

Daniel the Prophet in Babylon

by Art Katz

Art Katz's sermon examines Daniel's prophetic role in Babylon as a model for the church's boldness and faithfulness in contemporary society.

Duration: 1:27:02

Scripture: Daniel 4:3-37, Matthew 6:33

Topics: "Babylon"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses a passage from the Bible in which a tree is cut down and its branches are chopped off. The tree is stripped of its foliage and its fruit is scattered, causing the animals and birds to flee. However, the stump and roots of the tree are left in the ground with a band of iron and bronze. The speaker connects this passage to the privilege and distinction of the church, as mentioned in Psalm 149, to bind the kings of the world and put them in irons. The sermon also emphasizes the importance of not bowing down to false gods and trusting in God's deliverance, as seen in the story of the Hebrew children in the fiery furnace. The speaker highlights the significance of their disobedience to the king's commands and their trust in God. The sermon concludes by discussing the proclamation made by the king in the fourth chapter, which demonstrates the breadth of his kingdom and the credibility of his announcements.

Transcript

So we're going to examine Daniel. You might want to read chapters 2 through 4, and we'll make that tomorrow's subject, because we want to see, is this man an anomaly? Do you know that word? A-N-O-M-A-L-Y. Is he a freak, a strange once-and-for-all occurrence in history that will not repeat it again? Or is he a paradigm? Is he a pattern? Is he a statement for all generations? Is God still waiting for a Daniel component within the church itself that can address kings, that can interpret? Because even the king said, can we find such a man as this? The spirit of the gods is in him, with him.

They knew that what he had was extraordinary, and beyond any of that, the magicians and the wise men of Babylon. So, Lord, precious the way you're moving along here, and defining, almost as a consequence of what we're examining, the issue of propheticness itself. For, after all, this is a prophetic school, and we want to know the sublime character of this ultimate calling, by which you even equate yourself, saying that the spirit of prophecy is your testimony.

And so, my God, we know that it's being attacked today, and disfigured, and disqualified, disqualified and mutilated by the cheap, easy acceptance of almost anything that goes, that's called prophetic. If a man has a gift of gab, or a personality, or an attractiveness, that he can be promoted, or make the announcement for himself, people follow in droves. And so we thank you, Lord, for the way that you're honing in, and giving us such clarity, sharp definition, my God, and how intrinsic it is to the church that is the church.

And so, we're blessed, Lord, that we just invite you to continue what is upon your great prophetic heart. We want to get into Daniel and his relationship as God's authoritative and prophetic figure to Nebuchadnezzar, the king of the Babylonians. Just think of what that implies.

A Hebrew prophet in exile with the king, the potentate, of the greatest imperial power then existent in the world. It makes Paul at Mars Hill look like a minor note. This is supreme and ultimate contradiction, and I have never before seen it, and I have never before expressed it, but right now.

So we need to understand the context to appreciate what is represented here, because I believe that this is more than just a note of history. It is a paradigm. It is a picture of the end.

That if the nations are to be confronted, we will have to be with the same Daniel-like prophetic authority making the same kinds of statements, indicating who, in fact, is God, and bringing their presumptions to an end, not only in the oracle that is delivered, but in the judgment itself that follows, that the prophetic voice brings the judgment into being. That's why Daniel trembled to relate the meaning of the dream to the king, because his very transmission of the giving of the understanding is, in fact, its release and the setting of emotion. So what a picture of the church in its prophetic constituency.

I mean, it's enough to be an oracle. It's enough to bring the word of God that is, in every point in particular, in opposition with the tenor of the nations in their presumptive power, but to be also the agent of the judgment is the final demonstration, and very much is in harmony with Psalm 149, that this distinction is given to the saints to bind with fetters the kings of the world and of the nations and put them in irons, and that this judgment is the church's own privilege and distinction. In the little time that I had last night, I was looking for some commentary that I could lay my hands on that would give some further insight, and I couldn't find any.

I haven't looked yet at... Spurgeon's commentary on the treasury of David. I'm sure he'll have something to say of what this means. But most scholars are offended by this kind of reference that sounds so vengeful and having to do with naked power that the church will actually bind in irons and bring in fetters those that oppose God, and that this is their ultimate privilege and distinction as the church.

Whatever that means, it means much, and may the Lord unveil that for us. And maybe as we look into the prototype that Daniel is in his relationship with Nebuchadnezzar, we may gain something of that insight. One that I read last night suggested that the problem is ours and not God's, and that we are so averse to judgment that we are offended even by God's announcing the particulars of it, that only one who has been passionate for the cause of God and seen it so long suffer abuse will have a desire to see God vindicated, even as a vengeance.

So, Lord, experiment perilously. We've not been this way heretofore. We want to explore what Daniel represents in his relationship with that imperial nation and its ruler as some kind of prototype of that which will configure at the end of the age for the church and give us an insight and an understanding.

And what is the prophet? And what are his preachments and his pronouncements? And with what authority? And how does he obtain it? So we ask, my God, that you would be pleased to introduce us in your own precious way into the significance of this examination for the first time in Yeshua's holy name. Amen. We turn to chapter 4 of Daniel where this episode is recorded.

It follows right on the deliverance of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego out of the fiery furnace that was an astonishment to the same king. For he himself says at the end of chapter 3 in verse 29, For there is no other God who is able to deliver in this way. So, what does that imply? If every knee is to bow and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord and that the whole category of rebellious nations in the end is to make this acknowledgement that the praise of God might go to the ends of the earth, will it require a demonstration of himself as God, as radical and as violent as this? Will his saints have to go through a fire out of which only the God who is God can bring them? And that the potentates of the last days will so observe this divine deliverance that they will have to acknowledge what Nebuchadnezzar acknowledges, that there's no other God like this who delivers and that there's no other way for the revelation to come except by that same means.

And how shall it be performed? By men who will not bow their knee to Baal and will deny the false gods of their generation and of their nation and for that reason be thrown into a fiery furnace heated up seven times and be delivered out of it for the fourth man will be there in the midst with them and not so much as the smell of smoke shall be found upon them. This is a remarkable admission for there is no other God who is able to deliver in this way. And who is delivered? Those that he says in verse 28 who disobeyed the king's commands would not defer to the Baal system to the pagan worshiping deity who trusted in him they disobeyed the king's commands and yielded up their bodies.

Well, we can jump on every phrase here but this is too pregnant to just allow to pass. They yielded up their bodies. Will there be that demonstration of the last days to the nations and to the powers of who in fact is God unless there's a people so submitted to that God that they will yield up their bodies in trust.

Remember what they said? Whether he will deliver us or no and yet will we go into that fire because we have no alternative. There's no way that we're going to condescend to this requirement that we should pay deference to any deity other than the God of Israel. If he will deliver us, well and good.

But even if he will not yet will we not be deferred from the yielding up of our bodies. Is that a description of your present consecration? I pray. Certainly it doesn't even begin the church doesn't even begin to approach anything as ultimate as that.

But unless this demonstration of like kind comes at the end of the age how shall the gods of this age acknowledge that the only one God and true God is the God who delivers in this way. Verse 28 Nebuchadnezzar said, not Daniel Nebuchadnezzar said Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego who has sent his angel and delivered his servants who trusted in him. They disobeyed the king's command of his own and yielded up their bodies rather than serve and worship any God except their own God.

Therefore I make a decree any people, nation or language that others blaspheme against the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego shall be torn limb from limb and their houses laid in ruins for there was no other God who was able to deliver in this way. Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in the province of Babylon. Well I think that those servants that will yield up their bodies and make sacrifice will equally be promoted but not by Babylon's king but by the mighty king.

In fact it's the anticipation of that promotion or reward that is a factor in their ability to make such sacrifice. Got the picture? Because in all our afflictions he's afflicted and his presence is a saving presence. By his very nature he's a deliverer but this is a kind of deliverance we have not anticipated and it's not a deliverance from sin it's a deliverance from the consequence of obedience.

That's an ultimate kind of deliverance and the Lord will be with us in that for as many as are willing to bring their bodies to that sacrifice. And so to get back to our subject both the church in Japan the missionary western church of Japan and that in Germany were incapable of this sacrifice. They were unwilling for any discomfort that would come to their institutions let alone the actual sacrifice of their lives and they did bow their knee to Baal.

They did acknowledge the emperor in a nominal way. They didn't go to the Shinto shrine and bow and scrape and weep copious tears. They did it at a distance but they did it.

There was a morning hour where in their schools the children had to rise and bow toward the emperor's palace and pay some kind of acknowledgement to the Shinto shrine on those special feast days that the nation celebrated to show that they were loyal Japanese because the onus of this loyalty was upon them and the Japanese looking upon Christianity as a western import and only another faith posture having no more credence or credibility than their own or any other in the world and that the church was not able had not the authority or the prophetic power or boldness to make that presumptive claim that what we represent is alone God but they allow themselves to be seen as another faith posture and only hope that they would obtain some measure of tolerance by which their schools could be continued and their services conducted. They lacked Daniel's heart and that of Meshach Abednego and the other brother who went into the fire. If you can't pronounce it, Cass, how are you going to do it? Let's go on here.

This king has been given a remarkable revelation of the God who delivers that would not have been his experience if there had not been willing candidates among God's people in exile and in the fourth chapter this same king says to all people's nations and languages that live throughout the earth notice the breadth of this proclamation and where does he get the presumption to think that his announcements will have that kind of credibility because his kingdom was of that dimension. It was imperial. It was total.

The world bowed before the recognition of the might of this potentate and so think of the frail Hebrew children and what they are opposing. The mightiest of all kingdoms on the earth and yet they did not defer for a moment and to disobey in the yielding up of their bodies and now this king is saying may you have abundant prosperity the signs and wonders that the most high God has worked for me I am pleased to recount. The most high God.

What an acknowledgement. Can you imagine the emperor of Japan acknowledging that there is a most high God and that he only is some petty official in that realm of government that the Lord allows for the governance of nations but he is not himself deity. That there is a most high God.

And who is that most high God? He is the creator of the heavens and the earth who happens also to be the God of Jacob and the God of Israel. And that our setting forth of that God as being the most high is not some parochial attachment as if this is our baby and therefore we are commending him because he is ours. We are commending him because he is the God of all the earth and he has created all nations and he is the most high God.

But he is also the God of Jacob. That is his distinctive identification and that is what rankles the nations. They don't mind a general allusion to a most high God that is abstract but when you bring the scandal of specificity and say that this most high God is the God of Jacob and of Israel, the God of the Bible, the God of the patriarchs, the God of the prophets, the God of the psalms, psalmists, then the fat is in the fire.

And that's exactly our quandary. So I don't know that this king has yet made that recognition but he must have to recognize that the revelation has come to him from the sons of Israel whose God is the God of Jacob and the God of Israel. The signs and wonders that the most high God has worked for me, I'm pleased to recount how great are his signs, how mighty his wonders, his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom and his sovereignty is from generation to generation.

What think ye of that statement? How do you like it? Do you think it's just a little obsequious note of a guy trying to sound generous or is it a profound statement that even the church that is today in the world has not yet acknowledged? This is profound acknowledgement because it includes his own kingdom as coming under the sovereignty of the most high God. Where does he say that at when he says his kingdom is everlasting? That means it's present, it's future, and it's also past. It's an ongoing and continuous kingdom and his sovereignty is from generation to generation including the present generation and therefore even over this king's kingdom.

This is acknowledgement. This is submission. And when the world will have come to it, the age of history will have been concluded and God will be glorified and his praises will be sung to the ends of the earth.

This is what the whole conflict is about is this contention by nations and the powers of the air who have their expression through them who refuse to throw in the towel and acknowledge that the most high God is sovereign over all and that his kingdom is forever and everlasting. When that acknowledgement will be obtained, the age will be ended for it is the whole purpose of the age. The Heil's Geschichte of God, the whole salvation history is to obtain this end.

And if this is more than just a little historical moment but a paradigm and a pattern, we have a little glimpse of how this recognition and acknowledgement will come to the great kings of this earth by the demonstration of this God through the sacrifice of his saints. And that may well be why Revelation 13, 7 says and he gave to the beast power to overcome the saints. What? We thought we were going to take the kingdom and cities by praise and turning up the amplifiers and taking them and what we were going to do a bunch of macho pyrotechnics.

No, the Lord says you'll take it by the sacrifice of yourself. You'll take it by exhibiting in your last day suffering from these oppressive powers who raged, who want to break his bands asunder by the way in which you will bear the brunt of their attack upon you. For what is ventilated upon you is the hatred for him which they had one opportunity to express 2,000 years ago and now in his physical absence it's coming upon you and upon the sons and daughters of Israel even in their unbelieving apostate condition where they still represent the people of God and therefore God.

And you guys must be exterminated together with them. Well has PLO's Arafat said first the Saturday people then the Sunday people. First we'll get rid of the Jews then the Christians for both are an abomination in the sight of Islam for both represent a God before whom they will not bow.

And have them inscribed on the mosque on the temple site God has no sons and believe in their Koran that Jesus was never crucified therefore how could he be risen? Oh, I just got a little Holy Ghost chill. We

need to be cognizant deeply aware of the issue of the age which will be brought to its fullest intensity of expression at the end of the age for which end we are intended and for which God has called us and given us birth both naturally and spiritually. We must become the sons of God who will not for a moment hesitate to enter the fiery furnace as our brother has done by the insistence that the state is not going to determine the means by which his child is going to be brought forth into this place.

It hates God and therefore doesn't want to allow his saints to express him and therefore that they should be governed by the state and that means a bowing of the knee to the whole bail system of which the powers of the air and Satan their prince is ruler. We're getting only the first expressions of this conflict but it will increase and again and again I have to say when it came to Japan the church in Japan collapsed. They were afraid to suffer and therefore they rationalized the way in which they could make a minor concession.

Well, so what? So our kids, they know that God is really God and that the emperor is not really deity so what does it matter if they get up with the other kids and face his palace and make a little bow or make some acknowledgement of the Shinto shrine when the nation observes it as a national holiday. It doesn't really count. They don't really believe that in their hearts.

It's just a nominal bowing. You read again the Ten Commandments. Thou shalt have no other gods before me and thou shalt not bow to any god.

Bowing is not a minor condescension. Bowing is giving the game away and the alternative to not bowing is going into the fiery furnace. We mustn't make even the most minor condescension for it's not minor, it's major.

And once it's made, the powers of the air have got you. Then they can say, Jesus we know, Paul we know. Who are you? The name of the game is that if God is God and we stand for him and with him necessarily there has got to be suffering and sacrifice.

Come on, let's make our peace with this. That's been the truth of the church in every age. Modernism is the name of the game.

It's not some strange fate that befalls only a few. It's the call. And once we know it, our peace is made with that, it doesn't matter what the requirement.

Whether it's a fiery furnace or imprisonment or shame or scandal, whatever. So this king is making this remarkable statement to all peoples, nations and languages that live throughout the earth. I Nebuchadnezzar was living at ease in my home, uh-huh, that figures, and prospering in my palace, uh-huh, that goes with statehood and power and authority and sensual living and carnal delight that your whole system is predicated upon it and you win people in obeisance to you in the promise of having some share in that kind of carnal and sensual gratification.

See how I read the scriptures? You need to read them in like manner. And in fact, that's why it's given. Why does God have to tell us such a little piece of petty information that he was at ease and prospering in his palace? Because it's a summation of the whole genius of world power, authority to the end of self-aggrandizement and gratification at the level of the senses.

I saw a dream that frightened me, my fantasies in bed, and the visions of my head terrified me. So I made a decree that all the wise men of Babylon should be brought before me in order that they might tell me the

interpretation of the dream. Then the magicians, the enchanters, the Chaldeans, and the diviners came in, and I told them the dream, but they could not tell me its interpretation.

At last, Daniel came in before me, he who was named Belteshazzar after the name of my God. Can you imagine? What does Daniel itself mean? Dan the El. Dan is judge, the judgment of God.

Isn't that remarkable? A true name for his calling to bring the pronouncements of God's judgment, which is at the heart of prophetic proclamation, or at least to sound them as warning. But here he receives in exile a Babylonian name after the God of Babylon, but it in no way lessens his true identity. And he showed his true identity by bowing before the God who is God three times a day at his window in public sight of all those who would disparage him, and by that act, condemn himself to his own death.

But he would not retract a moment. Like Paul, not for an hour would I allow the truth of the gospel to be compromised, nor would I withdraw myself and pray out of the sight of men so that my neck would be preserved, that I could continue praying. Surely the Lord doesn't want me killed.

He wants my prayers to continue, so therefore I'll put myself in a safer place. No. He made a public proclamation by his prayer.

The boldness of these men, and God saved him out of all consequences, and told him at the end of his book, now you lie down and rest, and you'll be raised up in that day, and you'll receive your reward with the saints. You've done your bit. He has really done it.

And that's why I said that more than Elijah, though Elijah is very appropriate, and I love the way the brother prayed that the fire of God would fall on the sacrifice at Braunschweig, for our purpose is now in the issue of the role of the church in its prophetic function. No greater example for that than Daniel. So we want to study and understand the kind of man that he is, how he purports, how he deports himself, and what is the consequence.

So all of these false enchanters, diviners, magicians failed, must fail, but Daniel was able to interpret the dream. How come? He had a special ability, a gift, clever, even the king says, who is endowed with the spirit of the holy gods. Not a remarkable acknowledgment for a Gentile king that the distinctive of Daniel, who alone is able to interpret what his skilled magicians and enchanters cannot, is that this man, as against those men, has the spirit of the gods.

What he really means is the spirit of God. And that will be our distinctive also. How does it say, for we have not the spirit of the world, but the spirit of God.

To the degree that we do have the spirit of the world and have in any way made condescension to it, we have not the spirit of God. He has the spirit of God in full in Babylon. He has the spirit of God in full in exile.

What's our excuse? In the liberty that we enjoy, that we should not move in the same fullness of power, authority, insight, and revelation as this Daniel. That was his king, who refused from the beginning to eat from the king's table, for he knew that it was more than the issue of voluptuous dining, opulent dining. He knew that to condescend even to that table would already be a compromise.

And he said to the steward, let us eat vegetables. And if in ten days we look like we're losing something, we'll give up our insistence. In ten days he was radiant, which is an argument for vegetarianism.

I can't help but have this great thought out of my experience in past years that in conferences or in times of meetings with other ministers, particularly prophetic men, invariably the meeting is followed by going down to the biggest restaurant and consuming much of that. Why should I think that now? Is there anything intrinsically wrong with that? Or is there something in the pattern of it of men who are not as separated as Daniel following up their meetings in fellowship that is usually hilarious and buddy-buddy and one-of-the-boys type mentality where I always felt out of place at the same time where they're consuming vast portions of food. There is some kind of note in that that should not be lost to us in comparison with Daniel who refused to eat from that table at all.

Now what that means symbolically and spiritually is for you to consider. Is there a place in your own walk in life where a temptation is being offered you that does not seem to be sinful and yet to partake of it or to participate constitutes compromise? Only if you have a Daniel heart would you recognize that as danger and avoid it. We think of the Lord's table and the eating and drinking as a reenactment of covenant commitment and in a kind of transposed way turning the other side of the coin this eating is a kind of covenantal agreement with that ruler.

You may not stipulate it or say it but the eating from his table implies agreement and probably in fact establishes it. So I'm glad that the first line says when you sit down with a ruler or a church leader or a denominational head or whatever it is be aware that something is at stake here than mere intake of protein. That there's a spirit valence to the issue of the table that we have failed to recognize.

I remember how insulted a Christian was at a message I gave once in which I talked about we have an obligation over the stewardship of our bodies and to be excessively overweight and obese is an offense to God and is contrary to the spirit and must necessarily dull the spirit and this man waited for me in the hallway after the message to take me up on this because he felt that it made no threat to his spirituality at all and the guy was so rotund he was a barrel with legs and it wasn't what he called the organ that everyone says is wrong the thyroid I've never heard so many people with thyroid complaints in this generation they're overweight I'm not denying it but I hope that it's true and not merely an excuse or a justification but this man was unwilling to see that the issue of the body

is also the issue of the spirit and that he could afford to be as overweight as he wants and gorge as much as he wants and still be spiritual because what has that to do with the spirit and my answer is more than you know because anyone who fasts and is also a preacher a speaker of the word knows that there's an acuity and a sharpness that comes in your perceiving and expressing the word that is the result of fasting that the most powerful words that I have ever spoken not always but more times than not have come out of a fast so whatever is implied in the denial of the flesh through fasting somehow has a consequence for the realm of spirit that makes it more cogent, powerful and penetrating so there again we have another expression of the same thing I hope I'm not coming off like some

fattest against food, against eating but understand this and receive this in light of the word I'm still absolutely persuaded that my daughter has been saved from the ravages of cancer and likely death by the daily communion that I fed her for ten consecutive days I gave her from another table the table of the Lord a foundational thing not just in the spirit realm but that the life of God in the bread and in the wine would infuse her cells and bring life-bearing power into these cells and I understand she's making a marvelous recovery I doubt very much if she's continuing in that daily taking of communion but I felt that at the critical juncture when her condition did not look promising the issue of the Lord's table not man's was a life-saving provision and so I encourage you also again

as often as you will to know that what we're receiving is not an emblem or an abstract sign of something but the substance and spirit of the thing in himself the reality, the spirit of the life of God love not the world I personally have difficulty in giving credibility to preachers who are overweight whose gut laps over their belts they might have wonderful words and somehow I can't acknowledge the authority of such a man seeing that he himself cannot govern his own body so maybe I'm at fault in that but I'm very concerned myself that I should not discourage others from believing the word of God out of my mouth because my credibility is affected by the visible evidence of indulgence ok, back to our text because I want to look at a paper that I found among my papers on the phenomenon of

preaching for what is Daniel and what is a prophet in the last analysis and what is the church and its prophetic stature in the last days for those who proclaim a word of God to the nations to the magistrates and to the rulers in the authority of God so the issue of proclamation of preaching is more than the issue of technique or homiletics it's something that I want to examine as we come to the end of this looking at this chapter so then King acknowledges that Daniel is endowed with the spirit of the holy gods and that no mystery is too difficult for you hear the dream that I saw tell me its interpretation and verse 10 through 12 reviews that dream you can read it yourself if you're not familiar with it of a great tree whose branches are spread and visible to the ends of the whole earth

its foliage is beautiful its fruit abundant provided food for all the animals will feel found shade under it the birds will nest in its branches and from it all living things were fed and then it continues from verse 14 that this tree is cut down and its branches are chopped off and stripped of its foliage and its fruit is scattered and the animals flee from beneath it the birds from its branches but leaves its stump and roots in the ground with a band of iron and bronze in the tender grass of the field let him be bathed with the dew of heaven let his lot be with the animals of the field and in the grass of the earth let his mind be changed from that of a human and let the mind of an animal be given to him and let seven times pass over him the sentence is rendered by decree of the

watchers some angelic entity that have authority to establish this by decree the decision is given by the order of the holy ones in order that all who live may know that the most high is sovereign over the kingdom of mortals or men or mankind and he gives it to whom he will and sets over it the lowliest of human beings what a remarkable dream for Daniel to interpret and that the king is yet convinced that he is able to interpret it though all others have failed because he is endowed with the spirit of the holy gods verse 19 then Daniel was called Belteshazzar was severely distressed for a while his thoughts terrified him the king said do not let the dream or the interpretation terrify you and Daniel answered my lord may the dream be for those who hate you and its interpretation for your

enemies so already Daniel understands that the dream is intended for the king himself and that in fact it's the pronouncement of the declaration of a judgment and a prophet cannot withhold the words of judgment that's how Samuel began as a boy when the lord called him three times and he finally understood that it was the lord and received the word that was the judgment on Eli the priest the man for whom he had the greatest affection and who had become in every respect his father and yet when Eli said in the morning what did the lord say to you Samuel did not withhold one word of judgment that he had to share that is to say that Israel had been without a prophet and that a prophet is restored to Israel to guide the nation through tremulous times because the lord would not allow Samuel's

word to fall to the ground because Samuel had honored God's word and related it unsparingly though it was a word of judgment God subsequently honored his words and therefore the whole of Israel had the

value of true prophetic proclamation as its guide but the key was the first requirement of obedience in bringing a word of judgment and so here also Daniel is faced with the same obligation and we will be faced with it also and to some degree are already speaking those things that pertain to the future judgment of Israel though those words are terribly unwelcome and has brought upon our heads greater reproach than any single thing else of the 37 years of the lord so Daniel recites the truth of this dream and it's a judgment for this king who has grown great and strong in verse 22 whose

kingdom has increased and reaches to heaven and your sovereignty to the ends of the earth and whereas the king of verse 23 saw a holy watcher coming down from heaven and saying cut down this tree and destroy it and leave its stump and roots in the ground with a band of iron and bronze and the grass to the field let him be bathed with the dew of heaven let his lot be with the animals of the field and from seven times pass over him this is the interpretational king it is a decree of the most high that has come upon my lord the king you shall be driven away from human society how fierce this is and how uncompromising this prophet is in giving the full statement without in any way tempering it or removing anything of its sting you shall be driven away from he's speaking to the great potentate

of that age and all the earth recognizes the magnificence of this great king Nebuchadnezzar and here's a Hebrew prophet in exile telling him you'll be driven away from human society your dwelling will be with the wild animals you shall be made to eat grass like oxen you shall be bathed with the dew of heaven and seven times shall pass over you until you have learned that the most high has sovereignty over the kingdom of mortals and gives it to whom he will well that raises an interesting question anybody know what that is? based on the text that we have already considered will this same king acknowledge that God is sovereign over all and that his kingdom is everlasting? why then is he required to face this severe judgment of seven times sounds like seven years out in the open that the dew

will fall upon him he'll live like any animal in the field his nails will grow to be claws his hair will become matted he will become a beast he'll lose his human qualification he'll be divorced from human society what a fierce judgment in order that he might learn that the most high has sovereignty over the kingdoms of men and gives it to whom he will hasn't he already acknowledged that? in his previous statement in the first verses of chapter 4 how great are his signs how mighty his wonders his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom and his sovereignty is from generation to generation just for your edification just to let you know the question that I'm raising is the first time I've ever raised it the first time I've ever seen it I'm seeing it with you over the text right now why am I

telling you that? that you should not think that this is some canned presentation prepared in advance although there's a place for preparation but that you should read the scriptures in such a way that you raise the questions because that is true reading to go through a text blithely that you've read your chapter for the day and not seeing hey this is a contradiction God is requiring this judgment but the man has already acknowledged these very things for which this judgment is now to be given what am I to make of this? that's the way the scriptures ought to be read so I'm just pausing to say I'm doing this right before your eyes and it's an important question so what must we surmise? that though he had made this pronouncement to all of his kingdom the word went out to all the earth and

it sounds so sincere that evidently he didn't believe in his heart what his mouth had proclaimed and that therefore it was important enough for God to bring them then into a personal judgment if it was not enough to come to this truth in his heart by the demonstration of the sons of Israel in the fiery furnace then what is the next thing? then the man must experience in himself some degree of a fiery furnace of the judgment of

God for that's how critical the acknowledgement of God as the most high is and if God will go that far with a pagan ruler how far will he go with his own church? and to what degree? hear the quiet? see where it's coming out of me? to what degree are we in the place of verbally agreeing but not in our hearts and for that reason if we have not been persuaded by the

word of God then something must come into our experience of a kind sufficient to bring us to the depth of awareness that is requisite for a saint of the last days therefore O king may my counsel be acceptable to you atone for your sins with righteousness and your iniquities with mercy to the oppressed so that your prosperity may be prolonged ooh I like that because you know what we're getting here? we're getting a definition or description of what constitutes prophetic proclamation not only the word of God made clear and a judgment announced but a call of repentance to this king by which the judgment might be alleviated you know what this could have meant for Daniel? how dare you suggest to me the king of Babylon who has graced the world with a tree that has flowered and many are living

under its branches and the trees abide and the birds abide in its limbs and the blessings that have gone in my benevolent kingdom that I should be submitted to this requirement to atone for what sin? with righteousness? iniquities with mercy? what iniquities? what mercy? so to the oppressed I'm not oppressed I'm a good person until the prophet tells you you don't even know the truth of your condition until the church reveals to the world the truth of its condition it will be as who me? in its you don't even know the truth of your condition until the church reveals to the world the truth of its condition it will be as who me? in its naive rejection as this king like David and Nathan or David and Nathan there is another instance where the prophet's proclamation is the statement of truth as

God himself sees it and cannot come to men except through proclamation and that this requires a courage and a boldness with no equivocation or compromise so Daniel is giving this king full bore and if this is more than just historical moment but a paradigm for the last days and there must be in the earth and before the nations and the potentates and the hot shots of our age even American presidents let alone in Arafat a proclamation of such a kind and such an authority before the end comes and maybe that's implied in this gospel of the kingdom shall be proclaimed to all nations and then shall the end come that this gospel is not some little chintzy step one step two step three how to get saved but the proclamation of judgment that is imminent and that will fall on all nations who will not

repent for its presumptions presumptuous arrogance against God and that they have elevated themselves above the most high and done their own thing without his consideration and that's exactly the thing in which Paul warns in Acts 17 that God has appointed a day in which he will judge the world by that man whom he has raised from the dead he's winked in times past but he commands now all men everywhere including their rulers to repent what if the king had died in his partial and inadequate knowledge well we'd have to live with that eternally and there'd be a shriek and a howl and what could not be remedied so the mercy of God is in the anticipation of what his eternal fate would have been and therefore that justifies the severest dealing now as a mercy in the avoidance of that calamity and

this has got to be a conscious component in the prophetic church that it takes eternity into its consideration for that will enable us to be bold and to be fools and to say things and require things that God gives us to proclaim knowing that what is at stake is not just some temporal adjustment in time but the eternal fate of our heroes I thank you for that note and also that he was appalled he's not some as you said some hot shot lowering the boom and enjoying it his own soul travails at having to pronounce it and unless that's our disposition we'll not even be employed by God okay Nebuchadnezzar represents

something more than himself with all nations and in fact all the world and that this judgment is for all to bring this recognition and knowledge of God I wonder if we could even

suggest that the judgment has already started and that nations that have been proud have found themselves out in the field and have lived and become as animals and have lost their human distinction that has been true both of Japan and Germany in World War II they behaved worse than animals I think if that's true and God is in his mercy giving in piecemeal something of the same judgment to all nations in the last days what it would require then is a prophetic interpretation of that to which nations have already passed that they might receive the benefit of having been reduced to animals and having caused themselves in becoming beast-like and losing their distinctive humanity that they need not suffer it again so this is a remarkable paradigm you have gestured that statement brought it into

the largest cosmic context and I think it's perfectly appropriate and I want to give a homework assignment for anyone who wants it and I will tell you that if you'll do it it will affect you profoundly and it's this to compare the first statement of Nebuchadnezzar at the commencement of chapter 4 which seems to be a very profound acknowledgement of the Most High God as against the statement that he makes at the conclusion of chapter 4 what's the difference in the two statements of assessment and acknowledgement of God as God and I think that that will be a most rewarding study and don't neglect the way in which his statement ends for I, Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honor the King of Heaven for all his words are truth and his ways are justice have we come to that? all his ways are

truth and his ways are justice and that he's sovereign in the heavens over all and is from generation to generation well that has to include the Nazi Holocaust are you saying then that that was just that was justice and that it was a work of truth do you know what I mean it raises remarkable questions about God as God and then he ends and he is able to bring low those who walk in pride this is the final capstone because who is more the epitome of pride than this King himself and God brought him low and that he respects the God who is greater than he because he has the capacity to make him aware of his own pride and to break him in it and to bring him very low which is which in fact is the character of the God himself who brought him to that that's God's own meekness God himself is in the

lowly place so the King receives a recognition of a greater King whose character is what shall we say ultimate and yet the issue of lowness and humility is the prime and ultimate thing to which men must be brought in their agreement with God who himself is that got the point hey we've got to read the text really read the text really ponder what is being said for there is not a single word out of place of all of the things that this King might have said what does the Lord allow to be inspired and be set down in scriptures for all generations is a statement about a King who is able a God to bring low those who walk in pride we've got to invest ourselves in this text and if you compare the text of the commencement of the chapter and his assessment of God with his final statement you're going

to have the richest discovery for yourself and once you'll be so spoiled by dealing with the word of God in this kind of exegetical intensity you'll be ruined for all the future you'll never again be able to read a text casually you'll have wow if that's what was revealed and look at the meaning here then every henceforth every treatment of the scripture will come into new intensity and depth you'll be benefited for all your days anyone who's called to the place of rule especially needs to come to this recognition of the most high that brings us low so if we call to any place of authority in the church those that have rule and authority need especially to come to that place God dealt more severely with Nebuchadnezzar than he would with some rank and file member of his kingdom let not many

of you be teachers for upon you comes a greater judgment of course we're speaking about people in places of rule and authority what shall we say of Daniel himself how could he have spoken effectively to this king unless he had a comparable if not a greater authority in God and yet even higher office and if this was required for the king to bring him low what was required for Daniel to bring him low to save the prophet from exalting in bringing a judgment rather than being appalled the scriptures are silent but we can assume that anyone called to that kind of authority that's going to challenge kings must himself have a history of dealing with God by which he's worth well and if it could happen over a table like this through the examination of the word rather than having to experience it

in fact I count that a very great grace and in fact that is the characteristic of the word of God that it has this potential to affect life and character vicariously without the necessity to experience what the king himself did you make it your own prophets go through an intensive preparation if he had not that character would he have enjoyed the spirit of the gods would the spirit of God been with him in such measure as to give him illumination and ability to understand dreams and to speak so significantly to a king except the spirit of God was with him that even Nebuchadnezzar had to recognize and what I'm saying is that this is not some mindless deposit from God but that the issue of character as we said yesterday is relative to charisma because he had this character which is to say

the character of God the lord could give him his spirit in full measure or in great measure as a son who is like unto the father and that we also likely therefore have the spirit in measure as our character approximates that of God and that's not some kind of blanket thing that we can invoke or that's as charismatically ours automatically independent of what we in fact are before God in the truth of our lives because the spirit of God is the spirit of truth and the spirit of God is designated by a dove that will not alight on anything as the book Spirit of Truth shows Noah sent out a raven that never came back because it will abide on anything anything that floats even crud but the dove returned for it found no place for its food it will only abide on that which is compatible to its own

meek nature dove-like nature and so the character of Daniel though it's not expressly stated comes through in his demeanor and deportment waiting to be called by the king and then it's a humility to speak the full judgment without mincing words though he was appalled by what he had to say he did not withhold it that's meekness it's submission to God in full obedience the same kind that Jesus expressed in overturning the money changers tables though it was a violent act it was out of meek obedience before the Father okay it says of Jesus that God gave not the spirit by measure unto him that means that he had the unlimited and full provision of the spirit of God and access but if he did not give the spirit by measure to him does he give it by measure to others is there a measure well our

own history as believers shows it we know that there are men who have greater unction greater anointings and that even within those men depending on their walk they can see the fluctuation of their anointing so it's not some automatic thing yes there's a gift and a calling that God will not withdraw but the full expression of it probably has to reflect one's walk with God at any given time I can't believe that God would give his power in some unmeasured way to those who will abuse it and take it to themselves who obtain self-exaltation through what they express in their authority of their anointing in fact before long I think the gift might be retained mechanically the glory of it will have departed as God took his glory from this world we'll talk about the gift of God was his own

presence in the nation so this needs to be explored on the issue of anointing the spirit of God and probably we have done injustice in our charismatic generation by being too bland too mechanical and

even now suffering the consequence of calling many things from God that in fact may have a source of a completely other kind but it's expressed in power and some seeming evidence of that reality and yet its source is not God himself and many are impressed and completely captivated and taken by it because they know not God as they ought so that's an important line of endeavor speaking of Israel that the gift and calling of God is irrevocable but has Israel been functioning in that gift and calling in its history and the answer is clearly no it's irrevocable it will not be totally and entirely

dismissed there will be a time in which it will be activated but there could be a season in which it's withdrawn so the history of Israel itself an indication and probably individual lives and ministries can well experience the same thing it might be interesting to ask in what way has Israel continued in its gift by subverting and misusing it yes we have a gift for a light unto the world but what kind of light have we expressed and communicated through Eric Fromm and Freud and other of the great lights of Israel who have served the purposes of the world and have been a demonic force and yet enormously gifted so maybe there's a way in which the gifting and calling of God that is irrevocable can also be subverted and be misused by the powers of darkness that have now become the spirit of

that people and will come into its right use when the spirit again of God has his possession God will not be mocked even by his own word now our brother made an observation about Russia in our break time that I thought was very significant about a nation already experiencing the judgment of being cast out into the fields living like animals losing its humanity this is the realm of our brother's activity in that part of the world and I say well then you need to interpret for them the meaning of their being cast out into the field that is designed to bring them low well I'm an evangelist yes but what is the gospel it's the gospel of the kingdom it's the issue of contending kingdoms God's redemptive program for all the earth and that it's not the gospel unless we bring this kind of context

rather than just a manual on how to get saved step one step two but then what will that cost you as a Canadian in the Ukraine or in Russia who is in fact by their view an exile out of your own country and then there's have you the right to make that kind of proclamation and to give that kind of interpretation and will you have the boldness so the issue of proclamation and preaching which is my subject now is critical and before I get to a little paper on that subject just a devotional commentary yesterday and today from Eugene Peterson about values because the issue of contention between kingdoms is not just the issue of who nakedly is right in final sovereignty over creation but the issue of which value system is going to be communicated to men that they might live in righteousness upon

the earth there are two ways in contention two wisdoms in contention and we need to be reminded that we're not just communicating a religious alternative but an entire way of life a mode of being that has its origin in heaven and yet is intended for men in the practical their life on the earth so in that sense this brother asks what are our values in the Christian way we acquire a healthy value system we find that persons are more important than property we learn that forgiveness is preferable to revenge we realize that worshiping God is more central than impressing our neighbors isn't that remarkable statements this is a complete controverting of the values by which the world presently lives its life and that's why when you bring the gospel to a Jew you're not just offering him a

religious alternative you're requiring for him the actual upturning of everything to which he has subscribed as being false and in error and contrary to God and calling him to a new mode of life that he cannot live on the basis of his Jewish excellency but on the basis of the spirit of life given him in conversion by new birth have you got that this is the gospel this is preaching and that's why to the Jew first is the test of the church

why to the Jew first because they are the epitome of a world system predicated on values that are contrary to God and yet the whole world has gone after it as being the self evident wisdom of how to live rightly take care of number one seek for your material success if you've got to cut corners in terms of morality you do it this is a competitive world

and if you don't do it then somebody else will after all your family has got to be cared for and so it goes and goes into the film industry into books into articles into things that influence the entire mode of living of a whole world so when you challenge a Jew with the gospel of the kingdom you're bringing another heavenly value system that is in complete contradiction to all to which he has subscribed all his life long and saying your whole life has been misspent you've lived it in error and you'll be eternally judged for that error if you do not repent of it and change your mind that's what the word repentance means and take to yourself another mode of living and value system which is heavenly and which is God's how many Christians who bring the gospel know that that's what is at

stake and have to know it consciously in order to bring it and to know therefore that's why they're going to be so savagely opposed as I gave you the example of my first missionary attempt in Kansas City Lord what do I do I don't know how to be a missionary to the Jews I spent a year in training with Moishe Rosen in New York City and now I'm in the field but what do I do well I took the wash to the laundromat and I didn't know how to operate it so I asked a woman she's Jewish and we got into a conversation and she was interested in what I was about and why I was in Kansas City you need to speak to my husband he's orthodox I said I'd love to and so when shall I come come on the Shabbat he's home I came on the Shabbat with my Bible under my arm fuzzy tail bushy tail ready to do God's

service and I came up the steps the man was waiting for me at the door and when the door opened he said how dare you it was like the mask of civility was off nice guy sweet spirited he'll talk about any subject he's erudite he's learned he has a bachelor's degree he's nice in the Jewish community until this subject the mask is off and something savage and antichrist and fierce was expressed how dare you the venom was coming down his mouth and drooling down how dare you come and bring this to me on the Shabbat wham there was the door right in my face and on my nose rightly does Jacob YOSH J O C Z now gone to be with the Lord Hebrew Christian theologian say that it's the gospel brought to the Jew that reveals the truth of its radical content that we ourselves do not see it nor understand it

until we face the kind of opposition that Jews express toward it and that's why Paul says in Romans that they are the enemies of the gospel for our sake it will be opposed and yet needs to be proclaimed well it's a mercy to bring that message and to bear the the offense the scandal of the gospel why is it a scandal because in every point in particular it's predicated against the wisdom of this world think how far God has gone couldn't he have revealed himself in some more honorific way couldn't he have begun by coming in clouds of glory no he begins by coming as infant in a despised city and his whole birth is confused and Bethlehem the least of the cities of Judah and we're in a stable because there's no room at the inn from the very advent of his birth God is setting forth another

wisdom so we need to be conscious of this or else we'll be eating at the wrong table because the world's values are attractive beguiling seductive their inducements and we need to refrain if we are deeply schooled in the value system which is of God which is to say another wisdom for the whole purpose of the church God has created all things in order that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might be demonstrated before the principalities and the powers of the air not articulated demonstrated that means we just do not mentally subscribe to them we exhibit them we live by them and we live by them corporately

we have separated ourselves from the world's wisdom we don't say that taking care of number one is the first obligation we don't say that the pursuit of pleasure and the

avoidance of pain is a self-evident truth when we know that pain is intrinsic to the faith and that suffering and likely martyrdom will be our reward and we see it as reward and not as some grim thing that we may have to bear you see it's a complete reversal but it's the glory of God and it's truth he obeys because God has said to the Jew first and in obeying without understanding or requiring understanding is itself the wisdom of the Lord because the world will not move unless it knows unless it understands unless it has knowledge that gives an acceptance to this requirement and makes it worthwhile but when God called Abraham he followed after him not knowing those who follow the Lamb with us so ever he goeth do not require an explanation first for where the Lord is taking us so just the

obedience to the priority to the Jew first is itself expressing a wisdom of God which is to say an obedience rendered without having to have it first explained that you might approve it so that you might do it God does not need our approval all we need is his requirement period and how did my life in God begin with the first statement that God spoke to my atheistic heart on May 22nd 1964 Art you are not to leave I had wandered into this messianic bookstore Art calling me but he knows me you are not to leave no ifs and whys but hows explanations of what that will mean why I didn't require I didn't need it I heard the voice of him with whom I have to do my life in God began by obedience without question and that because he's God is wisdom and that's contrary to the wisdom of the world

that requires explanation weighing up the profit and loss line well how about this is against that well if it's makes sense I'll do this that's the wisdom of the world God will call us to that which is unprofitable and make us candidates not for prosperity but for suffering but because he calls we obey that's another wisdom the gospel would have been diffused and the labors of the Lord distracted if he had acted out of human sentiment or a sense of fair play hey listen if this is a message of salvation it ought to go to the Gentiles as well as to the Jew no single minded absorption the house of Israel only and exclusively why? because in the stratagem of God and God's wisdom Israel is the purveyor of God's salvation to the nations and by their restoration the nations are benefited don't

think that simple obedience to the requirement of God is not going to be tested or tempted by other possibilities that are available to you that make a seeming common good sense and so we have to fight against that no the Lord has said this no matter what prospects seem to be available so we're still under that obligation although he has sent us into all the world but preach this gospel in beginning in Jerusalem Judea and then to Samaria and then to the outermost corner of the earth so the priority yet remains while we yet call to the outermost corners of the world but the church has neglected that priority and therefore I feel that the message that has subsequently gone forth to the world has been diffused and has not had the same value and power if we had been obedient on top of that we

have signaled to the powers of the air that though we say Lord Lord we are at liberty to censor his requirements or to veto those requirements that did not suit our convenience and that has destroyed our total credibility before the powers of the air Jesus they know Paul they know total obedience to God but who are you you that take the liberty to count the man his requirements because it doesn't suit your convenience who are you go ahead and have your programs and do your this and do your that while we yawn in your face so much has been lost by a disobedience to the requirement of God and because we do not require explanation whether we are obedient it doesn't mean that there is not an explanation and that there are not reasons why God gives us priority and you may have heard me give the

example before out of my experience as a high school teacher that every new term I was faced by the bullies in the back of the room usually black who knew that they were going to fail the course from the first day and their only purpose is to torment the teacher and they're already beginning to harass and I'm faced with a decision of how do I meet them do I have an authority equal to the challenge that they represent or do I choose to ignore it and kind of not hear what they're saying and pick on the lesser expression of insubordination and put them in their place I knew that if I had forfeited that first bully and picked on the lesser I would never have control or authority in that room the whole rest of the year I had to go to the bully first the bully had to be dealt with the authority

as a teacher had to be asserted and established and then everything else would fall into line the temptation is to avoid the bully because we don't feel equal to the task and then to meet the lesser challenge but you would never again have authority over the entire classroom we'll not have it in the world unless we have gone to the bully first and the bully is the Jew they are the most notable adversaries they are the strongest in their uncton and vituperation and bitter opposition and there are reasons to explain that but nevertheless for us it's the most formidable challenge not only in our ability to press through that opposition but to face the brunt of it with equanimity and poise and patience and mercy knowing that Satan has ravaged them and so desecrated the name of Jesus that

they are brought to a boil at the very mention so we need that testing we need that refinement we've got to pass through what they alone can bring us even in their unbelief especially in their unbelief that we might be fitted for the Greek and as I've cited on many occasions I believe that I have a special ability to discern and to avoid condescensions to things that appear but are not that are sentimental and soulish because I have taken in something on the subject of Israel and the Jew that has got to do with the issue of judgment that's when you have made peace and not just reluctantly acknowledge the severe dealings of God with Israel and those that are future but rejoice in them knowing that they are ultimately a mercy it inures you against deceptions that would otherwise be a test

for you and the example that I gave and where the Lord first revealed this to me was with a couple that you know in Canada who invited me to Ottawa to a conference on Indians North American Indians and that was wholly a staged performance of mushy sentimentalities of guilt and conscience the kind of thing that goes on in Germany with Jews this was being performed by Americans with Indians though there are good causes of good grievances that really need to be acknowledged in that the last night was repentance night they set up three or four microphones people could come out of their seats and ask forgiveness for the injustices perpetrated by their forebears on these Indians and so on many people crying including the couple that invited me and I was sitting there like a lump completely

unmoved I was totally unaffected what is it?

I'm impervious to righteous judgment and to mercy and to brokenness and to confession and to repentance and to reconciliation far from it it's my life why then was I like a lump totally unmoved because everything that was taking place took place in the realm of soul humanly manipulated for people to have a cathartic experience to cry their tears but nothing would be affected and I hear my host crying on both sides of me and I'm sitting like a lump dry eyed we're driving home that night and another question would come Art how did you like it tonight? well now that you ask I have to tell you I was completely out of it I was completely unmoved how come Art we thought that you were interested in the injustices and reconciliation and yes I am but this was a humanly contrived substitute to

affect a kind of sentimental rather than a spirit response and had you waited upon God for the real thing we might have had an event of a consequential kind for Canada for America but because you preempted God in your soulish endeavor we lost it and I was unmoved and I thought well how why was I unmoved and the thought came to me it's because you have submitted to God in his judgments you have taken something of iron into your soul for the judgments of God are the thing for which the flesh will most recoil and you have not only received you have received them as being ultimate statements of God and seen them as the great mercy of God and subscribed and endorsed them with rejoicing and not just reluctantly and somehow to do that brings a quotient and a dimension into our inner man that

serves to repel and for us to discern sentimentality and soulish things that we would not otherwise have seen and to be unmoved by it something has come into us and I believe that that's not just a personal thing for me but God's intention for all the church that the church can be duped and susceptible to counterfeit things for it has not bitten the bullet of God as judge and God in judgment which is Daniel's name Dan-el and we need to not only receive God's judgments but in fact before the age is over and earlier to proclaim them so values infuse life with a steady sense of direction and purpose they free us from the petty dictatorship of fashion and fad and free us to pour ourselves out into larger goals for higher purposes the gospel keeps us in touch with sane and healthy values the

gospel is the issue in fact of sanity itself so we need to recognize what is implicit in our message a life-saving message that if men do not receive it in power Paul said that you receive the word of God from me as not being from men but of God that perform they work in you and that it came in power because it has to come in power because it confronts, attacks and controverts an entire system of values to which the world subscribes which is insanity and death do we believe that and can we proclaim this so the claim of the gospel is that it puts us in touch with reality all of it not just the part it's not a narrow religious message it's the issue of reality which is all inclusive and takes in everything to miss it here is to miss it everywhere and if there's if Nebuchadnezzar could make

an acknowledgement of God that most Christians have not yet made in the beginning of chapter 4 and yet it was not real for him through and through what is the condition of the church in general that makes its confessions and its acknowledgements has its credos and its and so on if have they been any more sincere and deep and authentic in their appropriation of the truth of God than Nebuchadnezzar and for that reason what gospel have they proclaimed and what gospel was proclaimed in Japan that has only affected less than 1% of an entire nation completely without any consciousness of sin who are taking the liberty now of writing their history books in such a way as to exempt the truth of what Japan performed in World War II as brutality and horror upon its victims because the greater issue

is not truth but patriotism I can read you the article I clipped out of the newspaper in Japan that country needs the gospel but it needs the gospel of the kind that the Lord is fingering here and must come in power because you're opposing an entire world system predicated upon a lie and the end of which is insanity and death even while people live let alone in their eternity if we knew the victims that are in mental institutions if we knew the statistics of the broken homes the marriages the grotesque things that have shattered entire generations of our youth my God they are the victims of a world that has not heard the message of God in power but the world is really insane and what have we seen of the conduct of the world but it supports it at least the Yugoslavia Serbia Croatia the

country I'm going to I keep forgetting Albania Albania ethnic cleansing without conscience graveyards mass graveyards of men women and children who could be murdered in view of a value of ethnic

cleansing is insanity to take life is insanity to murder is insanity and men are doing it what's the word to take life without a blink of the eyelash without emotion without conscience because they're insane and yet men of that kind will receive world acknowledgement world honor because the whole world lies in the wicked one who is the father of lies what is the proclamation of the gospel but that very God suffered the judgment that is our due and was made to be less an other than a man he was marred more than any man he was bestialized he was made animal like that when you see that great who has

the cover of that the masterpiece of the crucifixion of Jesus you wonder whether you're looking at a man or an animal holy ghost masterpiece marred more than any man and so this is God's judgment on unrighteousness and sin to save mankind from the necessity itself to bear that judgment for nothing that they could sacrifice would be acceptable to God and that the sins of Japan can be met at the cross because God himself was the lamb see the whole gospel begins to take on dimensions of a deeper kind when we understand what is at stake and what is being expressed in that message because the claim of the gospel is that it puts us in touch with reality this garish bizarre sight of a destroyed God man is the foundation of reality and is reality itself for those who look upon it steadily and

whole like beholding the snake of brass that if you look up you'll be saved from the bite of sin and of death all of it not just the part the whole gospel isn't it interesting that we have a movement in our generation called the full gospel businessmen the full gospel well I'm still at odds with a family and believers in North Carolina where I was the guest of the president of the local branch of the full gospel and was invited to the meeting a monthly meeting that took place the night of my arrival not as a speaker just it was agony it was full of charade of play acting and pomp that never once precipitated that night when I spoke in his house and I knew the lord was low the whole gospel is a charade it's a play acting it's an in house celebration but it has no corresponding reality

where it really counts where men are dying and need to hear the word of god in power I lost all my I lost my friends that night and I was told I had burned the bridges behind me I had violated southern value of respect for your host you don't say things like that I was going for broke huh?

I just said you seem to do that a lot yeah life and death was at stake not only for what would issue from this but their own life imagine a man dying thinking he had served god and he was playing a game all the while and had never any consequence for his community subsequently that man contracted cancer here's putting a little salt into the wound salt and we prayed for his deliverance and as we prayed and considered the thought came to me I shared it with our fellowship in the morning prayer time I wonder if that cancer is in any way related to the rejection both of the message and the messenger all those months ago claiming that it was not of god and that it was rude and unmanly and could not be god and so do I send a letter to suggest that maybe you want to consider that your cancer is

not some kind of accidental phenomenon but somehow the door has been opened to this by an unrighteous rejection both of god's word and god's messenger and I'm not saying thus sayeth the lord but I can but I want to offer it at least as a possibility lest you should die in that sin and then learn on the other side of eternity that that was the cause so would you have written that letter knowing that that would heap offense and that that would be a last straw for those people art was bad enough the last time but now to suggest that my husband's cancer is a consequence of sinful rejection when we saw it as a heroic testimony to the doctors and the nurses in the hospital because he was going to overcome this by the way he died and we did send that letter what was the response from the family

never heard a word back but you can pray for me because at the end of this trip that begins in Albania Albania and goes on to Germany and Holland and then ends in South Carolina I'm invited to be a guest in her home again wow and I'm going to Charles Smith where there's also been offense over the years and Paul Gordon where I spoke a message on resurrection where he got up and he said this is the word of the Lord for us and when I got home there was a three page or five page letter of condemnation for that same word from the same brother who himself now is living in shadow of death with tubes and oxygen and heart condition I'll be his house guest also wow she's a lifelong friend it's not just offending southern sensibilities this woman once wanted to be my secretary the first Ben Israel

television programs were produced in Durham North Carolina through this woman and her contacts we've got a long history this is like biting the hand that has fed you for years and yet it was a word of truth that had to be expressed for which I was accused of arrogance by a brother who was with me in traveling at that time later on this man has since left us accused me of arrogance but where was he when I was on my face between four and five in the morning filling kleenexes with my tears knowing the kind of word I would have to bring that night it's a little episode of what it means to proclaim the prophetic word and go for broke in the obedience to the Lord because I was naively hoping that this man would break when he heard that word and recognize that it was that his whole life and this

whole full gospel thing was not at all full but a fiasco a play acting and repent of it that he might serve the Lord honorably to the end of his days instead of repenting he was hardened and then later sent me the letter that I had sent him and he sent me sent him

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/10/SID10901.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/art-katz/daniel-the-prophet-in-babylon/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net