All I ask for is justice." I thought to myself, "God help him not to get what he's asking for." You can have justice if you want it. God is just. He gives righteousness according to a plumb line, it's as exact as that. Justice according to a level. There's not a single variation, not one millimeter out in God's justice—if that's what you want. But none of us can afford to ask for justice.

Romans 6:23, how many of you know what that says?

> "For the wages of sin is death."

Wages are what you deserve. If you want your wages, God will not withhold them. Come with your hand out and you'll get them. But, the wages of sin is death. The alternative is the free gift of God is eternal life. You can't earn that. You'll never deserve it. You've got to decide, do I want my wages or do I want my gift?

And then Paul turns to the example of Pharaoh. We're going back to Romans 9:16:

> "So then it does not depend on the man who wills or the man who runs, but on God who has mercy. For the scripture says to Pharaoh [this is from the book of Exodus], 'FOR THIS VERY PURPOSE I RAISED YOU UP, TO DEMONSTRATE MY POWER IN YOU, AND THAT MY NAME MIGHT BE PROCLAIMED THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE EARTH.'"

So then, He has mercy on whom He desires and He hardens whom He wills. You say that isn't fair. God will give you justice if you want it. But if you want mercy, then don't ask for what's fair because it's not. It goes beyond anything you can earn.

Let me show you first of all, Proverbs 16:4, that's a wonderful verse.

> "The Lord made everything for its own purpose [or His own purpose], even the wicked for the day of evil."

That's a profound statement. Even the wicked have got their place in God's plan. And Pharaoh is perhaps the outstanding example. God says, "I've raised you up because I wanted to show everybody my power in your wickedness." And everybody knows that God hardened Pharaoh's heart. But most people never bother to study the whole record. I've studied it very carefully and you can find the outline there on Page 12 of your outline. First of all, Pharaoh hardened his own heart seven times before God did anything. Then the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart once. Then Pharaoh hardened his own heart twice more. Finally, the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart six more times. God did not harden Pharaoh's heart until he had hardened his heart himself seven times. God said in effect, "Well, if you're going to be stubborn and obstinate, then I'll see just how stubborn and obstinate I can make you, because I want to demonstrate my power in you."

The two words that are used for the heart of Pharaoh are hard and heavy. Hard, I would say, is stubborn. Heavy is insensitive. So God often lets wickedness run its course to fulfill his purpose. This is very, very important. You understand? Why does God allow those wicked people to go on? He's using them, they're part of His plan. See? Even

the wicked serve God. That will set a lot of our minds at rest because we look at the injustice and the wickedness in the earth and say, "How can God?" The answer is God knows all about it, He's in control. The wicked are also serving His purpose.

In Genesis 15:16 God has promised to Abraham that He'll give him the land of Canaan. But He says, "Not yet. Four generations later, I'll give it to you." And then He explains why, verse 16. He said:

> "In the fourth generation your descendants will return here, for the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet complete."

The Amorites were already a wicked, idolatrous, perverted people. But He said their wickedness has not yet come fully ripe. When it's fully ripe, I'll cast in my sickle and reap them. And your descendants will take this land. So, when you look at things that are happening in the world today, just think of that. It's wicked but it isn't fully ripe. When it's fully ripe, God will cast in the sickle and reap.

And then we go back to Romans 9 for a few moments, Romans 9:19.

> "You will say to me then, 'Why does God still find fault? For who resists His will?'"

In other words, everything is working out according to God's purpose. So, nobody, in a sense, is doing other than what God has planned they should do. Paul's answer is a little unsatisfying to some people.

> "On the contrary, who are you, O man, who answers back to God? The thing molded will not say to the molder 'Why did you make me like this,' will it?"

Paul says, in effect, God knows his business, don't try and instruct him. And he compares a human life, as the scripture does in many places, to a vessel molded of clay. And his statement is "the one who molds the vessel is the one who decides what it will be." And God is the molder of the vessel. And then he says in verse 21:

> "Or does not the potter have a right over the clay, to make from the same lump one vessel for honorable use, and another for common use?"

We cannot deny that.

> "What if God is willing to demonstrate His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction?"

When you see the wicked flourishing, think that's God's patience. God is enduring that because His purposes are being worked out. Peter said count the longsuffering of God salvation. That's one of the most amazing things for all of us, is God's patience, how long He endures wickedness. But He does it for the sake of His elect, His chosen ones.

This is a problem we all face. How can God let that kind of thing go on? The answer is God knows His business. When His purposes are worked out in His chosen ones, He'll deal with the wicked.

And then we get this beautiful statement here which in verse 23:

> "God did all this in order that He might make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He prepared beforehand for glory, even us, whom He called, not from among Jews only, but also from among Gentiles."

The Living Bible says "vessels that God prepared to pour His glory into." That's you and me. He's fashioning us to become vessels of glory. When you ask why does God permit that? In my life the answer is He's making you the kind of vessel that will take His glory. See?

We'll just try and finish this chapter very quickly. The end of the chapter is that God extends mercy both to Jews and to Gentiles. Not to Jews only or to Gentiles only but to both. Paul quotes two passages from Hosea in which it's clear that God is going to for a time reject Israel. But then he says in the same place where it was said to them, "You are not my people," there it will be said to them, "You are my people." That's very important for us to remember because God is regathering Israel to the place where it was said, "You are not my people," that He might declare to them that they are His people.

And then in verse 27:

> "And Isaiah cries out concerning Israel, 'THOUGH THE NUMBER OF THE SONS OF ISRAEL BE AS THE SAND OF THE SEA, IT IS THE REMNANT THAT WILL BE SAVED...'"

"The remnant." God has a remnant whom He has foreknown and chosen, whom He is going to bring through.

> "FOR THE LORD IS GOING TO EXECUTE HIS WORD UPON THE EARTH, THOROUGHLY AND QUICKLY."

The NIV says "the Lord will execute his sentence with speed and finality.

And then it goes on to point out that if God had not left Israel a remnant, they would have been totally destroyed and wiped out. He concludes the chapter by saying the Jews who sought to achieve righteousness by keeping a law, failed. The Gentiles who didn't know anything about a law and weren't interested in righteousness, achieved righteousness. This is the paradox. The Jews failed because they rejected the Messiah, the stone that God had laid on which to build His church.

I've gone rather quickly through the latter part of that chapter because I've got a long way to go in a short time. I trust you'll be indulgent.

© 1990 - Derek Prince Ministries, International, Inc.

Sermon

Transcript: MV-4312-100-ENG
Last Updated: 16 Sept 2026
Website: Derekprince.com/en/resources



© 1990 - Derek Prince Ministries, International, Inc.