

# Arab-03 the Two Wisdoms

by Art Katz

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of choosing God's wisdom over the wisdom of the world, and prioritizing God's glory over our own interests.*

**Duration:** 1:07:00

**Scripture:** Ephesians 1:10, Ephesians 3:8-10, Ephesians 3:21

**Topics:** "Arabic"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of holding steady and passing tests in order to reach a place of greater maturity in faith. He highlights how our minds are trained to seek immediate answers, but living in the tension of faith requires patience. The speaker references the book of Hebrews, where it is mentioned that the great heroes of faith did not receive the promise in their lifetime, but they lived with the expectation that it would be fulfilled in the life to come. The sermon emphasizes that the ultimate requirement is not about living better or solving personal problems, but about bringing glory to God. The speaker encourages the church to prioritize God's glory and demonstrate His wisdom, which can break the influence of the powers of the air and release captives for ministry.

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## Transcript

But if we hold steady and pass the test, it could be the making of us, being brought into a new place of greater maturity, a transcendent place. So I appeal to you to hold steady. Our minds are trained to be greedy.

They want immediate answers now. The world has not prepared us to live in the tension of the faith. Where something is delayed, the answer does not come until later.

It may not even come in this life. At your own leisure, look at the book of Hebrews. The great heroes of the faith, of whom it says, these all died not having received the promise.

Not just a few of them did not receive, none of them received. These all died not having received the promise, yet they saw it afar off and were able to live without the promise being fulfilled, confident it would be given them in the life to come. That expectation enabled them to live now.

In such a way it says that they received a good report. This is another way of living, a heavenly rather than an earthly way, and we are not used to it, but we need to become used to it. So something is involved in

these days much more than the subject of Israel.

It's an opportunity to come into a more radical place of faith, of the kind that they in the book of Hebrews knew and enjoyed. And we are not just listening to a teacher that makes a demand upon our intelligent understanding, that makes a demand upon our intelligent understanding, as if understanding is the result of a certain set of reasonable or logical propositions that we consider. as if understanding is the result of a certain set of reasonable or logical propositions that we consider.

This is prophetic proclamation. It's not so much our intelligent understanding as a word that performs a work in them that believe. It's a new dimension for you.

So don't panic. Don't worry. Consider yourselves special.

Because the issue is the glory of God forever. And knowing that, we know that that means ultimate requirement. It's not how you should live better.

And how this series of talks will enable you to live a more successful Christianity. And how the faith can meet your problems. This goes far beyond that.

It has nothing to do with you at all. It has to do with Him. And His glory forever.

Wherever there's a church that takes that seriously, Wherever there's a church that takes that seriously, and makes the issue of God's glory the foremost purpose for its being, and makes the issue of God's glory the foremost purpose for its being, that church declares to all forces of darkness, to all forces of darkness, to all forces of darkness, that destroys their influence in the locality where that church is, that destroys their influence in the locality where that church is, and releases the captives for the ministry of that fellowship. and releases the captives for the ministry of that fellowship. For that fellowship is demonstrating another wisdom.

For that fellowship is demonstrating another wisdom. The whole of the spiritual drama is a conflict of two wisdoms. The whole of the spiritual drama is a conflict of two wisdoms.

The wisdom of the world, the gods of this world, and the wisdom of God. Totally opposite. In every point and particular.

In every point and particular. The principalities and the powers of the air. The principalities and the powers of the air.

That brood over every nation and every locality. That brood over every nation and every locality. Actual princes of the air.

Actual princes. Who have had an influence and a sway over nations. Who have had an influence and a sway over nations.

To this very day. Against which God raises up only one agency to combat them. Against which God raises up only one agency to combat them.

The church. But the church of an ultimate kind. Not any casual fellowship.

But a church of a particular kind. The kind that embraces the eternal purposes of God. That pertains to his glory forever.

As its foremost consideration. Is that practical? No. And yet the remarkable paradox is this.

That those who put God's interests first. Have a greater consequence for their practical life. Than those who put their practical life first.

So I want to pray. Precious God we ask mercy and grace. To see where we are.

We have constituted no threat to the powers of the air that brood over our cities. For we have been so much under their influence. And we ask that you would help us.

To break free from their influence. In the only way that you yourself have provided. That we will take eternity seriously.

The glory of the Lord more important than our own practical need. That we might be true church indeed. For only such a church shall overcome and endure in the last days.

And be to this nation what it must. So grant us a grace to understand. Not so much with our minds as with our spirits.

May we not resist nor reject your word. But receive it that it might perform a work in us. We thank you for the privilege.

And invite you to continue with us. To shake all things that must be shaken. That only that which should remain will remain.

Be with my mouth Lord. And with the ears and the hearts of our hearers. Paul cried out for a grace for utterance that he might make known the mysteries of God.

And I pray for that grace also. Thank you for hearing us and answering us. In Jesus name.

Amen. You remember that Jesus was told that Lazarus the friend whom he loved was sick. And instead of rushing to his bedside as you would expect that he would.

He remained two days long the way he was. And then he went to his house. And when he approached this house one of the two sisters ran to meet him.

It was Martha. She said Lord if you had been here my brother would not have died. It was an accusation.

It was putting pressure on him. Because she only thought in terms of her own immediate satisfaction. He said your brother is not going to die.

But this is going to reveal the glory of God. And we are in that situation Jesus. We all of us have a spirit of accusation.

Of requirements. As if we have something coming to us. You can't allow my brother to die.

If you had been here he would not have died. And I would not have to suffer this. What a picture of ourselves.

As compared to Jesus. Who is motivated by one thing only. Greater even than his love for his friend Lazarus.

It was that the glory of God the Father should be revealed. There is a certain spirit of requirement with us. If you had been here my brother would not have died.

Art if you had spoken more intelligently. More clearly. I would not be in this state of confusion.

Why did you have to bring up a troubling subject? Why don't you address my needs? Why do you have to speak about some ultimate millennial thing? Especially as it centers in that hated nation. Only for one reason. To reveal the glory of God.

You see where we are? You see where he is? You know what I noticed as Terry read again from Isaiah 19? The wonderful spirit inspired words of God. Egypt my people. In verse 25.

Blessed be Egypt my people. And Israel my inheritance. You know what thought I had? Egypt will never be his people.

Until his inheritance is your inheritance. Until Israel is as much a joy for you as it is for him. Merely to be begrudging toward the truth.

I guess I have to. It says in the word. Does not make you his people.

If you're going to be his people you've got to love what he loves. And rejoice for what he loves. But there's something in you that's unwilling.

Resistant and selfish. Hard and stubborn. That has always been true.

It's only the issue of Israel that now reveals it. You see the wisdom of God? All the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God. He knows exactly what it takes to find us now.

And to reveal both our condition and our needs. He said except that our righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the Pharisees we cannot. It's not enough to acknowledge our enemies as having a purpose with God.

But to love our enemies. As he loves them. And by his love.

To come to a place like that. Is not only to see Israel differently. It's to see Muslims differently.

Loving your enemy is an ultimate place in God. If it's going to be said of you that you're his people. They must be your inheritance.

That you should rejoice over Jerusalem. Not the present one. But the one that is to come.

Which will not come without you. Your prayers, your intercession, your prayer. The bringing forth of that nation.

Is the very key to the completion of God's purpose. It has such a profound impact on the powers of darkness in the air. Because it contradicts all wisdom.

All reasonable understanding. That you can pray for an end. Not out of a religious obligation.

Not because I have to. But out of love. Because I want to.

Not so much the love for them in themselves. As the love of God. Who is glorified by their return.

Sometimes we need to obey when we don't understand. Like when Jesus washed the feet of the disciples. Peter refused to receive that washing.

He was too spiritual. And he didn't understand it. Jesus said to him in verse 7 of chapter 13.

John chapter 7. What I do thou knowest not now. Peter wanted to know now. He wanted to have his greedy mind appeased now.

But this was a mystery. That was not to be understood now. But yet an obedience now was required.

And you shall know hereafter. And Jesus said if you don't allow me to wash your feet now. You will have no part with me.

That's the issue before you. If you'll not allow the Lord to wash your feet with his word. Though you don't understand now.

You'll have no part with him. In his end time purposes. In the things that conclude this age.

And release his coming and his kingdom and his glory. So what's up to you? How far do you want to go? How far? You want some practical teaching out of this? That you don't understand now. But you'll understand hereafter.

If you will submit to him. You can't understand how great mistakes are in these very days. Mistakes in efficiency.

You say but brother it can't be because I'm just an ordinary believer. I'm just an ordinary Christian. This can't be that important.

But no different than what the condition of Jesus' disciples were. Who could not receive nor understand when he told them that he had to be crucified and be raised again on the third day. They blocked it out of their minds.

It wasn't practical for them to consider. And we're something like that. We want to block out what is not convenient.

And yet his death and his resurrection is central to the whole faith. And we're made of the same stuff as they were made of. That's the mystery.

If God cannot succeed with a congregation like this in Cairo and in Egypt in this hour to receive the mystery of God's eternal purposes then I don't have any hope for the church anywhere. It's all the more to his glory when it has to do with people like ourselves. Maybe you were born to come into the kingdom for such a time as this.

So let's turn to Ephesians chapter 3 and see if we can understand the mystery of the church. Paul speaks about his calling in this chapter. In verse 7 that he was made a minister according to the gift of the grace of God given to him.

Who is less than the least of all saints. That's how Paul saw himself. That's how we need to see ourselves that we might receive God's grace.

Which is only given to the humble. That he should preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ. And to make all men see in verse 9 what is the fellowship of the mystery.

Which from the beginning of the world has been hidden God who created all things by Jesus. And order that now. That the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God.

What do you think of that? Have you understood that? Are you looking carefully at these words? Do you understand the words? In order that now something is to take place. That is so important in God's sight that he created all things in order to obtain it. And the key for which all things were created is the church.

That it might make a demonstration of a particular kind unto the principalities and powers of the earth. Of the new creation. Of the manifold wisdom of God.

If we don't get past this verse we can forget all the rest of these verses. They will mean nothing and will be closed to us until we come through this gate when we understand this verse. This is the gate and this is the purpose of God from his church.

The apostle says at the end of this chapter verse 21 unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages Amen. Do you desire to be a part of that church? Or do you just want to attend a fellowship where you receive some benefit? This is a critically important question. What is your intention of that? How far are you willing to go? This is not for everybody.

If this glory does not come to Jesus Christ by the church and the world is dying for the demonstration of this glory then the world will die without declaring this glory. Tell her. If we don't do this this glory will never come to light and the world will die looking at this glory.

Do we have this concern and this jealousy for the glory of God? It's not something that we can do for ourselves. But we can be open to receive. Knowing that if God gives it to us it will ruin us.

It will ruin us. It will. For our careers, for our future for our practical expectations for our lives it will ruin our careers and our jobs.

This is the end of respectable Christianity which allows you to be a Christian and an engineer at the same time and get married and have a family and everything goes well with you. But the Christianity that we ask for and hope for that feeds our needs has nothing to do with this world. So what will it be? One or the other? Or I'm wasted, Andrew.

You cannot hear me if you don't choose the latter. Do you realize how historic this moment is? Time is standing still waiting for your answer. The issue of eternity is waiting waiting for your desire and your will.

Of how far you will go. How far will you go with God? What kind of a Christian do you want to be? How much are you concerned with His purposes? Because look at verse 11 that this whole thing is according to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Jesus Christ our Lord.

I was telling Terry this morning that not long ago I was faced with the same issue in Sicily in Italy an audience of Sicilian women with their bandanas around their heads the most ordinary and simple women

they loved the Lord but they were practical also and the Lord said speak to them the mystery of Israel and the Church I said look this is ridiculous and it's impossible what about the Italian women? they have no concern for the eternal purposes of God they are waiting to get home so that they can cook Israel is nothing for them the Lord said that's exactly the point when a church will take to its heart something that has nothing to do with its own practical interest simply because it is God's eternal purpose that church is church indeed and their willingness to do it demonstrates

another kind of wisdom contrary to the wisdom of this world contrary to self interest it puts the interest of another before their own interests and when the powers of the air that brood over Sicily and the Mafia see it see that one thing that one demonstration their influence over that locality in Sicily is broken by the only thing that can break their power the demonstration of the manifold wisdom of God through the church that's exactly our issue today what practical importance is this for me? not only does it have no seeming practical importance it might even threaten your life it's not safe to entertain and to consider things pertaining to that nation to do so is not only inconvenient but at risk and any expression of the church of Jesus Christ in Egypt that will do so makes a

demonstration to the powers of the air above it that breaks their influence over that locality what is being tested is how far you have been brought by Terry from that have you come to such a faith that you can consider the eternal purposes of God as being greater than your own do you see yourself as being connected with the invisible cloud of witnesses who are not yet perfect without us there is something here of an unbroken continuum throughout the whole history of the faith do we choose to see ourselves as being part in that of a church that has always had a jealousy for the glory of God and has suffered for that reason even unto death for nothing will invite a greater opposition against you than this kind of jealousy so I want to know how far you want to go or we can stop here and I

and my friends will go sightseeing this is a historic moment in this room let's not rush this I really want us to wrestle with this you keep saying concerning this thing this thing can you say something about this thing yes I mean yesterday you were so clear today you are what is it this thing what is it is it I mean can we talk about this specific thing being a church of an ultimate kind that fulfills the eternal purpose of God for which reason it says that he created all things through Jesus Christ how important must this be to them he created all things the cosmos itself the world the world and the nations the whole thing that sustains the life of mankind sustains keeps in order that there should be a place for a church that should perform something for him why should that be important

to him he doesn't tell us he simply states it and what is this church to demonstrate the manifold wisdom of God whatever that is whatever that wisdom is and not by individuals in the church the church itself in its totality in its true corporate makeup only that church can fulfill this purpose this is not for individualists this is for a church of an ultimate kind that are really together that have one heart, one mind and one will it's a sacrifice to be such a church something for something given if we give our time or our energy we expect a certain result that's that's the wisdom of this world and it's powerful even among Christians if we don't feel that we're receiving a benefit from the fellowship we'll go someplace else as if that's our right after all, our self-interest is first even

spiritually but we're acting in the spirit of the world that's the utilitarian spirit of the world something invested something in but it's not the wisdom of God God's wisdom is selflessness self-denial giving yourself for something that is contrary to your self-interest even opposed to your self-interest because it glorifies another people who do it would be considered stupid And God calls such people pilgrims,

strangers, and sojourners in the earth.

It's what we are called to be. Where was the manifold wisdom of God first demonstrated? Because it brought an incisive defeat to the powers of darkness. It says he made of them an open spoil in a public display.

He disarmed the principalities and the powers. Where? At the cross. Jesus himself demonstrated the wisdom of God at the cross.

The two wisdoms collided at the cross. The wisdom of the world and the wisdom of God. The wisdom of the world says, take care of yourself.

Come down from the cross and we will believe you. It uses force and threat and intimidation and power. If you bow to me, I will give you all the kingdoms of this world.

Success, prestige, satisfaction. Is this a wisdom that you recognize? Is it not yet powerful in the world? Isn't that why you go to university and sacrifice to obtain a career? But God has created all things for a demonstration of another kind. And the powers of the air will only be defeated by this demonstration.

And the powers of the air will only be defeated by this demonstration. What Jesus demonstrated on the cross in his own body. In patient suffering and sacrifice.

In suffering reproach. Is what we will be called to do at the end of the day. It will bring the final defeat of the powers.

Release mankind from its bondage. Release the king and his kingdom. But it can only be performed by the church.

He created all things in order that through the church, the medical wisdom of God. It's the same wisdom that will embrace and rejoice for the restoration of Israel. Though it has nothing practically to do with your benefit.

It is even contrary to your self-interest. To embrace that purpose of God is to put yourself in a place of peril and jeopardy. To embrace that purpose of God is to put yourself in a place of peril and jeopardy.

But your willingness to do it is a demonstration. That has powerful practical consequence. Even for Egypt and Cairo.

Because of something that breaks in the air over us. Because of something that breaks in the air over us. The church itself is such a demonstration.

Because it is made up of Gentile and Jew. We are part of that mystery today in this room. Peoples who have been historically at enmity with each other.

Are made one. Is contrary to the wisdom of this world. Look what's happening in Yugoslavia today.

Serbian against Croatian. And both of them against the Muslims. Unbelievable violence and hatred and atrocity and torture.

Because of the ethnic differences. That hates the other. The very opposite of the genius of what the church is.

Can you see what the church itself, when it is really one. As Jew and Gentile. Contradicts the wisdom of the world.

It's a demonstration of the wisdom of God. That is glorious. Just it's very existence.

Is itself a power. If you can see that. Jew and Gentile made one new man.

In the church. What will it mean about Israel and the nations. That have been historically opposed to each other.

And are made one in God. How much greater a glory is that? A demonstration of the same wisdom of God. John the Baptist said, I must decrease that he might increase.

Are you willing to decrease as the church? That Israel might increase. That our purpose is to enable their restoration. That's contrary to the wisdom of the world.

And we should take second place to another. It says in the hour that Zion travails. A nation will be birthed.

Travailing is the agonizing pain and suffering. Of bringing something into being that was not before. It's a kind of dying.

To bring new life. Which the mother is willing to do for her child. It's her own child.

But God is going to bring Israel to such a place. That it cannot even travail for itself. It is going to be so reduced and so devastating.

That it will be nigh unto death. It will have no energy for itself. That process is at work right now.

And will continue. Until they will be completely without life. If anything comes to them, it must come to them from outside themselves.

A people who are willing to suffer the pangs and the travail of birth for them. That they might be brought into being. So Paul says, what shall they return be but life from the dead? What shall they return be but life from the dead? And what shall the return of the people of Israel be but life from the dead? Who would be willing to travail and to suffer for another? That God might bring that other forth.

To bless many. This is what the first martyr Stephen did. He was young and brilliant.

He had a wisdom that stopped the mouths even of the doctors of the law. He had a face that shone like an angel. But he was willing to lay his life down.

In order that a man at whose feet the clothing was laid. Would see something of another wisdom. That this Stephen could die more gloriously than Paul knew how to live.

Paul knew religion. He knew the wisdom of the world. But he was seeing another kind of demonstration.

That one was willing to decrease unto death. That this one might increase unto death. There would not have been an Apostle Paul without a martyr Stephen.

One had to decrease that the other might increase. And here is what I want to say to you. That the true church of Jesus Christ in the world.

Must be a Stephen people. Who will decrease even unto death. That this nation's soul.

That even breathes murderings against the church. That is contrary to God. And even opposed to the purposes of God.

That his own ignorance and self-righteousness. Will be broken by the demonstration of another wisdom. And be raised up out of that death.

To bless many nations. That's the ultimate purpose of God. That reveals his glory forever.

Did Stephen know that that's what his death meant? That he was then able to lay down his life? He didn't know and he didn't need to know. It was clear that his face shone like an angel. Because his life was totally surrendered to God.

He required no explanation. And yet his obedience to death is the key to the path. To open a new life.

When we read the life of Stephen. What a gift to the church. If he had lived, what would have been the benefit? But he was cut off when he was young.

Does it make sense according to our wisdom? That would have filled the wisdom of God. It was wasteful and extravagant from our perspective. It was a loss that Stephen lost his life in death.

But it released the glory of God. Jesus was told that his friend was sick and dying. Whom he loved, it says.

Yet he remained two days longer. And they go immediately. You don't have to be spiritual to understand that.

Common sense tells you if a person is sick, whom you love, you go immediately. But he delayed himself. Sufficient for his friend to die without any explanation.

Isn't that cruel? Isn't that unkind and unloving? He healed and saved others. Shouldn't he have done for his own friend? But he was obedient to others. He was obedient to higher orders.

That had to do with the glory of God. And by the time he got to the tomb of Lazarus, there were four days. And the sister said, by this time he stinks.

His body is entirely corrupted. Didn't I say, if you would believe, you would see the glory? And he cried out, Lazarus, and out from death came to life. He was enclosed in the cave and with a rock over him.

His face had been bound up and his hands and his feet. Jesus said, release him and let him go. Israel has been in a grave for 2,000 years.

Longer. Longer. By this time it stinks.

There is nothing good that can come out of it. Except by the resurrection power of God. The resurrection power of God.

The demonstration of which glorifies him forever. But it waited on an obedient son whose word could raise the dead. Had he gone earlier, he could not have spoken that word.

The power of that word was relative to his wait for the resurrection. Contrary to all wisdom. All self-interest.

What if God calls us to speak a word into Israel's tomb that it might come forth to bless the nations? Even this nation. Would we be able to speak such a word? If that word had to come out of our corporate mouth, as the church that demonstrates the wisdom of God. That could remain two days longer where it is.

While every human impulse wants to go and to help a friend. We still remain. Because there is something more important than human kindness.

And alleviating human ills. Helping others. And serving the needs of man.

It's the glory of God the Father. This sickness is not to end in death. But to glorify God and the Son of God.

By a demonstration of another wisdom by another power by those who have a single eye for that glory. How much more powerful is that demonstration? If it is performed not by a friend of Lazarus but by an enemy. Who has no reason to want to see Lazarus come out of his grave.

Only wanting to see him remain in his grave. That's a greater demonstration. It's the kind of demonstration that the church of Egypt could make.

And for which God is asking.

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