

At the End of Time - Part 2

by Derek Prince

The sermon explores the end times, including the rapture, judgment of Christians, the Antichrist, restoration of Israel, and judgment of the nations, emphasizing the importance of endurance and sacrificial living.

Duration: 27:50

Scripture: Isaiah 24:19, Joel 3:1-2, Luke 9:26, Romans 11:25-26, 2 Corinthians 5:10, 1 Thessalonians 4:15, Revelation 20

Topics: "End Times", "Perseverance"

Description

This sermon delves into the concept of enduring through hardships as a form of training from God, emphasizing the need for courage and perseverance in spreading the gospel despite increasing challenges. It explores biblical prophecies related to the return of Jesus, including the rapture, judgment of Christians, overthrow of the Antichrist, and the establishment of Christ's kingdom on earth.

Transcript

Music Music Music Music Music Music Music There's only one way to learn to endure, that is, enduring. That's right. So if you're in the midst of enduring right now, bear in mind God is training you to live it through to the end of the age.

You see. And then it says, this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations. You say, well when times get easier we'll go out and preach the gospel.

No, no, no. Times are going to get harder and harder and harder. And it's going to take guts to go out and preach the gospel.

Do you like that rather vulgar word, guts? Very American. You know the American translation of that, intestinal fortitude. That's what we need.

Christians with guts. The thing, the situation is not going to get any easier, it's going to get harder. Do you think it's too hard now, well move in quickly before it gets harder.

You see the church that Jesus wants is not going to be deterred by opposition or persecution. It's committed to him and to his purposes and to his tasks. Now let's go on to the events that are associated with the return of Jesus.

And I'll give you a little list of events. Not necessarily in the correct order. You know why? Because I don't really know what the correct order is.

I've met some Bible scholars that believe that they did know the correct order. The trouble is they didn't agree with one another. So they couldn't both be right.

And I'm prepared to leave it with the Lord, see. I'm not a busybody. I don't badger God for answers.

David said at one point, my soul is like a weaned child within me. I just let him show me the things he wants to show me. The key to understanding biblical prophecy is to let the Holy Spirit focus your attention on the things he wants to show you, at any given time.

Don't be an unweaned child. All right now here are some of the events. The resurrection and judgment of true Christians.

First of all the rapture. How do you feel about the rapture? First Thessalonians 4. Some Christian scholars will tell you the word rapture isn't found in the New Testament. That's rather a naive statement.

Because it depends on what translation you use. I could use a translation that contains the word rapture. It would be a perfectly accurate translation.

Well this is what the Lord says through the Apostle Paul. First Thessalonians 4 verse 15. 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, those who have died.

In other words the fact that we're alive when the Lord comes, will not mean that we get there sooner than the ones who have died. On the contrary Paul says, for the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel and with the trumpet of God. I don't know how people believe in a secret rapture.

To me there's nothing that could be more public than something that's announced from heaven with a shout, the voice of an archangel and the trumpet of God. I mean what secrecy is left at the end of that. And the dead in Christ will rise first, before we who are alive are changed.

Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them. Caught up could perfectly well be translated raptured. The word rapture comes from a Latin word which means to seize something forcibly.

And in the Greek it's used of a thief entering a house and stealing something. It's used of a wolf coming amongst sheep and taking a sheep from the flock. It basically indicates a sudden forceful grab.

And that's what the rapture will be like. Jesus will grab us. He'll reach down take us, suddenly, forcefully.

There's just one difference between Jesus and the thief. You know what that is? The thief takes what doesn't belong to him. Jesus will only take those who belong to him.

Those who are his, at his coming. Then we who are alive and remain should be caught up. And Paul says elsewhere, we'll be changed, in a moment, in the blink of an eye.

This is very exciting to me. If you don't get excited, well that's your problem. But here we are, we're sitting in this meeting, looking at one another.

Warren is looking at my wife and he blinks. Suddenly she's totally changed. She's a glorious, gorgeous, shining creature.

And he's changed too. She looks at him in amazement. Doesn't take a long time.

In a moment, the twinkling of an eye, we shall be totally transformed. Do you believe God can do that? I do. I think it's exciting.

If you don't get excited, I don't really know what's wrong with you. Well the rapture is followed by the judgment of Christians. Now some Christians don't realize it, but we will be the first to be judged.

Peter said judgment must begin at the house of God. What is the house of God? The church. 2nd Corinthians chapter 5 and verse 10.

Now we'll probably come back to this when we speak about eternal judgment. But let's look here for a moment. 2nd Corinthians 5 verse 10.

For we must, we is Christians, we must all, all Christians, must appear before the judgment seat of Christ. That word translated appear means actually to be made manifest. I think it's a very frightening word.

Everything about us will be totally known. There'll be no secrets. We'll all be made manifest before the judgment seat of Christ.

The judgment seat in Greek is Bema. It's what a Roman official sat on when he conducted judgment. That's what Pontius Pilate sat on when he judged Jesus.

There's a different scene. There's a great white throne for the judgment of the remainders. But this is the judgment of Christians.

And please bear in mind Romans 8.1. There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus. It is not a judgment of condemnation. It is a judgment to assess the quality of our service.

And to give the appropriate rewards. And Paul says we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ. That each one may receive the things done in the body according to what he has done.

Whether good or bad. And notice there are only two categories. Good or bad.

And John says in the first epistle, all unrighteousness is sin. Anything that is not righteous is sinful. It's like if somebody asked you to illustrate the word crooked.

The way I would do it was this. I'd show them a straight line. And I'd say anything that deviates from that line is crooked.

It may deviate by one degree or it may deviate by 90 degrees. But it's crooked. And that's how it is with righteousness.

Anything that is unrighteous is sinful. Anything that is not good is bad. There's no middle ground.

This is a deception of the enemy. Which he has foisted upon the church. Well I'm not doing what's right.

But I'm really not doing what's bad. That's not possible. It's one or the other.

This is the judgment seat of Christ. Then we come to the overthrow of the Antichrist and his forces. Now in first John chapter 4, John speaks about Antichrist in three ways.

The spirit of Antichrist, many Antichrists and the Antichrist. The spirit of Antichrist is the spirit that operates through every Antichrist. The many Antichrists have been here since the second century A.D. One of the most significant was Bar Kochba, who claimed to be the Messiah.

And led the Jewish people in the final revolt against Rome. Which was utterly suppressed. And the whole nation was either killed or taken into captivity.

There was another one called Shabbatai Tzvi in the 17th century. Who claimed to be the Messiah and said he would take the Jewish people back to the Middle East. Plant them in their land.

He went to the Middle East, was arrested by the Turks and converted to Islam. So that was a disappointment. The Jewish encyclopedia records about 40 false messiahs that have come to the Jewish people since the time of Jesus.

Jesus said many will come in my name saying I am the Messiah and will deceive many. So there have been many Antichrists and a lot of Antichrists in the church. We don't need to be too specific about that.

But the Antichrist has not yet come. I personally believe his shadow has fallen across the stage of human history. But he has not emerged.

But he will be the final embodiment of all that is evil and satanic. And when he rules humanity, which he will for about three and a half years. That'll be the worst period in human history.

And God will permit this. Because he says to the human race. Well you've made your choice, now see what you've chosen.

You've rejected me, you've rejected my son. This is the alternative, help yourself. Have you ever discovered that God doesn't teach just in theory? No.

You can say well God I've really learned that principle. That's fine. God says now let's see it worked out in your life.

And that's going to be true of humanity. Humanity is going to get the most terrible lesson that humanity has ever had. You see Pontius Pilate brought before the Jewish people two men.

Jesus and Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a criminal, a violent man, an agitator. And he said which of these will I release.

And they said give us Barabbas and crucify Jesus. And at the end of this age the human race will do something similar. They'll say we don't want this Christ, give us the leader of our choice.

This brilliant, talented, supernaturally empowered man. We want him. And you know what happened? The Jewish people got him.

They also said to Pilate, we have no king but Caesar. An amazing thing for Jewish people to say. And for 19 centuries they've been ruled by the Caesars.

And the Barabbases have been turned loose on them. That's really the essence of Jewish history. And the same thing is going to happen to the human race.

We're going to get what we choose. Those of us who choose Jesus will be under his government. Those of us who reject Jesus will be under the government of the Antichrist.

Well I have to go on. Now on the overthrow of the Antichrist. Revelation 19 verses 19 through 21.

This is where Jesus appears from heaven riding on a white horse. Do you believe there are horses in heaven? I do. Whether you do or not, that makes no difference to me.

And the one who sat on him was called faithful and true. And in righteousness he judges and makes war. Notice Jesus makes war.

His eyes were like a flame of fire and on his head were many diadems, royal crowns. And then it says in verse 15. Out of his mouth goes a sharp sword that with it he should strike the nations.

And he himself will rule the nations with a scepter of iron. He himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of God. And he has on his name, has on his robe and on his thigh a name written.

King of kings and Lord of lords. This is Jesus coming forth as God's appointed ruler to deal with the wicked. And then it says a little further on in that chapter.

Verses 19 through 21. I saw the beast, that's the name of the Antichrist. It's quite interesting.

Revelation, the final book of the Bible, has two characters that are set in opposition to one another. One is the lamb, the other is the beast. The lamb is Jesus, the beast is the Antichrist.

The word the lamb occurs 28 times in the book of Revelation. The beast occurs 33 times in reference to the Antichrist. And this is the end time conflict.

It's between the beast and the lamb. And you know who wins? The lamb, that's right. And that's a lesson for us.

Because we don't win by violence, we don't win by hatred, we don't win by being tough. We win by laying our lives down, like Jesus. So the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to make war against him who sat on the horse and against his army.

Then the beast was captured and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence. By which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone.

And the rest of their followers were killed with the sword which proceeded from the mouth of him who sat on the horse. And all the birds were filled with their flesh. That's God's garbage collection system.

It's the birds and they'll clean up everything. All they leave is clean bones. And you find out in Ezekiel, they'll have a system of burying those bones.

We won't go into that. But all that is ahead. Now in the midst of all this, Israel, the Jewish people who've been displaced from the center of history for 19 centuries, are coming back into the center of history.

I don't know whether you ever noticed, Israel today is a very small land. It's smaller than Wales, smaller than the state of New Hampshire. It has about four million Jews and about one million others.

And yet it's almost in the news every day. Even here in New Zealand. Ruth and I have noticed scarcely a day passes without a report from Israel.

You know why? Because Israel is coming back into center stage for the climax of the age. That's where they'll be when the climax comes. Now Romans 11 contains a very important revelation.

Romans chapter 11 verses 25 and 26. Now these words are addressed by Paul to Christians from a Gentile background. That is non-Jewish.

How many of you know that most of you are Gentiles? I'm a Gentile. Warren is a Gentile. Now Ruth is a Jewess, see.

But she's in a minority. So the people who are not Christians are pagans. But the people who are not Jews are Gentiles.

This is difficult for some people to apprehend. So Paul is writing to Christians from a Gentile background. And this is what he says.

Romans 11 25. I do not desire brethren that you should be ignorant of this mystery. This secret that God has been keeping.

Lest you should be wise in your own opinion. Don't get conceited. Don't think of yourself more highly than you ought to think.

What is the mystery? That hardening in part has happened to Israel until the full number of the Gentiles has come in. Notice it's hardening in part. The whole Jewish people has never been totally hardened.

There have always been Jews in every generation who believed in Jesus. Sometimes they were a very small minority. But hardening in part has happened to Israel, not forever.

But until, until what? The full number of the Gentiles has come in. Until the church has done its job and proclaimed this gospel of the kingdom to all nations. And meanwhile the Lord has begun to gather in the Gentile harvest.

I believe myself the greatest harvest that church has ever seen is still ahead of us. I believe millions of people are going to come into the kingdom of God. But bear in mind that's preparatory to the restoration of Israel.

And then Paul goes on to say, verse 26. So all Israel will be saved. Israel is the only nation of which the Bible predicts that all the nation will be saved.

Doesn't say all New Zealand, doesn't say all Britain, doesn't say all America or Russia. But all Israel will be saved. On the other hand you have to bear in mind that all Israel is not all the Israel that's alive now.

For in Romans 9 and verse 27 Paul quotes Isaiah. He says though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, the remnant will be saved. The remnant is the remnant God has foreknown and chosen for himself.

So it's not all the Jewish people at present alive in the land of Israel. But it's the remnant that God will bring through great tribulation, testing, suffering to make them his. Then will come Jesus judging the Gentile nations.

And this will be, this is pictured in Joel chapter 3 verses 1 and 2. And this is very, very important for us who are non-Jewish to understand. Joel chapter 3 verses 1 and 2. For behold in those days and at that time, and God is speaking, when I bring back the captives or the exiles of Judah and Jerusalem. In other words in the days in which we are living.

When God is bringing back Jewish exiles from more than 100 nations to their own land. God says I will also gather all nations, Gentile nations. And bring them down to the valley of Jehoshaphat.

And Jehoshaphat means in Hebrew the Lord judges. And I will enter into judgment with them there. On account of my people, my heritage Israel.

Whom they have scattered among the nations. They have also divided up my land. That is something extremely important we need to understand.

God is going to judge the nations on the basis of how they've treated the Jewish people. And particularly he's going to judge them for one thing. They've divided up his land.

What's the modern political word for dividing up? Partition. And that's precisely what the nations have done and are busy trying to do right now. And God is angry with them.

And we who love our nation need to be in urgent prayer that our nation will not be aligned against God's purposes for Israel. Now it doesn't say there'll be any Jews judged there. My personal opinion is because the Jews will already pass through their own judgment, the great tribulation.

Somebody said years ago something worth considering. God blesses the Jews direct. He blesses the Gentiles through the Jews.

God judges the Gentiles direct. He judges the Jews through the Gentiles. I think this has been worked out in history time and time again.

So Israel will pass through their judgment in the great tribulation. They will have been judged. But then the nations that persecuted them will be judged.

And in Matthew 25 Jesus says, I'm going to sit on my throne. I think I better read those words because it's so clear that this is Joel chapter 3 in the New Testament. Matthew 25, the last part of the chapter.

When the Son of Man comes in his glory, verse 31. And all the holy angels with him. Then he will sit on the throne of his glory.

This is the same scene as in Joel chapter 3 verse 1. All the nations, the Gentiles, will be gathered before him. And he will separate them from one another as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. And if you've studied that chapter you'll find the basis of the division is how they've treated the brothers of Jesus.

So the nations need to know. We need to keep our nation informed. We need to speak out and warn our nations.

You're going to be judged by the way you have dealt with God's people and God's land, Israel. Now following that Christ's kingdom on earth will be established. Whenever you pray the Lord's prayer, which you probably do quite often.

What you may not realize is you're praying for the establishment of Christ's kingdom on earth. Because the first petition is thy kingdom come. That takes precedence over all other petitions.

And when you're praying that, you're praying for the return of Jesus, the establishment of his kingdom on the earth. Whether you know it or not. Now this is described in Isaiah chapter 24 verse 19.

You see how important it is to have a knowledge of biblical prophecy. Isaiah 24 verse 19. This is in a sense the climax of the age.

It's reduplicated many times in Revelation. This is the picture. The earth is violently broken, the earth is split open, the earth is shaken exceedingly.

The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard and shall totter like a hut. Its transgression shall be heavy upon it and it will fall and not rise again. That's the earth, the planet on which we live.

It shall come to pass in that day that the Lord will punish on high the host of exalted ones and on the earth the kings of the earth. The Lord will deal with two kingdoms. Satan's kingdom in the heavenlies, the kingdom of man on earth.

He will punish all those who refuse his righteous government in the person of Jesus. They will be gathered together as prisoners are gathered in the pit or the prison and will be shut up in the prison. After many days they will be punished.

Now I like this verse, this is the climax. Then the moon will be disgraced and the sun ashamed. For the Lord of hosts will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem and before his elders gloriously.

The Lord's kingdom will have been re-established in its capital which is Jerusalem. Now why should the sun be ashamed and the moon disgraced? This is something that I believe I have the answer to. Because in Luke 9 and verse 26 is a description of the return of Jesus.

Luke 9 26 Jesus says, For whoever is ashamed of me and my words, of him the son of man will be ashamed when he comes in his own glory, in his father's glory and the glory of the holy angels. Just think of that. Jesus is coming in his own glory, the glory of the father and the glory of the holy angels.

The brilliance of that glory is something we cannot even begin to imagine. And yet it will not hurt our eyes. But then the sun and the moon will have to take a back seat and say the light we offer is nothing compared with what comes with Jesus.

So that's why they'll be ashamed. Now I've got to go quickly and I'll just give you the references. I don't have time to turn to them.

The next thing that will happen is that Jesus will establish his kingdom for 1,000 years. A thousand years the Bible says is as a day. So it's one day in the Lord's reckoning.

Then satan will be released from his prison briefly and go out and stir up rebellion in the nations, which is his job. And the Lord will intervene and bring final judgment on the nations and satan will be thrown into

the lake of fire together with the antichrist and the false prophet who are already there. The present heaven and the present earth will pass away and a new heaven and a new earth will come forth.

And all the remaining dead will stand before the great white throne of God for judgment. Now tomorrow, God helping me, if God wills and we live, we'll deal with the eternal judgment of God. The Lord bless you.

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