

# Dvd 15 the Mystery of Israel - Part 1

by Art Katz

---

*The mystery of Israel is central to God's cosmic design, and understanding this mystery is crucial for the church's own fulfillment and recognition of its relationship to Israel.*

**Duration:** 55:14

**Scripture:** Isaiah 53:3-5, Ezekiel 22:18-22, Ezekiel 37:1-14, Luke 2:25-32, Acts 3:21, Romans 11:25-26, Romans 11:33-36, Ephesians 2:11-13

**Topics:** "Israel's Role", "End Times"

---

## Description

This sermon delves into the profound themes of the faith, focusing on the intertwining of the cross of Christ, the centrality of the nation of Israel, and the last days' revelations. It emphasizes the need for Israel to acknowledge its desperate state and the church to prophesy in faith and love. The speaker highlights the necessity for suffering preceding glory, the importance of understanding the mystery of Israel, and the ultimate goal of bringing glory to God forever.

---

## Transcript

The issue of history, which is the issue of dimensionless. Hello, welcome to my lecture, which is the issue of dimensionless. Hello, and thank you for joining us.

My name is Mark Lafter. Today we will be speaking with Art Katz, who, since he was saved in Jerusalem in 1964, has been an apostolic and prophetic presence in the body of Christ and around the world. Since 1975, he has lived in northern Minnesota, where he was specifically sent to establish a community, a refuge, and an end-time teaching center named Ben Israel.

In that setting, and along with many others, Art has sought to articulate and to live out the great themes of the faith, principally the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ. How that cross dovetails with other great mysteries and revelations of the last days will be the focus of this three-part series. Specifically, in our first episode, we will ask how the cross of Christ, the centrality of the cross of Christ, and the centrality of the nation of Israel both coexist in God's cosmic design.

In our second episode, we will ask how the cross of Christ interfaces with the coming time of Jacob's trouble, a time of great tribulation for both Israel and the church. And in our final episode, we will examine what the cross of Christ means in the light of the mystery of the reciprocal relationship of Israel and the church. Art will describe how God has woven the destinies of the two together inextricably in suffering and

transfiguration.

Art, we hear reports daily coming out of Israel of terror, mayhem, and dire straits for that nation. What is the church? How is the church to view this? Well, I'm sure there's much disappointment in those in the church that have hoped for a successful Israel to see this increase of calamity and even a threat to the very existence of the state. And my heart goes out to those who experience this kind of anxiety and apprehension.

But I think I have to say that the church needs to brace itself for yet worse reports. My ultimate conviction is that we should brace ourselves even for the failure of present Israel and that, in fact, God intends that failure and that the establishment of the state is not the fulfillment of the prophetic destiny of that people as we had thought, which was originally my own first understanding. But as events have unfolded and the scenario of devastation and violence increases, I see in Scripture indication that God has established a preliminary to that great and ultimate fulfillment through which Israel itself must pass and cannot be exempt.

So, what shall we say? That we are disappointed, Israel is disappointed in itself, that the establishment of the state was not just a political hope or provision, but that we would be an example to all nations of the kind of unique state that Israel would be, that it would encompass or express what we thought were our moral distinctives and righteousness. But alack and alas, as our dilemma and extremity requires, we are acting as every other state has acted in its own self-preservation and even in ways that we thought Jews would never act. The employment of violence, the justification for torture of suspected terrorists, even actual terrorists, have compelled us to a line of conduct that seriously questions our moral uniqueness.

And I believe that that's all in God's intent, because we have never subscribed to what we think is a Christian doctrine of human depravity or the innate sinfulness of man, and we are the perennial optimists and humanists that celebrate man, particularly Jewish man. I think we have to learn in the hardship of our experience what the scriptures all along would have told us, that there's no man good, no not one. And that such a venture as a prophetic fulfillment of Israel's destiny cannot be accomplished by man, however well-meaning, and that it is, in the last analysis, it's God's own great work.

So, if Jesus were here now, he would say to the church something of the kind that he addressed to his disciples after his own death and resurrection, to those that were disillusioned and crestfallen, that had hoped that he would be the answer to their messianic expectation. He said, So there's a remarkable parallel between the issue of Israel and its prophetic fulfillment and that of the Son of God before it. There's a suffering that precedes the glory, and that we are slow of heart to believe for.

We have no stomach to understand the necessity for that kind of preliminary. And I think our problem is, we have not the kind of jealousy for the glory of God that is becoming an appropriate to the church. To desire the success of a state is not the same as desiring the glory of God that can only come through a much greater fulfillment that must necessarily be preceded by disappointment, failure, suffering, and the rest.

Art, in what context should we understand God choosing Israel to be so central to all the nations? What is the purpose, and what function does Israel perform for the nations? Well, I don't think that there's any proper understanding of the issue of Israel except in the context of the nations. This was our destiny from the first as a particular and peculiar witness of God to the nations. We were chosen for that purpose, to make God known, as he would be exemplified and shown through our own conduct, our own covenant

faithfulness to the God who has called us.

And of course, we have been an abysmal failure in that regard historically. But the chosenness has to be seen in the theocratic context of God's intention, namely that there's a kingdom that shall prevail, and the rule of which shall go forth to all nations, and only then will they beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks, and study war no more. So the great text in Isaiah chapter 2 is that the law shall go forth out of Zion, and the word of the Lord out of Jerusalem.

The church has spiritualized this away historically, and has robbed the literal significance of Israel's destiny. So therefore, not only is it unknown to Israel, it's unknown to the church, and yet is at the center of God's great intent, that there's a rule that must go forth out of the place that God has appointed, and he has chosen Zion, not because it's preeminent or impressive, in fact, all the more because it's not. He's not chosen Israel because it is impressive, all the more because it's the least of all peoples.

And so there's a mystery here of God's chosenness that must be fulfilled, because the issue of the God who chooses is the issue of God. And so Israel is at the vortex of the issue of God before all nations. And the powers of darkness know this better than the church, and will do everything within the realm of its own power to defeat this design from obtaining fulfillment.

And therefore, we will understand how that couples with the last day's opposition to Israel itself, even to the point of an annihilation of that people, rather than there should be a fulfillment. We read in Acts 3.21, for example, that the Lord is contained in the heavens, waiting for the restoration of all things spoken by the prophets since the world began. The church, again, has misappropriated that verse, thinking that it refers to itself.

The prophets had no thought but that of Israel, that there were things that needed to be fulfilled for Israel's own destiny that has to do with the coming of the king. This is why Jesus said, You'll not see me again until you shall say, Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. He is contained in the heavens, which is to say he's imposed upon himself a restriction.

He cannot come down into the place of his kingship, the very city where he was crucified, and over his head the ironic statement in three languages, Jesus of Nazareth, king of the Jews, he cannot be that king until there's a people restored to the land, restored to their God, restored to him, that will be the fulcrum for the theocratic glory that is to issue from the place of God's own choosing, namely Zion. Adolf Safir, a great Hebrew Christian preacher in England in the 1800s, he said, It is the duty of every minister of Christ to explain the mystery of Israel. It is a part of our holy religion.

It belongs to the counsel of God. It is inseparably connected with the truth as it is in Jesus. There can be no true and full preaching of the gospel without explaining the mystery of Israel.

What aspect of the genius of God is Safir describing in his conjoining of the proper preaching of the gospel and the mystery of Israel? And how has this omission, the omission of this mystery in contemporary preaching, truncated and diminished the gospel today? What shall we do to correct this situation? Wow. That's an enormous question, and it is the question. Paul speaks of it as the mystery in Romans 11.

I would not have you to be ignorant of this mystery, brethren, lest you become wise in your own conceit. Paul was a steward, an apostolic steward of the mysteries of God. And, of course, mystery does not mean a detective story.

It means something hidden, concealed in the deepest purposes of God to be revealed and to be fulfilled at the time of his own choosing. And Paul warns the church that there's a consequence of a great kind if they should forsake the knowledge of this mystery because it's not only the issue of Israel's call, it's the issue of the church's call. The two are so inextricably joined that neither the one nor the other can find fulfillment independent of the other.

So a church that has discarded this mystery or rejected it will suffer the consequence that Paul warns. It will become inflated in its own conceit. And I think that that is directly connected with the bombast and the hyper-expression of our contemporary church, even in its best charismatic forms, the kingdom now, or we are the kingdom, or we are the Israel of God.

All of the presumptuous bombast that celebrates the church at the expense of Israel disfigures the church and fails in the church's recognition of its relationship to Israel, alone by which it can come to the fulfillment of God's own intention. Well, I know that I'm speaking a mouthful myself, and that even heightens the word mystery. Mystery requires a revelation for its understanding, and therefore no amount of human or intellectual effort is going to glean it.

It's something that needs to be communicated by God, but it requires a condition from the church that is hospitable to the receiving of mystery, namely a disposition of spirit that is humble and contrite. If we are self-exalted and bumptious and arrogant in our own claims and contentions, then we ipso facto, by that very fact, disqualify ourselves from the receiving of the mystery. So perhaps we'll come back to this, and I'll just repeat myself to say that we have paid as the church a remarkable price in the forsaking of the mystery that the apostle has instructed us that we should not be ignorant.

And my prayer is, of course, that in these last days we will seek and find what has been historically lost to us, because it's not only the key to Israel's fulfillment, it's the key to our own. Yes, it seems like you're describing the dangers of the church embracing replacement theology or the two covenant theories. Doesn't embracing those theologies really destroy the centrality of the nation Israel? Absolutely, and in fact, it is the expression of the conceit of which Paul warns that we would substitute ourselves for Israel.

And of course, the Scriptures almost seem to invite that interpretation unless we are in a proper disposition toward God, and the veil can be taken from our own eyes and our own understanding as the church. So there's a remarkable complex thing that there's a blindness over the eyes of Israel with regard to its own understanding of God and its destiny, and a kind of comparable blindness over the eyes of the church that needs to be revealed. I think that much of the problem is the church's failure to identify itself properly as being in conjunction and connection with this Israel and not some kind of autonomous innovation that has come later in New Testament times that is something other than the Israel of God to which Gentiles have been called by the grace and mercy of God because salvation then and always is of the Jews.

Art, it might be useful just to take a little look at church history in this overall perspective. Adolf Safir has spoken about the medieval church which did not possess much in the way of gospel light and the Reformation church did not possess sufficient prophetic light. We know that over the history of the church there was a lot of darkness.

We needed the Reformation to understand justification by faith. It took 14 centuries for that to come out. It's not surprising in a sense that the mystery of Israel has not been seen and acknowledged until these days.

As a matter of fact, you have said it is not uncommon to have to wait for an understanding of a prophetic text until we come closer to the time of its fulfillment. Are we at that time? Absolutely. And in my own understanding that has been my experience with the first intifada and the first throwing of stones something was signaled in my own spirit that this is the beginning of the end of the present state of Israel.

I couldn't document that at that time but I think that subsequent events more and more indicate the terrible tragedy and increasing sense of hopelessness and futility that is coming to the nation through that which began with the mere throwing of stones by children. But something was triggered in my spirit that this is the beginning of the end. That Israel is being brought to a final sense of inability in itself to resolve its own difficulties and that necessarily has to be the case.

Maybe I understand that more than others being Jewish because we Jews in our own estimation and in that of others have always been so resourceful of people that we can even come out of the Holocaust with a tattooed number on our arms and hardly anything more than a ragged prison uniform and within a decade we're prospering. Well the very history of the state of Israel itself is another exemplification of that human resourcefulness. We are man and we are human self-sufficiency independent of God and of course that's a contradiction in terms.

However God himself would desire to see us finally in a place of security it will not be on the basis of our own proficiency or self-sufficiency but on the basis of our relatedness to a God whose grace enables our establishment in the land. So everything is calculated to bring us to a place where the insurmountable difficulties are beyond our Jewish ability to resolve because the issue of Israel, I'm repeating myself, is the issue of man and we are a witness nation both to our anthropology and to God. We're a statement to the world that you cannot succeed independent of this God and God has been excluded from the consideration of the world.

He's a Sunday addendum but he's not brought into the serious consideration of men and of nations and therefore we suffer the consequence that we must in that God rejection. Israel has got to illustrate that truth to all the world unbeknownst to itself it is serving that purpose and that destiny. So the church rather than upbraiding Israel for its failure needs to understand that it's a failure that must necessarily come.

It's a failure of man to succeed in himself independently of God. Yes, Israel might make allusion to prophecy that is fulfilling prophecy but effectually we're talking about an atheistic nation that is secular, socialistic, and Zionistic, humanistic, seeking to establish itself and the scant references to prophecy are only a cosmetic employment and are not really a confidence in the God of the prophets. So we need to understand the drama that is being acted out before us that does not invite us to censure Israel for its failure but to understand how painful that failure must necessarily be but that it is necessary and out of the final failure and collapse will come God's resurrection answer.

Jesus exemplified that at the cross. The disciples themselves were heartbroken. Alas, we had thought it had been he but here he is, a dead cadaver and so we're going to come to a similar recognition of Israel.

Alas, we had hoped that this might succeed. It came within a hair's breadth of succeeding and then at that very moment even in Jesus at the apogee, the height of his human fulfillment as son of God becomes then the terribly shattered human wreck at the cross and defeats the hope of his own disciples. And out of that defeat and out of that abandonment out of which he himself cried, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? comes the great resurrection answer of God which is to say the glory of God.

I believe that if we will hold tight, we will see the same enactment of the issue of Israel for it is required to walk in the footsteps of its own Lord and fulfill a same road to Calvary and exhibit to the world the power of God alone that redeems and establishes and restores not as an accomplishment of men but as the revelation of his mercy, goodness and power. Isn't that a key to understanding Israel's centrality that it must, as you just referred, walk that road to Calvary. It must be the suffering servant nation just as its Messiah was the suffering servant.

Absolutely. It's interesting that the rabbis have often claimed that interpretation for Isaiah 53 that the suffering servant is Israel called to be a servant. And of course, we have to acknowledge that there's sufficient grounds to read that into that text.

But I believe that the greater fulfillment of that text is yet future when Israel, like the Lord before it, shall have no beauty that any might desire it. It shall be stricken and marred more than any man, more than any nation. So shall nations and kings be astonished at the sight.

I think that that's yet future. And Israel is taking the first steps toward that kind of abasement and humiliation so that by its own suffering it might begin to recognize the suffering of him who had preceded them and whose suffering has been ignored as a non-fact by Israel itself. So that the crucifixion of Jesus has been ironically set aside in Jewish consideration.

The text is not even read in synagogues. In its Haftarah readings in the Shabbat services, when Isaiah 52.12 is read, the following week Isaiah 54 continues, and this is excerpted out from even synagogue reading because of its clear Christological significance. And I think for that reason and more, we who lament that there are those who claim that the Holocaust never took place are ourselves guilty of saying that a crucifixion never took place except that of some unhappy melancholy character who thought himself to be the Messiah and troubled a Roman empire.

And so in misreading the significance of the crucifixion of our own king, we have a necessity ourselves to experience his suffering and by that to say, oh, for our transgressions he was stricken. And so that's a whole message in itself and one I think that history is soon to unveil. Let's just look at another direction for all of this.

By stressing the centrality of Israel, are you building up again the wall of separation between Jew and Gentile? Quite the contrary. I think that it is the linkage of our mutual identity. The church somehow has not recognized itself and cannot independent of its relatedness to Israel.

And Paul makes it so clear in Ephesians, you who are far off talking to the goyim, to the Gentiles, without hope, without God in the world, have been brought nigh by the blood of Israel's Messiah and brought into the covenant and hope of Israel itself, even into the commonwealth of Israel. So until the church recognizes that it has been grafted into the tree of another and sees itself as an independent and autonomous entity, it is disfigured in its own understanding of itself and therefore must malfunction. It is only in the recognition of its union and even its origin out of Israel itself and as an instrument to bring the branches back into its own tree will the church be the church and will Israel be Israel.

And is it at the root of all this is the church has had a mentality of prosperity and success and has not appropriated for themselves the necessity of the cross in our own lives and because we haven't taken the cross properly into our own lives we do not see it for Israel. Isn't that correct? Yeah. Well, suffering is intrinsic to the faith and the suffering that precedes the glory and nothing makes that principle more

apparent than in the role to which God calls the church in regard to Israel in the last days.

Our relationship with them has got to be something more than sentimental and more than just a kind of shallow affection because we're cute or we just have a hope for Israel's fulfillment but the relationship will be costly especially as the intensification of Israel's calamity unfolds even to the point of a destruction of the political state a possible expulsion again into the nations. I think that the time of Jacob's trouble indicates an uprooting of Jews worldwide and that unless there's a church willing to accommodate, receive, provide refuge to Jews in that distressed condition there'll be no Jewish survival but it'll not be something that can be provided casually and without cost. It might require even our own not only inconvenience but suffering and perhaps even loss of life.

And until we're willing for that and actually demonstrate that willingness how then shall we move Israel to jealousy? We've not yet fulfilled Paul's great statement that it's the church that is to move Israel to a jealousy that of such a kind that they will embrace what they have heretofore historically rejected. And I believe that that will come when the church will extend to Israel in compassion that is more than sentimental but the very heart of God the willingness to lay down its own life while Israel is yet in the condition of sin and apostasy and judgment that our affection and our love for Israel is not conditional on Israel's attractiveness but even when it is stricken and marred more than any man and there's no beauty that we should desire them yet do we desire them because the issue is not what they are in themselves but what they are in God, beloved. And my people have never experienced such a love.

I didn't experience it myself until 37 years ago when I was myself in a desolate stricken condition and out in the nations traveling as a hitchhiker and was befriended and taken up by those who picked me up off the side of the road and gave me in some portion that which will be the experience of Jews in the last days coming to me from Gentiles whom I mistrusted or distrusted and yet showed a kind of love that could not be explained on the basis of my loveliness but on the basis of the heart of God being expressed through them. It's not going to be anything other than the revelation of the Lord as he in fact is demonstrated through Gentiles the Hebraic character of God and the compassionate love of God and identification that will move us to jealousy and therefore to salvation. Let's follow up with that in terms of your own personal journey.

For the first 20 years of your preaching there was a very strong element of the radical call to discipleship and the kingdom of God insofar as it related to the church. Then from about 1988 on you took in some sense a great turn or a new change came about you in terms of stressing the centrality of Israel. Can you talk about this process in your own life and how that came about? Well I think it's not coincidental or insignificant that it came during a period of death in my own life.

I was sharing only recently with a brother that after 10 years of our community life at a time when we were just about to see daylight after much suffering in the initiating of a community which was new to our experience that the Lord ended the entire community that he himself initiated and brought everything into a place of death. The abandonment of the property the loss of our identity as a ministry the threat even to my own marriage and life and family and the Lord put me in the seminary during that time even to heighten the issues of death it was a liberal Lutheran seminary filled with women who were feminists if not witches and so I went through a real season of death that was tasted an abandonment from the property all without explanation even a death to ministry as the Lord forbade me to speak publicly for a period of 14 months and in that intense time of tasted and experienced death of actual expulsion casting out with the insecurity that came no form of livelihood and into the novel environment of a liberal seminary the Lord

began to reveal the mystery of Israel.

I used to make annual trips to Israel and minister to the church in Israel as I would in any nation to the body of Christ but until that season of death I had no understanding of the mystery of Israel per se as a nation and its futures in the theological theocratic intention of God that came during my time at the seminary and so I raised the question if it took a season of death to begin to unveil the mystery what will it take for its fulfillment and indeed both here now in front of these cameras and any public proclamation of the mystery there's always a measure of death yet to be experienced the Lord is so jealous over this mystery that he required a 14 month period of silence on my part I could not speak on any subject maybe it was clearing the slate for the bringing forth of a subject now on time for the church to be prophetically proclaimed that needed somehow a season in which there'd be no speaking at all and so from that point on about 1988 the Lord began the unveiling of this mystery and even the explanation that was given me when I first set foot on the property in Minnesota End Time Teaching Center Community Refuge Refuge for what?

Now I understood Refuge for Jews in North America from a flight from persecution that will be worldwide global In your opinion what exactly is the modern state of Israel and what is going on there at this present time?

Well it's a people in a nation called to collapse and very few understand that but I think if we would look at the text in Ezekiel chapter 22 the Lord makes clear that there's a last days return not for fulfillment or success but for judgment and it's called a furnace in chapter 22 of Ezekiel Son of Man verse 18 the house of Israel is to me become dross all they are brass and tin and iron and lead in the midst of the furnace they are even the dross of silver therefore thus saith the Lord God because you have all become dross behold therefore I will gather you into the midst of Jerusalem that somehow the dealing of God must take place in the land and so that it's not an exaggeration to say that the establishment of the state in 1948 is not for its permanency or fulfillment as a prophetic

destiny but for the initial judgment that sets in motion those things that will culminate in that final restoration there's a judgment that precedes a restoration there's a severity of God that precedes a goodness and somehow in the wisdom of God Jerusalem itself has got to be the vortex of course when God says Jerusalem he means as well all Israel and what do we see practically speaking but since 1948 and now increasingly in this more recent time issues of such a kind that as I've said before compel a line of conduct that is thoroughly un-Jewish and we needed to see that we needed to experience that that we who had complained of Nazi mistreatment are now ourselves being called Nazi we who were the victims of racist mentalities are now being accused ourselves of a racist mentality and not

without some substance in these accusations all to bring us to the place of the acknowledgement of God's truth that there's in man no good thing and when God will mark iniquity who can stand this must be experienced by Israel or we cannot fulfill our destiny how shall we be a nation of priests to the world and bring a knowledge of God's so great salvation without first understanding the desperate necessity for that salvation that in man is no good thing and that God alone is our righteousness except that our awareness of our own condition has been mocked by our own conduct there's no cheap way out if we will refuse the word of God and the indictment that comes to the word whether we are Israel, the church or individuals we must then therefore experience the reality of that in our

experience it's a last resort from God, it's a painful reality but one that cannot be omitted so I'm saying that the purpose of the establishment of the state in 1948 is not for its success but for its necessary failure and that the scriptures both here in Ezekiel and elsewhere indicate a necessity for Israel to be tried as a metal and a crucible of heat in order to smelt and remove the impurity and that we might come out before God and before men and before nations as the righteousness of God revealing not our virtue but His this goes back to the principle that in all of our discussion we're not trying to elevate Israel, we're not trying to elevate the church but only the glory of God, that all things must be done unto His glory, isn't that correct?

If we miss that principle we miss everything and of course that was at the heart of the apostle Paul as he concludes his great dissertation on the mystery of Israel, Romans 9-11 for of him and through him and to him in verse 36 of chapter 11 be glory forever so the issue for Paul, great apostle that he was and great Jew identifying with his own people in the first verses of chapter 9 I would wish myself a curse for my brethren's sake in the end shows us his apostolic heart that however great his endearment for his own people and that of the church for which he labored day and night there is an issue that exceeds both and if we miss that we miss both our significance to Israel and to the church and that is the glory of God forever and my own experience as a minister to the church is that that is wanting in the church's own deepest consciousness we have become too utilitarian, too pragmatic too oriented to success and to programs and have missed a jealousy for God's glory which is the central and indefatigable heart of the apostle and therefore for a church called to be apostolic and prophetic and so my prayer often is Lord restore to the church a jealousy for your glory for only that will permit the kind of sacrifice that the church will be required to make in order to fulfill the mystery of God if it's just Israel's sake or just the church's sake is not incentive enough in itself but the glory of God that abides forever is this, this is not a little icing on the cake, this is not a little rhetorical flourish that Paul employs it's the statement of his deepest apostolic heart and the church until it comes to that can never claim to be apostolic though it claims it and so yes, it's this jealousy and this understanding that the issue is not Israel in itself nor either the church, both are instrumentalities for a much greater revelation, the glory of God forever and that will require, as glory always does, suffering Simeon who was waiting for the consolation of Israel he took the baby Jesus in his arms and called him a light to bring revelation to the Gentiles and the glory of your people Israel, what did he see at that time that the church has lost sight of or has never seen concerning the mystery of the centrality of Israel?

Well that's a remarkable text that initiates the drama of Jesus as Israel's Messiah, that he could recognize a babe being brought into the temple for the necessary dedication, circumcision and being brought by the spirit and seen by the spirit that in this innocuous child is the fulfillment of all Israel's destiny so unless that mystery is revealed by the spirit, there's no understanding.

What distinguished this dear man is that he's called a just and righteous man waiting for the consolation of Israel which is more than the success of the state and unless we are waiting and expecting and looking for the greater consolation that has as its consequence the glory of God, we will not see in the state now in its pitiful condition the ultimate fulfillment of this so great destiny. The parallel with the infant Jesus and the infant state is remarkable the corollary of the two are inseparable and so what is required is a certain disposition of heart that waits and waits for what? For the consolation of Israel he would not be consoled by anything less nor other than God's own divine and supernatural fulfillment that has its origin in this infant and so we must also look upon present Israel however unhappy its condition and increasing distress as also the nucleus of the essential commencement of what will consummate later in a glory. Our problem is that we're not righteous and therefore we're not seeing and though we celebrate the Holy Spirit in our language, we are not led into the temple of God by the spirit nor do we see by the spirit we have our own

agenda.

We want to see Israel to succeed. Why? Because we want to succeed. We only project upon the nation what we desire for ourselves religiously and so therefore we're disqualified from seeing that which is ultimate and therefore until we can see it, how shall we perform it? The church, I'm very fond of saying, is called to ultimacy it's called to a prophetic and apostolic fulfillment which cannot be performed out of our own human or religious well-meaning intention or ability but only out of the ground of the life of God in resurrection and ascension power and therefore we're acting and living out beneath the level of God's intention because we've not seen the ultimate issue of Israel and the church which is the purpose for which we are speaking these things into these cameras today.

Yes and another one of the main problems of the church I believe is the painful ignorance of the prophetic scriptures there are most of the prophetic scriptures are yet to be fulfilled and to me there is a painful ignorance of all that is prophesied, all that is spoken about, all that is promised in the restoration of Israel and the consummation of all things.

And yet ironically by a church that somehow celebrates prophecy in fact this is the season and after my in all my 37 years as a believer I've not seen prophecy and the prophetic call more celebrated than presently by men whose qualification in my own estimate is dubious and in fact I don't think that the church can even distinguish between the gift of prophecy and the office of prophet and yet we run after men to hear a word that somehow will inform us that God knows of us and has some personal relevant thing to communicate which of course is of clear value but there is something much greater in the issue of prophecy Jesus himself identifies himself with that call that the spirit of prophecy is the testimony of Jesus my God if that's so let's not traffic in something so holy and cheapen

it by some kind of dubious counterfeit but let's wait for and look for and have an appreciation for that which is ultimate and so I'm suspicious of those who are running after so called prophets who neglect or ignore the canon of prophetic scripture itself and even there we can misread it or mechanically seek to understand it or think that we're seeing its fulfillment unless our own understanding is opened for its interpretation and I believe that a key to that comes from prophetic men themselves who have authentically been called to that office and though I will probably heap upon my own heads some scorn as celebrating myself I believe that that is my call and because it is I'm privileged to have a certain understanding and appreciation of scripture that is not given to others not for my

enjoyment but for my communication an example would be Ezekiel 37 in the valley of dry bones which like many I had believed previously is already in process of fulfillment and that the dry bones coming together is already the state of Israel and now God is adding the flesh and then subsequently the spirit but a better and deeper reading of the text indicates that the death is yet future and yet we're in process toward it now and that what God is waiting for and has not yet obtained is the acknowledgement of the nation itself that we are without hope and that we are as dry bones and that realization is yet future and the events that are taking place are calculated to bring the nation to that acknowledgement God waits for it and interestingly when it comes he himself does not address the

bones but he turns to another called the son of man prophesy to those bones that they might live and so when the Lord opened my own understanding in conjunction with the event of the intifada and the first stones that were thrown I began then to reappraise this text and to see it in a way in which I now proclaim it not as something past but something future and therefore it's a death that needs to be foreseen that we

need to brace ourselves to understand but more than that to be the son of man who will be called to prophesy for unless that word of a resurrection authority and power issues from a son of man company namely the church brought to an ultimate constituency and maturity in God those bones will remain bones and there we have the whole mystery we have the Israel in its depleted

condition unable to aid itself and something must come to it from outside itself or it cannot live and that something is not the direct action of God but something coming from symbolically a figure called the son of man a prophetic figure called to prophesy but to prophesy in a faith that transcends its even own prophetic ability and a love by which faith works that exceeds its own mere affection which is to say that it has to receive and come into both the faith of the son of God and the love of God or those bones remain fixed in death so the issue of Israel the last analysis is not Israel Israel must necessarily be brought to a place that is inert and incapable of its own restoration why because we're Jews because we see look ma no hands because historically we have come back time after

time from misfortune and reestablished ourselves expelled out of Spain we come into the new world after the holocaust we come here we succeed here we even establish a state and in 50 years we resuscitate a dead liturgical language and become a high-fi high-tech civilization and one of the great military powers of the earth in half a century who's heard of such accomplishment and yet we cannot succeed on that basis we have got to be brought to such a place of death in which there's no hope and that we ourselves acknowledge that we are without hope God waits for verse 11 of Ezekiel chapter 37 we are cut off we are as dry bones we are without hope when God hears that acknowledgement coming from Jews the epitome of mankind of human presumption of self-sufficiency then he's released to look to

a son of man prophesy to those bones but the issue is when Israel comes to that death will there be a church that has come to that prophetic maturity that can be commanded to prophesy and can prophesy in a faith that exceeds its own faith and that works only by love that is more than mere sentimental affinity with Israel so the issue in the last analysis is not Israel the issue is the church but a church that has come of age Art it's clear that anti-semitism with its long history is still on the rise how should we understand this and why is God allowing this at this time?

It is so painful a question that I'm almost brought to tears to consider it I know this sense of anguish that is increasing through Jews and Jews throughout the world because who could have expected that within a half century of the holocaust itself this phenomenon should again be asserting itself we would have thought that the world would have been chastised by the horror of the holocaust but before it has elapsed we're seeing again conditions of a kind that have always signaled terrible catastrophe for the Jewish community and are again bringing that sense of dread the remarkable thing is that it's arising from sectors in the world where we would have least of expected it and from sectors within those nations among the educated trade unions green movements peace movements formally

having an affinity with Israel now standing profoundly against it and calling us Goliath calling us racist calling us Nazi refusing to unload Israeli cargos coming to nations cutting off contracts and taking forms in France and nations where we've had a comfortable existence and what form of anti-semitism but going back to the middle ages of the blood libel that we kill gentile children in order to take their blood in the making of our ceremonial and ritual needs of matzo who has ever heard that such things would be dug out again from the history of the dark ages and be employed in modern times taught us and they're irrefutable how do you answer such categorical charges so I know that there's a sense of dread coming into the Jewish community my god again isn't there any surcease from

these things don't we ever come to a place of security where we can at least rest our heads in an enlightened 20th century and say that these things shall not haunt us again and so we're preparing a whole booklet for Jewish consideration on these very questions and in it we're wanting to explain that this phenomenon has haunted us throughout our history that it even predates the advent of Christianity itself it cannot be explained as something that merely issues from Christendom or the misuse of New Testament scripture we were haunted before even the advent of those things that somehow it seems always to be dogging our steps and I want to suggest that it itself is a judgment coming out of a covenantal failure and that we will never be relieved of the ogre and the fear of anti-semitism and

the horrors that issue from it until we will have been brought back into a relationship with God we must deal with the root cause God is chastising us and bringing us into a consciousness that something is amiss and that is not to be corrected by secular authorities we're not to appeal to France to protect us in our synagogues and our Jewish youth and our streets when the phenomenon is our own problem namely our covenantal failure that invites this kind of expression coming out of nations may we be spurred by these increasing reports that will haunt us in every place will not be safe in any place that is an expression of something to do with our failure before God and our covenantal obligation that releases these evils to provoke us to a return and that no human authority can save us from

the threat and the terror that must necessarily come only our return to the God whom we have historically neglected if not rejected and therefore suffer the consequence that must follow yes in this hour that we've been speaking we've stated very clearly that Israel is a central nation to all nations and that it has an irrevocable destiny that it's always a witness nation whether in apostasy or in faithfulness and really the question is how far will God go to establish the fulfillment of Israel's theocratic destiny and the establishment of his kingdom what is this destiny of Israel and as we have failed in the nations and to the nations as a nation of priests and a light unto the world it is in the nations and out of the nations that our distress and haunting calamities issue they'll never

be resolved until we will be to the nations what God intended a nation of priests and a light unto the world if we ourselves are not in that light how shall we be to others and for the want of that light anti-semitism is itself a deviant conduct that issues out of darkness so we have brought a judgment out of our own failure that will not be rectified until we also shall be that which God intended and yet ironically our cry is we want to be as other nations why must some conduct be expected of us that is not expected of others we still stubbornly reject our own destiny and our own call and we are paying the cost of that rejection so you're saying that there's a time of great trouble ahead for Israel it must come it must come music music music music music

---

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/jEMleMX78ll.mp4>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/art-katz/dvd-15-the-mystery-of-israel-part-1/>

# *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](http://www.sermonindex.net)**