

# Commanded of God

by Art Katz

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of the issue of Israel and the church's role in Israel's restoration, highlighting the need for obedience and the knowledge of God.*

**Duration:** 55:13

**Scripture:** Isaiah 2:3, Micah 4:2, Zechariah 12:10, Matthew 24:21, Acts 3:21, Romans 11:25-26, Revelation 11:13

**Topics:** "Commandments"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of understanding the significance of the last days and the events that will unfold. He highlights the need for the church to be aware and engaged with these truths, rather than being indifferent or focused on shallow things. The speaker also discusses the phenomenon of genocide and how it is a satanic hatred directed not only against Jews but also other groups. He connects the restoration of Israel with the coming of the Lord and the establishment of his rule in Jerusalem, as prophesied in Acts 3:21 and other biblical passages.

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## Transcript

Genocide, meaning racial annihilation, came into being through the Holocaust. Now we have seen that phenomenon directed not only against Jews, but Bosnians, and Africans, and so on. But over and against the enmity of men against men, this is a satanic hatred, and the desire to annihilate a people whose restoration actually brings the Lord.

You say, how do you see that? Because it says in Acts 3.21 that the Lord is contained in the heavens, waiting for the restoration of all things spoken by the prophets since the world began. The Lord's coming is timed with the final acts pertaining to the restoration of this people in their ultimate besieged condition. When he pours upon the city of Jerusalem the spirit of grace and of supplications, he comes to intervene and to save them after two-thirds have already been decimated.

And with that saved and restored remnant, he occupies an actual throne in an actual geographical location of a city called Jerusalem, in a place called Zion, in fulfillment of what is spoken in the prophet Isaiah, and elsewhere again chapter four in Micah, when God repeats himself twice, take note, that the law shall go forth out of Zion, and the word of the Lord out of Jerusalem. I have to speak to you in a shorthand language, because we don't have the time to develop all of this. But Israel needs to be seen in the context of God's theocratic intention for the nations.

It's the issue of God's rule. And he has appointed a people and a place as the locus of that government and rule. And the city is Jerusalem and the people is Israel.

Not the present occupants of that city or the political state today called Israel, although survivors out of this political and Zionist entity will be part of the restored and the enduring prophetic fulfillment that will be to the eternal praise of his glory. Put on your seatbelts, gird your loins, the last days are going to be filled with remarkable convulsions and apocalyptic devastation, violence and judgment upon Israel, and then therefore what of the nations? And the final shakings by which the Lord is established and his rule out of the place of his own choosing. If that's true, cats, how can we be the church and live in ignorance, let alone indifference to these truths? Exactly, we can't.

And that's why we are a disfigured church. That's why we're responsive to hype and shallow things and things calculated to get our vibes going, because something of a fundamental and ultimate kind is absent from our consideration that would have brought an effect throughout the entire body. It would have brought us into the high seriousness of God.

It would have grown us up. It would have compelled our maturity. It would have required for the body to become the organism of God's intention instead of the casual collection of God's saints for services.

And that one thing, it's because God has chosen it, is the issue of Israel or the Jew. So, let's read this text. The hand of the Lord came upon me and brought me out in the spirit of the Lord and set me down in the midst of the valley, and it was full of bones.

Then he caused me to pass by them all around, and behold, there were very many in the open valley, and indeed, they were very dry. And he said to me, Southern man, can these bones live? So I answered, O Lord God, you know. And again he said to me, prophesy to these bones and say to them, O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord.

Thus says the Lord God to these bones, surely I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. I will put sinews on you and bring flesh upon you, cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live. Then you shall know that I am the Lord.

So I prophesied as I was commanded, and as I prophesied, there was a noise and suddenly a rattling, and the bones came together bone to bone. Indeed, as I looked, the sinews and the flesh came upon them, and the skin covered them over, but there was no breath in them. And he said to me, prophesy to the breath.

Prophesy, Southern man, and say to the breath, thus says the Lord God, come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe on these slain. Notice that they're not dying of old age. They've died violently.

On these slain, that they may live. So I prophesied as he commanded me, and breath came into them, and they lived and stood upon their feet, an exceedingly great army. Then he said to me, Southern man, these bones are the whole house of Israel.

They indeed say, our bones are dry, our hope is lost, and we ourselves are cut off. Therefore prophesy and say to them, thus says the Lord God, behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up from your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. So evidently the graves for the whole house of Israel is not in the land itself, but outside of it, namely in the nations.

Then you shall know that I am the Lord when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up from your graves. I will put my spirit in you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your land. Not you will place yourselves.

There's a difference between what men do politically, and through their own efforts, and the sympathetic aid of others, and what God will do. Well, I'm interrupting myself. But there's going to be a profound difference between the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948, through a Zionism that came through a completely secular man by the name of Herzl, and by secular, socialistic, and atheistic men of the kind that has led that nation since its inception, as contrasted with the I will establish, I will return.

In a word, we're going to see the most vivid supernatural demonstration of the power of God when this people will again be dispersed throughout all the nations of the earth, and be pursued relentlessly unto death. God's intervention, his redemption, his restoration, and his act of return will demonstrate God to the nations in a way that he has not been seen in the whole of modern history. It's his final demonstration of himself in power, in judgment, and in mercy.

And if the nations then refuse to acknowledge that God as the God of Jacob and the God of Israel, there's nothing left for them but judgment. Israel has always been God's witness people, and the final witness to the reality of God comes in the devastating dealings of judgment, violence, death, apocalyptic destruction, even within the land, expulsion and flight, deliverance and return as the redeemed of the Lord to Zion, that no one will be able to deny that there's a living God who has affected this. Because the nation itself will be brought to such a place of despairing, such a place of hopelessness and forlornness, that if God be not their deliverer and their restorer, they will perish.

You say, Art, why is that kind of radical dealing so necessary for that nation? Because he says, then you will know that I am the Lord who has spoken and performed this. You can believe that that knowledge is not going to be cheap, and it can't be because it's an ultimate knowledge. We can talk about the Lord, the Lord, the Lord, and he's done this and he's blessed that, but when he has saved you out of the extremity of death itself, when you have experienced his resurrection power, when he has saved you out of a hopeless and despicable condition, where you've been cast into the remotest parts of the earth, where you're in the dungeons and in prisons, read Psalm 107, in bonds and in fetters, and God breaks them and looses and delivers and brings and restores, you really know a God who is God indeed, both in his power and in his mercy.

Now, why is that important? Because that people must communicate that knowledge to all the nations of the earth throughout the entire millennium. It's not enough to have a Torah knowledge or a rabbinical knowledge. It's the knowledge of God as he in fact is, both in judgment and in mercy, in both abandonment and in rescue.

And the people who will cry out, my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? will be the same people who will also experience, like the Lord before them, his resurrection power. In a word, we're going to see for the first time, not just an individual resurrected, which should be our experience, but a nation, because nothing less than resurrection reality, authenticity and power can bless all the families of the earth. Are you following me? It's an ultimate and radical requirement, and God's last and final acts in the earth.

Now, as the text shows, Israel is brought to a place, as I've said, of utter hopelessness and abject, what's the word? They're finished. Why? Because we Jews have a remarkable capacity to restore ourselves. We can pull ourselves up by our own bootstraps, with the tattooed numbers from the concentration camps,

and give us five and ten years, and we'll have our own store and our own business, and the kids will be going to private school.

There's something about us, tenacious, indomitable ability, to affect our own deliverance and our own salvation. And so long as we remain in that prideful condition, who are we going to bless? We may impress a lot of people, but we will not bless one. Therefore, all the more, because the Jew, what shall I say, is the ultimate statement of man himself, in independent self-will and ability and pride, God has got to deal with them utterly.

So it says in verse 11, they indeed say, the whole house of Israel, our bones are dry, our hope is lost, and we ourselves are cut off. Now I challenge anyone in the room to tell me when historically that statement has ever been made. It has never yet been made.

Even the Holocaust of the Nazi time was not sufficient to bring the nation to this utter despair. In fact, what is the statement that came up out from the Holocaust? Not we are without hope, but never again. Oh yeah, who said so? We say so.

That's who. We have atomic weapons. We've got the number one air force in the world.

We used to have one of the most impressive armies. It's disintegrating. But we will see to it that we will not again be victim as we were in the Nazi time.

Never again. You know what it means when you say to God, never. So here's what I'm saying, saints.

This is a symbolic and prophetic statement that is compressing tremendous things together. We need to read between the lines and intuit what is being said here. That God is going to bring a nation to a place of ultimate and utter despair.

Have you ever been there? You may have to. If you're going to identify with them and be a comfort to them as one who knows from their experience that when you're at the bottom and there's no hope anywhere that God alone is that hope. Any other hope is a false hope.

And God will go far to put a sword through every hope that is not invested in Him. Particularly that nation that has been called to communicate Him to the nations in priestly knowledge. Following me? It's a hard word, saints.

And we're not prepared for it charismatically. So here's what I'm saying. We can anticipate that God is not going to withhold nor spare until He hears this nation say, Uncle.

He waits for their own confession that our bones are dry. Have you ever seen a dry bone? Where it turns to powder in your hands? And you think that those bones can live? They themselves have got to come to that abject despair. Our hope is lost.

Do you know what the name of the Israeli national anthem is? HaTikvah? Ha means the. Tikvah means hope. Doesn't that just stir your blood? But it has nothing to do with hope in God.

It's hope in man. Israeli man. Jewish man.

And such hope must come to its end. We ourselves are cut off. And when God hears that word, He turns to the Son of Man and a prophet, and He says, prophesy to these bones.

Now it raises the remarkable question of why God Himself does not address the bones directly. Why shouldn't Israel be eternally indebted and grateful for their deliverance out of their graves and out of abject hopelessness and death by the direct intervention of God Himself? Why does He need a middle man? Why must there be a Son of Man whom He commands to prophesy to these bones that they may live? I'll tell you this. I know that I know that I know.

If that man is not available to Him, Israel will never be raised from its death. And that's where you come in. Because I believe, prophetically interpreting the text, that the Son of Man is referenced in a symbolic way to a last day's prophetic people, a corporate people, who have been brought out and down and in to the midst of the valley of dry bones themselves.

Out from their charismatic fluff and lightness and fun and games and ain't we got fun and prosperity and all that stuff, to a place where their face is rubbed into the grim reality of Israel's death. God brought him out and down by the hand of the Lord and the Spirit of God. And it says, He calls me in verse 2 to pass by them all around.

The Lord is very thorough. He's rubbing the face of this prophetic corporate man into the grit and the reality of the hopelessness of Israel's condition. And then He even mocks him.

And He says, Son of Man, can these bones live? Aren't you a prophet? Well, I brought you to a place even beyond, not just your charismatic faith, I brought you to a place even beyond your prophetic faith. And all that this prophet can say and gulp is, Lord, you know, I myself can't believe for it. Those bones are dry, very dry.

And the whole valley is filled with them. This is the slain of the house of Israel who have come to their last apocalyptic devastation at the end of the age in the nations. And yet, the prophet is commanded.

And here's what I want to say, saints, that if this is a picture of the church in its last days prophetic constituency who have the power to raise the dead by their own voice, they had better speak as one voice in a unity and union that eclipses anything that we presently understand as the unity of the body of Christ. And all this ecumenical claptrap is a phony deceit. I'm coming fresh to you from the anguish of our own community life in its 24th year and telling you that I'm still licking my wounds and applying the plasters and the band-aids of the struggle and the heart-rending howls and shrieks and things through which we have had to pass to begin even to get a semblance of unity and agreement.

And my own flesh and blood son is among those with whom I've had my own trial. What is it going to mean for people, the body of Christ made up in its great diversity, its generational differences, its racial differences, and all the things that we have only touched lightly but not deeply enough that we might constitute one voice in the moment of ultimate crisis. Got me? In a word, this text indicates that God's concern is not only with Israel's restoration but the Church's transfiguration.

The Church is the key to Israel's final deliverance in its prophetic character, in its ability to speak for the Lord, as the Lord, in the authority of the Lord, in the moment commanded when everything conspires against faith and against believing and against speaking and against even the desire to see the bones live. Because after all, if they don't make it, maybe we can replace them. Maybe we are the Israel of God and we'll fulfill the prophecies.

Whatever there is that's still lurking beneath the skin of the Church that has its own ambition at the cost and at the price of Israel has got to be flushed out and dealt with. The fact of the matter is you are called to play second fiddle. You've got to decrease that that nation might increase.

And what did they ever do for you? This is remarkable. And here's what I want to say. Can you prophesy when you're commanded? Or as one of our own brothers recently said as he came to the Bible study in our fellowship where he was going to give, lead us out of the book of Galatians.

I don't feel that the Lord was with me tonight. I didn't feel that I had the liberty and I don't know. One of you other guys can take it.

You better not be in that condition in that day where your ability to respond in obedience is affected by your mood, your feeling, your condition and your I don't know. Unless you are habituated to obedience you will miss it in the moment that will be most requiring because I can tell you from my own experience you'll feel like it least in that moment. You'll not be at your spiritual high.

You'll be at your spiritual low when God says prophesy to those bones. You know what the issue of Israel is? The issue of Israel's restoration? Which is the issue of the Lord's coming and the Lord's kingdom? It's the church. Israel is out of the picture in terms of its own ability to affect anything that pertains to its own restoration.

And so it must be. God is not going to give them any opportunity to exert themselves in their own behalf. They can only be acted upon from without.

So the first thing is are we willing to be brought out and down and into by the hand of the Lord? Out of charismatic shallowness? Fun and games? Even a kind of serious evangelical Christianity that is something less yet than this prophetic reality that must take place with God's people together as one. There's at least three times I think in this text where we read as in verse 6 Then you shall know that I am the Lord. Verse 14 Then you shall know that I the Lord have spoken it and performed it.

This is the divine imperative that they shall know. That I am, is the Lord. That knowledge is not cheap for them and it's not cheap for us.

Do we know that we know that we know? The thing that has occupied our attention in these last months is that we don't know as we ought to know. We don't know God as we ought to know. And he's so insistent on that knowledge that he'll not spare us nor them as the age concludes to bring us to that place.

In fact, even to think that a God would so reduce the nation of his own choosing and his covenant people as to bring a second holocaust upon them a yet failed present state of Israel a yet future devastation that's not distant and another expulsion into the nations and a holocaust that eclipses the Nazi time in order to bring this about how far will God go? And what kind of a God is it that will go that far? Do we appreciate his judgments? Do we love them? And in fact, at your own leisure when you read chapter 36 that precedes this the repentance of Israel comes after their return where they abhor and loathe themselves for their own sin and their own failure. God does all this to them in his mercy and then he allows it to fall upon their consciousness that nothing that has befallen them is out of proportion to their own sin. He's righteous in his judgment and there will be a people who will be able to communicate him as he in fact is to the nations.

So, verse 7 says I prophesied as I was commanded. Boy, when's the last time you've been commanded? For anything from any authority especially in the church and how much will you take it before you'll bolt

and look elsewhere because you've got your rights and no one's going to tell me. We are not disposed to being commanded.

My long complaint about the church is that it has not required enough from its members. We're skimming along. It's nothing and therefore we don't show the growth and I'm not talking about arbitrary requirement but it's out of keeping with the whole tenor of the age to be commanded.

He prophesied as he was commanded not as he felt like it or was in the mood or was on a spiritual high. God commanded, he prophesied even beyond the limit of his own faith to believe for the effect of his word that those bones could live. And I want to say that obedience like that is not obtained in the moment.

It has got to be preceded by many moments of obedience by a history of consistent obedience to things small and large that God has commanded that when the final command comes we will not balk. So to prophesy to dead bones is an exercise in absurdity. It's something like speaking to a dead congregation.

You guys are not dead. Don't think I mean you. But I have had the experience.

You need to try it sometime. And yet, because the faces are indifferent or bored or hostile does not release you from the obligation to still bring the word. You've got to be obedient to the commandment to prophesy even to the dead bones that they might live.

And that's a real school. A real training. It's the school of the prophets.

And it's not for everybody. If you can't take indifference and hard looks and you need to be gratified and applauded you'll not cut it. It's got to be an obedience to the Lord no matter the indifference or the hostility of the audience.

So I think God is going to be entering us into such schools that when the ultimate moment comes we will not fail Him. And that bone will come to bone and flesh to flesh and skin to cover it. But it says at the end of verse 8 But there was no breath in them.

And verse 9 says He said to me, Prophesy to the breath prophesy Son of Man and say to the breath Thus says the Lord God Come to the four winds, O breath from the four winds and breathe on these slain that they may live. So I prophesied as He commanded me. Now the breath is the ultimate and final thing.

And Israel that has only flesh bones and skin is not yet a living people. The breath is the Ruach of God the breath of God the spirit of God and the prophet having spoken now to the dry bones is now commanded to address the spirit himself. Have you tried that lately? It's one thing to be commanded by God it's another thing to command God.

Now this is, hang on here this will require a bit of understanding. It would seem to be uttermost presumption and goal for a man to command the breath of God to perform something to come in to these bones that they might live. And God says that if you have a kind of pseudo or phony spirituality that says, I can't do that I can't command God I'm after all you will have failed in the complete obedience that will have affected Israel's restoration.

You know, I don't even have words for what I'm saying now. The thought of it is so delicate but it will flush out the last reservoirs of false piety and religiosity that is self-deferring Oh, I can't do this I mean, after all it sounds like audacity and boldness it sounds almost irreverent to command the spirit of God and God says,

unless you do they'll not live. That you've got to come over even your own last scruple your own last religious principle that keeps you from a complete obedience.

I think there's one place that I know in the scripture in Isaiah where it says according to the work of my hands command ye me to be able to command God without presumption or arrogance how do I say it? This is ultimate humility. What? This sounds like ultimate arrogance that's what it sounds like but what it is is ultimate humility and humility, scripturally speaking is not walking on eggshells and showing how delicate and spiritual you are humility is turning over the money changers' tables in violent acts and calling them thieves in the house of God is as much the humility of God as Jesus speaking the Sermon on the Mount Humility is absolute, unquestioned and total obedience to God no matter the consequence, the misunderstanding or even your own the violation of your own sensibility that would stand in the way against God in the name of God it's the end of everything that is false pseudo-religious, pietistic and pseudo-spiritual and when God has that people He has that people completely and when He has them completely it's His voice that is going forth and His word and His authority and the bones live that's why He says in verse 14 I will put my spirit in you and you shall live I will place you in your own land then you shall know that I the Lord have spoken it and performed it, says the Lord we need really to dwell on that final verse because we have all along been seeing it's the prophet who has spoken it's the son of man who has prophesied and yet at the end of the text God says, I have spoken and performed it what do you make of that?

I'll tell you what I make of it that the reason that God could say that the prophet speaking is His speaking is that there is no longer a distinction between where the prophet ends and God begins that distinction remains with us yet tonight because you know the way we talk if God will help me then I'll do this for Him we see two entities ourselves and God and we think that we're doing Him service and honoring Him if we ask His help and then we do for Him that's okay for some occasions but it's not okay ultimately I believe what the Lord is after and that the crisis of Israel will compel us to attain is such a place of union with God that you can't tell where the servant ends and where God begins how do you like them apples? how would you like that condition? that's God's desire for us

saints and we would never have obtained it if the crisis of Israel had not compelled it can you follow me? how many of us can say with Paul for me to live as Christ? that our words are His words and our thoughts are His thoughts our conduct, our air, the spirit of the Lord the disposition of our hearts what we are even if it has a Brooklyn accent or a Southern accent is only a superficial gloss the real issue is whose life is it? whose thought is it? whose speaking is it? whose motive is it? what's the ultimate intention of that act and that obedience if it is not the glory of God for which we run to be so dissolved in Him that His word is our word His thought is our thought His command is our command when God has the church in that place the whole story is over that's the end of the

whole redemptive drama Israel has been brought out of her death by it and the church has been brought to its glorious stature well you ponder this text where the Lord speaks of the the prophet as being one with himself the same and when the church will have come to that identification and union with Him His purpose and His power Israel will be saved the issue of Israel is the issue of the church and I praise God for that it'll make us it'll compel us to be the prophetic people of God well you would think that if that's true there should be some New Testament corroboration and I believe that there is in Romans and I'll give you a little quiz to what chapter would you turn to who said that 11 that's right hmm ok look at verse 25 I don't desire brethren I do not desire that you should be

ignorant of this mystery that's what we've been talking about tonight it's a mystery lest you should that's why it's expressed prophetically and strangely and symbolically that you should be wise in your own opinion that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in so you know what I want to say tonight never having seen it before or said it before as much as I'm seeing it this afternoon and speaking it now that the fullness of the Gentiles is not just the numerical quotient it's not just the number although that's important there is a number from among all nations that must be saved but more than something quantitative is something qualitative when the fullness of the Gentiles become in is this prophetic union with God it's going beyond our

religious dimensions and our cultural expression where something in God himself a fullness has come where you can't tell where his people end and where he begins we've transcended we've gone beyond we're in an ultimate place with him so it's until that fullness has come in and when it does the deliverer will come out of Zion and he will turn away ungodliness from Jacob for this is my covenant with them when I take away their sins in verse 26 and 27 this is mystery saints do you like mystery?

I'm not talking about detective stuff mystery is you have to wet your lips and intuit and sense what God is saying beyond the apparent words themselves however precious and dear there's an intuition an apprehension of something that words God only gives us the briefest expression what he means by fullness and what he means by the deliverer coming out of Zion it could be the Lord himself now released who's been confined and contained in the heavens waiting for the restoration of all things spoken by the prophets but that it comes out of Zion raises a suggestion that it's not the Lord coming out of heaven as something coming from some place in the earth and that Zion is the citadel of God it's the height of David it's the place of the Davidic presence of God and the government of God of

ultimate sainthood the sons and daughters of Zion that deliverance comes through them and because of them and by them when the fullness of the Gentiles become in whatever keeps you in your Gentilic form declare war on it you know what I'm saying there's got to be something transcendent expressed through saints that's beyond their skin color their culture their regional origin that is the statement of God formed in them in fullness and when that comes deliverance comes out of that Zion to Israel you know what liberty I'm taking tonight to play Ezekiel 37 as against Romans 11 in some way of apprehending the same truth for concerning the gospel they are enemies for your sake but concerning the election they are beloved for the sake of the fathers well the issue of God's election is God's

choice and so is the gift and callings of God which is the issue of His word and His promise which is the issue of His name and His honor if God does not restore this recalcitrant and unwilling nation that would much rather be involved in merchandise than in redemptive glory He fails as God then His gift and calling has fallen flat it means nothing then His covenant means nothing then His election means nothing then He means nothing the issue of Israel's restoration is the issue of God Himself as God and I want that to sink deeply in your hearing because you're going to be discouraged you're going to be stretched you're going to be brought to the point of breaking you'll be exasperated wanting to throw it all over unless you remember that there's something here greater than the issue of

Israel itself and greater even than the issue of the church it's the issue of God as God who calls who appoints who elects who makes covenant who restores who has given promise gifts and callings they must be fulfilled or God is not God and if He's not God, saints what hope for the world? so, there's so much that can be said and I try to bring this to a close in verse 31 where the Lord speaks about mercy that they have now been disobedient that through the mercy shown you they also may obtain mercy how are

you fixed for mercy? one of the first times I ever preached from Romans 11 a woman couldn't contain herself she cried out of the congregation in an irrepressible way she said, but brother Katz, she said how can we have mercy for the Jews we don't even have it for each other and I

said exactly it's not enough for our mercy to be theoretical abstract, positional or doctrinal we've got to know a palpable real mercy from God like I'm experiencing tonight after one year of not having spoken and being knocked a bit from pillar to post and not knowing how it would all come out and wanting tonight in Clarence's dear memory for this to be choice and significant and for what the future may yet hold I have to experience the mercy of God and I'll tell you that my people are going to be such a trial for you as I was sharing with the men this morning when we will again be uprooted and dispersed through the nations and come down the back alleys and the side streets and the wilderness areas of America where the Lord will say to us later what did you do for the least of these, my

brethren when you saw them naked, hungry and thirsty and in prison that's the condition to which this people will be reduced if they're going to say we are without hope and you're going to see it everywhere where the church is we'll be without excuse he's going to sift them through all nations and we will be sifted by them excuse the language we Jews will be irascible vexing we'll be out of sorts we'll be full of distemper because this thing that's going to come upon us is going to come upon us suddenly out of the Forbes list out of the 400 million if only our Christianity were earnest enough we will need mercy after mercy or they'll not obtain anything it's not an abstract doctrine that God is wanting to convey to them but a palpable and experienced mercy by those who have received it so

Paul ends with the most wonderful paean of praise P-A-E-A-N a doxology where words can't contain his heart he's seen something so glorious so much more than the issue of Israel's deliverance which is glorious enough in itself he sees the church brought to a fullness and to a completion to be God's prophetic voice and to be in such union with him that very God's authority is expressed through that church with a people who are so free from religious self-consciousness and false piety that they can even command God and that that would be the expression of their humility in their obedience Paul sees this it breaks upon him as revelation it's a mystery and it's what makes Paul Paul it's what makes Paul an apostle and it's exactly what makes the church apostolic seeing this mystery and its

requirement is to bring the church into the place of God's intention and then he breaks out with all the depth of the riches in verse 33 both of the wisdom and knowledge of God how unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out who would have dreamed God would have gone this far brought a crisis of this proportion consummated the age with such apocalyptic violence against this people in order to bring out a remnant even out of the place of death through resurrection that they might be a resurrected people in resurrection power and glory who has known the mind of the Lord who has become his counselor is first given to him and shall be repaid to him for of him and through him and to him are all things to whom be glory forever Amen so my final word, saints for tonight is take

those concluding verses to heart yes, I'm a Jew yes, I'm a servant to the church and I love both but they are not the ultimate issue they are the provision of God and the instrument of God for something that eclipses both namely, the glory of God forever this is all stage for God's glory it takes place in history it takes place in time and it's the last opportunity in history and in time to affect God's glory forever and if that's not our motive we're going to break down somewhere along the line in the last days, pressures and whatever they are if we're only preoccupied with Israel alone mark my words some of the biggest Israel what do you call them? who go running off to plant trees and feast of tabernacle celebrations will be

among the first to fall and condemn what they have celebrated

when Israel will disappoint them in the crash and collapse that will be coming to that nation and the daily things taking place that completely contradict every hope we ever had for that nation their violence against the Palestinians the growing injustice the class divisions that are rising the rich and the poor the racial distinctions within the nation Israel itself between those that came from North Africa and those that came from Europe it's been a revelation of the depth of of iniquity in the heart of man Jewish man that we could never have imagined except they had an opportunity to act it out brace yourself it's going to become worse they're going to become more indefensible they're going to become more flagrant they're going to become more violent they're going to become more

corrupt fist fights in the Knesset and name calling and political scandals it's the lowest of modern nations in terms of their political propriety and it's only at the beginning and it must get worse because it's on no basis of their own virtue or distinction that God will be honored and glorified through them what glorifies God forever is not Israel's ability but God's there's no man good no not one even Jewish men and Jewish men need to realize it by our experience because we will have never accepted that statement by his word we're too suffused with our own sense of accomplishment and ability to believe that we can be capable of a sin of a kind that would justify a holocaust as judgment we have got to see it demonstrated in our own injustice in our own violence in the breakdown of our

own morality in the establishment of rings of prostitution and 50 witchcraft cells among the upper middle class of Israeli youth and only at the beginning that nation will go down, down, down until they will say we are without hope only if you perceive this drama in the context of eternity will it make sense that God is willing to go that far in time in order to obtain a redeemed people for his name who will be given a new name who will be called a diadem in his hand he will glorify them and honor them and establish them that their coming to the nations will be a blessing from the throne of God that will be their eternal condition because in the last days God has brought them to such an end how far are we willing for God to bring us that we might be for them what we ought as more than

well-meaning intention if our prophetic word falls to the ground and has no prophetic value and weight they remain in the grave something has got to happen to us our own word to them has got to be a resurrection word and not just a well-meaning and kind intention we ourselves have got to be the people of the resurrection who speak and live and move and have our being in God and are speaking in that power obedient when we're commanded because we have not a life unto ourselves nor for ourselves or they will not have life at all all the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God who has been his counselor for of him and through him and to him are all things to whom be glory forever Amen in the pre-civil war time that God is already establishing in this nation I will be

astonished we need now to anticipate and to prepare and to come to that place that prophetic place that is spoken in these chapters I want to pray for that church death before resurrection a coming out and a going down is the beginning of that chapter it's got to begin with us also whatever our opinions, our categories however honoring they were to Israel or if we thought to God is a necessary by the hand of the Lord and the spirit of God being brought out and down and into the midst of the grit of things as God himself sees it for if we will not see as God sees neither shall we speak as God speaks and are we seeing that about our own situation? are we willing to see our own situation as God sees it? the church, its condition, our own condition prophetic seeing takes courageous heart so

Lord, I'm asking my God that operation of your spirit by which a one statement like this would be saved from being a muddle of confusion and that you will sort it out for the understanding my God of the people who have heard tonight seeing that it's not recorded and that you'll bring it to recall and give them opportunity my God to consider the texts that have been cited and the implication for themselves in their own persons and as the church of Mobile, Alabama bless them Lord may this be significant may this be life saving may it be that because of what you have set in motion by the word that has come into this community this morning and tonight that when that day comes when these people are at the bottom and without hope and dejected they can hear a word that will bring them up out of

their grave that they might live bless this people and bring this people as one voice all the more because of its racial diversity how much greater the opportunity in the south to be the one voice of God coming through and breaking out of the whole historic past and something much more than hail fellow well met and that deep integration of life in which there's going to be some pain before there's a rejoicing give them a heart for that a courage for that and the leaders and the elders my God and the men of responsibility in the church to guide and lead this people to be brought together into that prophetic stature that is Israel's salvation and your glory we thank you and give you the praise for that and God's people said Amen you want to sit for just a moment quietly and and maybe

transact something with the Lord out of your seat like suggest a prayer Lord whatever it takes for me to be part of your last days provision for the people Israel I'm willing whatever it takes to bring me into the kind of thing that was suggested tonight I'm willing I'm not a person known for my consistent obedience I move more by my moods and my feelings than you by your voice frankly I don't even have a heart for that people what did they ever do for me I'm so far removed from the condition that was described of the fullness of the Gentiles I'm more Gentile than I know in my coming and going and getting and spending and before the TV set and the Roebuck catalogs and all that stuff and I'm inviting you at your hand to shape and form me together with a people for your name and this

community for these purposes if you have the courage to pray a prayer like that I can assure you God will hear it, receive it and answer it let's just take a moment and just pray out of your seat something short but significant and it will be a real night before the Lord

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