

How to Approach Biblical - Part 2

by Derek Prince

Derek Prince discusses the principles of understanding biblical prophecy, emphasizing the importance of Israel's restoration and the centrality of Jesus in prophetic revelation.

Duration: 28:14

Scripture: Jeremiah 30:3

Topics: "Biblical Prophecy", "End Times"

Description

This sermon by Derek Prince Ministries delves into the importance of understanding biblical prophecy, emphasizing the need to discern the specific times and situations for prophecies to be fulfilled. It highlights the restoration of Israel as a key prophecy and warns of a time of tribulation before Israel's salvation. The sermon stresses the spirit of prophecy revealing Jesus and the necessity of interpreting prophecies in their plain, literal meanings. It also addresses the corruption of human nature, the progression of evil in the world, and the ultimate solution found in the righteous rule of Jesus.

Transcript

Derek Prince Ministries Proclaiming the inspired word of God around the world. Derek Prince is an internationally recognized Bible teacher and author. Through books, audios, videos, and radio broadcasts, Derek seeks to reach the unreached and teach the untaught.

In over 50 years of ministry, Derek has reached over 100 nations in more than 50 languages. And now, Derek Prince. Now the next principle is that many prophecies are given for a specific time and situation.

And until we come to that time and situation, we will not be able to understand the prophecy. So in Jeremiah chapter 30, verses 3 through 7, we have a specific prophecy concerning the restoration of Israel to their own land. And let me say my observation is most of the prophecies of the end time assume the presence of Israel as a nation in their own land.

In other words, they could not be fulfilled until the state of Israel was restored. This is the prophecy. And let me say that a dear brother in the Lord whom I respect, some good many years ago made a statement.

He said the restoration of the state of Israel could not be from God because if it were from God it would have produced peace. I have to say, he could not have said that if he'd been familiar with prophecy. Because prophecy says exactly the opposite.

These are the words. For behold the days are coming, says the Lord, that I will bring back from captivity or from exile my people Israel and Judah, says the Lord. And I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers and they shall possess it.

Now anybody who has a small acquaintance with the Bible knows where the land is that God gave to the fathers of Israel. There's only one land that answers to that description. It's a little strip of territory at the east end of the Mediterranean.

Then we go on. Now these are the words that the Lord spoke concerning Israel and Judah. For thus says the Lord, we have heard a voice of trembling, of fear and not of peace.

Notice that, not of peace. Ask now and see whether a male is ever in labor with child. So why do I see every male with his hands on his loins like a woman in labor and all faces turned pale? Alas, for that day is great, so that none is like it.

And it is the time of Jacob's trouble, but he shall be saved out of it. So far from predicting peace when Israel are restored to their territory. The Bible warns us there will be a time of tribulation and anguish without parallel in Jewish history.

And when you consider Jewish history, that's a startling statement. And concerning it, the Lord says, not he will be saved from it, but he will be saved out of it. And that applies to a lot of other situations in our lives.

God doesn't always save us from things, but he saves us out of things. He lets us get into them and then he saves us out of them. And then at the end of that chapter there's a little sort of P.S. in the last verse, verse 24.

In the latter days you will consider it. In other words, you really won't have any use for this prophecy until the time of the end. In fact, it won't have much meaning for you.

But I'll tell you as far as I'm concerned, it is exceedingly meaningful today. Because we live in Jerusalem and we see it all happening in front of our eyes. So remember, there are a lot of prophecies that you won't understand until the appropriate moment.

And then, one main purpose of biblical prophecy is to guide us in what we do and what we don't do. It becomes directive. And people who don't know biblical prophecy are liable to be praying and trying to do things which will never come to pass.

Because God has said they will never happen. And if God has said something will never happen, it's a waste of time to pray that it will happen or to try to make it happen. Now I'll give you a little example from Matthew 24.

And we'll be returning to Matthew 24 in the next two sessions. Let me say this, in case I forget to say it then. If you want to receive as much as possible from my next two sessions, read Matthew chapter 24 and chapter 25.

And when you've read them, read them again. Because we're going to deal with them in detail, verse by verse. But I'm just preempting that by going to two verses that apply to the situation after the Jews have been returned to their land.

It says in Matthew 24, 19 and 20. But woe to those who are pregnant and to those with nursing babies in those days. And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath.

So you would be inclined in that situation to say, God don't make, let us have to flee. God says that's a useless prayer. You're going to have to flee.

Pray within that, those parameters. Pray that though you may have to flee, it will not be in winter. Why? Because it will be very tough in winter.

Especially for pregnant women or women with nursing babies. And pray that it may not be on the Sabbath. Now why would you pray that it may not be on the Sabbath? That has no meaning at all unless there's a Jewish state.

Because I lived in that country which was then called Palestine while it was still under the British mandate. And the Sabbath was no different from any other day. But under a Jewish state, in the area of Jerusalem, no one has public transportation on the Sabbath.

The majority of people don't travel anywhere. So a large group of people fleeing on the Sabbath day would become extremely conspicuous. So Jesus says you're going to have to flee.

Don't pray you won't have to flee. But pray that you won't have to flee in winter or on the Sabbath day. Now that's an example of many prophetic scriptures which tell us what is going to happen.

And if God says it's going to happen, it is a waste of time to pray that it won't happen. It's a waste of time to try and work it out so that it won't happen. What you can do is pray within the parameters of revealed prophecy.

So that's number three. And number four, to avoid wrong prayer or action. Number five is in a different category.

You find the principle in Revelation 19 verse 10. Revelation 19 verse 10. For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

We're not talking about just the words of prophecy. We're talking about the spirit of prophecy. And all biblical prophecy focuses in the Lord Jesus.

He's the central theme of all biblical prophecy from Genesis to Revelation. Jesus said in John somewhere, John 14 verse 8. John 16 verse 8. When he, the spirit of truth has come, he will guide you into all truth. He will glorify me for he shall not speak for himself.

That's one acid test of any manifestation. Whether it's of the Holy Spirit or not. If it's of the Holy Spirit, it will glorify Jesus.

It will focus our attention on Jesus. It will show us something new we didn't see about Jesus. And prophecies that glorify men are not from the Holy Spirit.

In fact, when the Holy Spirit begins to move, if human personalities are allowed to move into his place and take the center of the stage, the Holy Spirit politely withdraws. And he's done that frequently in this century. There have been many moves of the Holy Spirit that were quenched because men put themselves in the center of the stage and wanted to focus on themselves.

But any true prophetic revelation will always glorify Jesus. Principle number six. Give words their plain meaning.

Don't be too spiritual. If you examine the many prophecies given about the first coming of Jesus, and there must be at least twenty. Every one of them was fulfilled literally.

He was born of a literal virgin. Not a metaphorical virgin. He was literally born in Bethlehem.

He literally was called out of Egypt. He literally healed the sick. He was literally crucified.

Very, very literally. Nothing spiritual or metaphorical about that. He was literally buried.

And thank God, he literally rose again from the dead. And he literally ascended to heaven. You cannot find one example of prophecies concerning the first appearance of Jesus that were not fulfilled literally.

There is no precedent there for making prophecy allegorical or spiritualizing it or interpreting it in some way other than the plain natural meaning of the words. Now some prophecies are allegorical. And then it's legitimate to interpret them allegorically.

For instance, nobody supposes that the king of Greece is a goat. Or that the king of Persia was a ram. We know those are allegorical.

But where the Scripture does not warrant an allegorical interpretation, it is a mistake to make it allegorical. I believe myself, as we face the tremendous pressures and dangers of this latter time, that the prophecies concerning this latter time are going to be fulfilled with frightening literalness. Things are going to really move out of their place.

Things are going to fall from heaven. There are going to be real literal earthquakes more and more. It's a mistake to make what is simple and plain spiritual and allegorical.

And another thing I would like to say just by passing is Israel is Israel. That's very simple but it's very basic. Israel is not the church.

And the church is not Israel. If you want a little study on that subject I have a book somewhere out there I think which is called, Prophetic Destiny. Destinies.

Who is Israel? Who is the church? The English version was better titled. It was called, The Destiny of Israel and the Church. And I give there, I think 79 Scriptures applying to Israel in the New Testament.

None of which applies to the church. So please don't be too spiritual. And finally, and that goes for a lot of other things.

We won't go into that. But super spirituality is a disease. Finally, bear in mind God's total sovereignty and supremacy.

And His total justice. He is always righteous. He never makes a mistake.

He's never said anything that isn't true. And brothers and sisters, He's never made a mistake in your life. You may think He has, but He hasn't.

And one of the things to benefit from the dealing with God is to acknowledge His absolute righteousness. So those are the seven principles that I want to put before you as we begin to approach biblical prophecy. Number one, there are secret and revealed things.

Don't waste time trying to find out the secret things. But be sure to obey the revealed things. Number two, that's the second one, is number two.

Number three, some prophecies are given for a specific time. And will not be understood until the time comes. Four, prophecy is given very often to keep us from wrong action on wrong prayer.

You see, if God has said something will happen, it will happen. If God has said something it will not happen, it will not happen. You can spend hours praying the opposite way, but all you're doing is wasting time and energy.

So if you want to pray sensible, effective prayers, you need to know the parameters of the will of God revealed in prophecy. Principle number five, the spirit of prophecy is the revelation of Jesus. All true prophecy given by the Holy Spirit ultimately has one theme.

It's Jesus. Number six, give words their plain meaning. And number seven, acknowledge and bow before God's total sovereignty.

I do not read the Bible in order to correct God's ethics. A lot of people do. A lot of people have got the idea that God is doing something unjust in the Middle East at the moment.

He's not. God is always right. Do you think you could say that with conviction? God is always right.

Amen. All right, now then. I want to come to one specific prophecy of the New Testament and make it a test case of these principles.

And it's a very relevant and important one. In 2 Timothy chapter 3, verses 1 through 5. 2 Timothy chapter 3, verses 1 through 5. But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come. For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God.

Having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away. Now that statement of Paul's begins with something unusual in the Scripture.

He says know this. Usually the Bible simply says this is the way it will be. But Paul is so concerned that we will not have a wrong idea about the last days.

That he says know this. Be in no doubt about this. Here is an absolutely established fact which you cannot change.

By prayer, by pleading, or by any kind of activity. It's going to happen. So bow before this fact.

Now a lot of contemporary Christians have not really yet absorbed this truth. He says in the last days, which is the period immediately preceding the return of the Lord. And there are probably half the books of the Bible have some reference to the last days.

Perilous times will come. Now that word that's translated perilous only occurs in one other place in the New Testament. It's in Matthew chapter 8 verse 28.

And it describes two demonized men who came to confront Jesus when he crossed the Sea of Galilee to the region called Gadara. And it says they were exceedingly fierce. I want to suggest to you that that's a better translation here.

In the last days fierce times will come. I believe myself we're living in fierce times. But I think they're going to get fiercer.

Now to wish otherwise, to pray otherwise, to act as if it were not true is a waste of time. It's an established fact. In the last days things are going to get fiercer and fiercer and fiercer.

That doesn't frighten me. I've adjusted to it. I accept it as the expression of God's wisdom.

God's righteousness. But a lot of people still act as if it weren't going to happen. And a lot of, some of those people are here this evening.

You have not yet grasped the fact that we are confronting fierce times. And they're not going to get less fierce. They're going to get more fierce.

Now you might say, well you're just a pessimist. No I'm not, I'm an optimist. I'm an optimist because I believe God has a solution.

You know what the solution is? The coming of Jesus. And I don't believe there's any other valid solution. No other solution than the establishment of the kingdom of God on earth.

With all respect to the politicians, I don't believe they have the solution. If they have, I'd like to know where it is. I pray for politicians if they're political leaders.

I respect them. But I do not expect them to come up with a remedy for the problems of humanity. Which are enormous and increasing.

Poverty, sickness, hatred, war. All these terrible things that are blighting the lives of millions and millions of people. Politicians do not have a solution.

Ultimately I believe the Bible reveals there will be one politician who will claim to have the solution. And he will be the Antichrist. But his solution will be worse than all the problems that have ever gone before.

Now I am not a pessimist. I'm not standing here looking unhappy. Because I believe that Jesus is coming.

But he cannot come until this condition is fulfilled in the world. Because that's what the Bible says. So if we want Jesus to come.

Do you want Jesus to come? Well you have to be prepared for fierce times. Because that's what it's going to take. I believe myself God is going to allow human wickedness to come to its full expression.

We will see if we're still alive. The real innate evil in the heart of sinners. Manifested with an ugliness and a fearfulness that we can hardly imagine.

I believe God is going to let man who claims to be able to choose his own leaders. Make their own choice. See I have to tell you frankly.

I prefer to live in a democracy than a tyranny. But democracy is not God's pattern for government. Democracy is a Greek word.

Just like humanism. It comes from Greece. And it's corrupted our thinking.

Some of us. Let me give you, I was a student of Greek philosophy before I became a preacher. Let me give you, I didn't intend this.

But let me give you Plato's little picture of five forms of government. I think really you can't improve on this. Starting with the best and ending with the worst.

The best is the rule of one good man. The next best is the rule of a few good men. The rule of one good man he called monarchy.

The rule of a few good men he called aristocracy. Thank you. After that is democracy.

The rule of the people by themselves. Who was it? It was Lincoln who said democracy, the government of the people, by the people, for the people, will never perish from the earth. I'm afraid he was wrong.

It will. All right, going still further, number four is the rule of a few bad men, which he called oligarchy. And finally the rule of one evil man, which he called tyranny.

Now I cannot really see that there needs any correction. What he said about democracy is it's the weakest of all forms of government. But in my opinion it's a preferable to oligarchy or tyranny.

But it's not God's form of government. God's form of government is a monarchy. The rule of one good man, and what is his name? Thank you.

And the rule of a few good men with him who are his saints. So I tolerate democracy and I'd rather live in a democracy than a tyranny. But I don't believe it's the ultimate solution.

I don't believe it has power to solve the problems of the human race. I don't believe that men and women basically are capable of choosing the right leader. If they have, why haven't they done it? I'm not criticizing the government.

We're just dealing with human weaknesses. So, what is the end? The end is monarchy. One man, Jesus, who will be king.

Who will reign in righteous rule. Who will share his authority with those whom he has trained through suffering, through affliction, through discipline, to share his rule with him. What do we call those people? We call them the church.

And bear in mind that the word church is a very poor translation of the Greek word ekklesia, which is essentially a governmental assembly. So if we're members of the church, we're members of a governmental assembly which will be headed up by one righteous man, Jesus. That's God's solution.

And I believe there is no other solution. I believe in a certain sense if we're trying to arrange for some other solution, we're wasting our time and our energy. We've got lots to do within the context of God's revelation.

Now, I want to point out two, I think, incontrovertible principles. You may not think them so. But what we are dealing with is the corruption of human nature caused by sin.

And notice that when Paul speaks about fierce times, the reason he gives will is men will be. And he lists 18 moral or ethical blemishes. The root cause of the problems in the world is not nuclear fission.

It's human character. After all, the atom bomb didn't invent itself. Men invented it.

Men used it. Men invented all sorts of horrible instruments of destruction. It's men who are using them.

So the root cause of the problems of humanity today is the moral and ethical corruption produced in humanity by sin. And if you'll accept the metaphor of corruption, which I believe is valuable, valid, there are two principles in the natural. All corruption is progressive.

It doesn't get better. It always gets worse. And all corruption is irreversible.

There is no way to turn back the working of corruption. I believe that applies to the world situation. I believe it applies to the world.

The corruption in the world is progressive. It's never going to get better. It's always going to get worse.

And it's irreversible. There is no way to reverse the process of corruption. So all Christian prayers and schemes and plans that are, whether they know it or not, directed to reversing corruption, are a waste of time.

And probably money too. See, this is why we need biblical prophecy. Because it saves us a lot of wasted time, effort and money.

A lot of disappointment. Now please understand, I believe as Christians we have an obligation to pray for our government within the parameters of the revealed will of God. I was speaking about this once, some good many years ago, about the need to pray for the government.

And at the end a lady came up to me, a dear lady, and she said, but Mr. Prince, doesn't the Bible teach that everything is getting worse and worse? I said, no. It teaches some things are getting worse and some things are getting better. And I'm one of the things that's getting better.

And you can be one of the things that's getting better too. You understand? This is not negative. It's realistic.

You have to live within the parameters of the revealed, the revelation of God's Word. So, let's note also, and we'll return to this list. But let's note also that in the last time, this passage reveals there will be a great upsurge of the occult.

For instance, in the same chapter, that's 2nd Timothy chapter 3, verse 7, Paul says, Now as Jannes and Jambres resisted Moses, so do these also resist the truth. Men of corrupt minds disapproved concerning the faith. Notice the word corrupt.

But those two names, Jannes and Jambres, are the names of the two magicians in Egypt that resisted and opposed Moses and Aaron. And so when it talks about them, it's talking about the occult, the satanic supernatural.

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