

Dvd 35 Thinking the Unthinkable

by Art Katz

Art Katz's sermon explores the complex relationship between Israel and the Church, emphasizing the necessity of understanding Israel's suffering for the Church to fulfill its prophetic role in restoration.

Duration: 1:12:33

Scripture: Ezekiel 20:35-38, Matthew 11:28, Acts 3:21, Romans 11:33-36

Topics: "Israel Restoration", "Radical Faith"

Description

This sermon delves into the deep theological explanation for the necessity of Israel's devastation and the church's role in bringing about Israel's restoration. It emphasizes the need for a radical faith that can withstand the severe judgments of God and the importance of understanding God's character and His ultimate plan for Israel and the church. The speaker challenges the audience to be willing to go through radical transformations and to be prepared for the tensions and disturbances that come with knowing God as He truly is.

Transcript

Jesus. O God, my Savior, do you see the beauty of their lies and their cowardice, and how hearts covet them for the kingdom of God, that they might be an end-time people of God, proclaiming His salvation throughout the earth? The issue of history, which is the issue of generations, is not a choice. About culture shock, or spiritual shock, first I feel that what I'm going to be sharing will be painful, if not shocking, for some of you, if not many of you here.

The greater your empathy for Israel, the more difficult will be your hearing of my word. So, I'm saying that not because I enjoy rubbing the saints the wrong way, maybe there was a time in the past, but because I know that I have a very difficult and painful perspective to consider, but I believe it to be true, and I ask you to test it, and see if the spirit of truth will be with us and honest as I share it. I don't know of anyone else who has this particular view.

It's caused a bit of reproach and alienation, even from some of my Jewish brethren, in Israel and elsewhere, and I can understand them. It's not something that one wants to play. There's something about us that desires happy endings, without any necessary travail before that.

When we think of Israel and the long history of the sufferings of the Jewish people, we want to say, haven't they suffered enough now, and isn't it now time that they might receive their nachas, their satisfaction?

But, alack and alas, I believe and I think that the churches testify that Israel must be required to experience yet future sufferings of so devastating a kind as whips what has been the experience of my people through history and even that of the Holocaust itself. I hope in these times of sharing, to give what I think is a theological explanation or justification for the necessity of Israel's devastation. But before it devastates Israel, I think that it's calculated to devastate us.

And until we are devastated and come out on the other side of devastation, into the life of God that is only the privilege of those who have been brought to it, we cannot ourselves be the agent of Israel's deliverance from their devastation. You know what I mean? I'm not going to be easy to hear, to understand. You'll scratch your head.

You'll rub your chin. You'll get angry. You'll get irritated.

You'll get vexed. But let me pray. Lord, grant us grace, precious God, to hear, to speak, to proclaim, to set forth what we believe, my God, is respective.

And to whatever degree it is not, we're asking for revision right on the spot. We invite you to trim our sails, Lord, and to cut us off at the pass. And in whatever strenuous way it pleases you, to edit, shape, form, and bring forth your statement.

Do it. But I believe, Lord, that we have come to an hour, a coming of age, where we can hear, where we can consider, where we can receive your strange work, your necessary work, for your people Israel. And I'm asking, my God, understanding that comes by the operation of your Spirit.

Make these times revelatory for those saints who are governed by the exercise of their minds. And if their minds are not immediately gratified, they're thrown into a tizzy, I ask that you would steady them. And grant them your calm.

If not every question is immediately answered, that they will hold steady until the answer will come in your time. But, Lord, speak for your servants here. We thank you, my God, for this occasion that it has pleased you to give.

Fill it with things, my God, that are dear to your own heart, needful for us, your church of the last days, to consider, to embrace, for us to walk in it. We thank you and give you the praise. In Jesus' name and God's people said, Amen.

Well, I think that the Philly entitled conference, The Mystery of Israel and the Church, which is a title that I like and that I have often used, but my own true sense was, the crisis of Israel. And indeed, just before the days have begun, something has erupted on the West Bank, through an outraged Jewish man from Brooklyn, like myself, that caused enormous devastation and loss of life and heightens the whole issue of Israel's crisis. The repercussions from that single act are more fearful than we can contemplate.

And already, I don't know to what degree, the recent shooting up of a van of Hasidic Jews in Brooklyn was a reaction to the murder of Palestinians in their mosque on their high religious holiday, Ramadan. So, we're only at the beginning of things. We need to brace ourselves for something that will become increasingly worse and even unthinkable bad.

I have a paper before me tonight that I've composed called Thinking the Unthinkable. Anticipating the Dreaded and the Undesired. What a title.

And it's going to stretch us. We're not thinkers to begin with, let alone to think things thinkable, but except that we think them and be fitted by such thinking, I think that the disaster will be yet the greater. So, let me just review some basic premises that I have, which I hope to establish and to reinforce and will be a kind of a guide to the things that will follow in this hard and unusual scenario that requires a necessary devastation for Israel that violates all our categories, disappoints all our expectations, and offends our very view of God.

You're going to be offended by the things that I'm going to share and the things, if I'm on target, we will necessarily have to experience and to observe in God's ruthless dealings with Israel that are yet future. Not because he's malicious, it's because he's merciful. Maybe the first thing that we have to think and understand is that the judgments of God are also his mercies.

There are whole frameworks of understandings, whole mindsets that are aliens that we need to adopt if we are to be the apostolic prophetic entity of the last days that can do Israel good. We cannot, in our present condition, do it. Mere sentimentality will not suffice.

Something of an heroic kind has got to come into the character of the last days' remnant people of God. And the remarkable thing is that it's the whole issue of Israel that requires this and that inducts us into this place in God. There's such a reciprocal place between Israel and the church that neither the one nor the other, independent of the other, can ever come to the intent of God for them.

We're locked in, and it requires us to be something that we would not otherwise have attained, something that will require sacrifice to obtain, and we have to obtain it corporately or we will not obtain it at all. In a word, it requires us to be the church, the church of an ultimate kind, which we would never have aspired to be nor be willing to have suffered the cuts to obtain unless it were tied in completely with Israel's deliverance as a nation in the last days. I'm telling you flat out that God is going to bring Israel to a place of such utter destitution the nation will be so inert, so incapable of helping itself, let alone saving itself, that only if something will come to it from outside itself will there be any prospect of Israel's restoration.

And that's something, I believe, must necessarily come from us in an ultimate prophetic way that cannot be performed as charismatics or any other variation of modern-day Christianity. It's an ultimate requirement, and God and his genius has established it. Now, don't get bewildered, freaked out.

These are ponderous statements, and it's all being taped. You'll have opportunity to hear them and consider them. In fact, I would even recommend now that when you get them, you don't even hear them alone, but hear them in some kind of a prayer circle or with a knit of saints where you can stop the machine, where you can examine the Scriptures, where you can act over the Word, and by that way to suck out and draw out the marrow from the bone of the things that will be expressed.

So if the Church is to be what I believe it must be for Israel's deliverance, and Israel's deliverance or Israel's restoration is the issue of the release of the Lord pent up now in the heavens waiting for the restoration of all things spoken by the prophets since the world began in Acts 3.21, then such a Church must be in agreement with God in his dealings with Israel. And it's remarkable that I've been inspired by some study of the two principal prophets of exile, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, who predicted or prophesied Israel's annihilation and devastation and expulsion from the land. What shall I say? They spoke that word uncompromisingly for Jeremiah at the risk of his own life at a time when there was a plentitude of false prophets who were speaking syrupy things and that were much more easy to hear, who were healing the people of Israel rightly and saying peace, peace, when there was no peace.

These two remarkable prophets of God did not withhold the severe word of judgment that Israel was soon required to experience. And I believe with all my heart that because they were prophets of that unremitting and uncompromising kind, that God gave them the privilege later and also to prophesy Israel's restoration and return. This is not an accident, that if we are unwilling for the first, we will be incapable for the other.

If we shrink from the hard work of understanding and agreeing with the necessary judgments that are to come, we will not be the instrument for the speaking of the word that not only comforts Israel, but delivers and saves Israel. That's more than just a word about something, it's a prophetic word that constitutes event in the speaking and the hearing. And my text for this, and I don't even know that I'll refer to this text, if you're familiar with it, the classic is Ezekiel 37, when Israel shall be as dry bones, cut off and without hope.

And I double-dagger to tell me any time in Israel's history to this present moment, including the Holocaust that reduced Israel yet to that place. I believe that that describes a future condition when the nation itself will acknowledge, we are cut off. We are as dry bones.

We are without hope. There was something for a Gentile to make us that maybe some of us here have, but for a Jew to make a statement like that is unparalleled, let alone the Jewish nation. Because we are, what shall I say? What's the good word? The self-assured, we are the epitome of man with such an assurance of our ability to pull ourselves up from our own bootstraps that no matter what calamity we have suffered in the historic past, we have displayed to the world and to ourselves an uncommon ability to lift ourselves out of it.

So successful have we been in this that men like myself who were born in exile called Brooklyn, New York, never understood that that was exile, that we got along so well in an environment that should have been strange and alien to us, where we had hung our harps and were incapable of singing the Lord's song, never ever touched our consciousness. We played stickball in the streets and went to see the Brooklyn Dodgers, and in fact to live in Brooklyn and to know the asphalt jungle was to us more natural and organic and real than to be related to some strange interlude in the past of people who were nomadic and desert dwellers and raised sheep and something of that kind. We did not even know that we were born in Brooklyn, Moscow, Phoenix, and Los Angeles because we were people under the judgment of God and we were suffering the exile of that judgment.

So great is our capacity to come out smelling like a rose. And that's, what shall I say, humanly admirable. You cannot help but admire a people like that.

Come on, confess up. You do. In fact, in your secret heart, you would love to be like that.

There is a... What kind of word helped me? What's the word? Strange admiration for things Jewish. There's a mystique that's powerful upon Gentiles. There's nothing more dangerous for the spiritual life of Gentiles than this enrapt fascination with things Jewish.

There's a power to it. It's more than just the issue of soul. So I know that you admire those who can conduct the Entebbe raid single-handedly.

We'll bring them back from Uganda. There's but one man. And somebody needs a hit squad? Give us a call.

You failed in getting the Iraqi dictator? You should have called us. You know that every last Palestinian terrorist who is involved in any way with the murder of the Israeli Olympic athletes in the Olympics of 19... Whatever the year that was, every single one of them has met a violent death by strange, inexplicable circumstances, which, if deeply learned, was conducted by the Mossad, Israel's CIA. You know, there's a certain luster and bravado and drama to that that is humanly engaging.

There's only one thing wrong with it. It's not a formula for blessing all the families of the earth. That's the only thing that's wrong with it.

And that only thing is everything. Not only for Israel's sake and for the nation's sake, yet waiting to be blessed by a people whose call is irrevocable to be a nation of priests and light unto the world, but for their own sake. So God has got to bring them down before he brings them up.

We have got to come to a place that's my own testimony. And what Jewish believer has not been brought down before he's been brought up into the faith of him whose name he had blasphemed till the very day of his salvation. We don't come easily.

We come kicking and full of our own opinions and arrogance until we're so knocked from one end to the other and so divested of our braggadocio that we can fear for the first time there's still small wars. Pray for the new edition of Ben Israel out of print in English. He entitled *Apprehended by God The Journal of a Jewish Atheist*.

That is now virtually ready for print. It's now in Russian and I'll be taking it by hand when I leave you to go to that part of the world for two months. A remarkable account of how long it took for God to bring a man down.

35 years. And in a kind of microcosmic way it contains all of the essential elements that are descriptive of God's future dealings with Israel. I'm going to suggest that not only is present Israel not the prophetic fulfillment but that it must first have been in order to give God an opportunity to demonstrate to ourselves our own patent incapability of establishing a righteous state let alone a messianic glory.

And everything that is daily happening that compounds the distress of Israel and takes educated Jewish doctors from Brooklyn and makes them to be mad so as to blast the brains out of men who are kneeling in prayer as it is only the beginning of the kind of derangement and revelation that shall come to us of what is the truth of our own condition. The painful truth which the scriptures had all along stated if we had only consulted them. But being non-biblical or biblical illiterates and being contemptuous of the Bible and incapable of acknowledging it as the word of God and thinking that it was our own cultural contribution to mankind we were not able to see God's statement of his judgment for the human condition which is the Jewish condition and therefore have got to read it by our own conduct or our own dismay and disappointment.

When Israel shall cry out we are cut off and we are without hope and we are as dry bones this is the heart of that cry. It's not that we are physically incapacitated though that may well be the case but that we have come to the realization of what we are in ourselves as men. And our enjoyable contemplations of ourselves as being morally superior to Gentiles which while we lived in the ghetto and were powerless will now no longer have any cogency because we have learned with every other nation that power corrupts and that absolute power corrupts absolutely even when you're Jewish.

I won't ask you if you're following me. If you're following me it's already a miracle. But just to give you a growing sense of something of the drama that is already underway of what it is that will save us from joining the world in its increasing course of condemnation against Israel for failing to act and to be like the nation that they and we assumed that they would be.

The only thing that will save us from that is the recognition that there's no way that they can be such a nation independent of their transfiguring power of our God. And it's only by that transfiguration brought by His power through our ministry through them that they will bless all the families of the earth and in no other way. So the real issue of Israel is the issue of the church.

Will there be in the last day a church capable of speaking a word to Israel in its grave of such power as to establish an event of raising a nation from the dead. That's not for amateurs, certainly not for the carnal, and it's a word that needs to be spoken corporately and with one voice. Something like, Lazarus come forth with a total faith that unquestionably believes that even the word out of its own mouth will bring Lazarus out from his tomb.

It's one thing to believe that Jesus can do it. It requires a greater faith to believe that we can do it and do it in agreement as a people together with one heart and one soul who can be commanded. We are so far removed from that possibility now that if Israel today were in that desperate condition, inert and helpless, and looked outside of itself for a word that would come it would certainly not be able to come.

We are simply not one except if you think that being ecumenical is one. That farcical religious and political nonsense that is presently being worked in the earth in religious orders. The oneness that will make our word an event requires the cross to our opinion and our sensibilities and what we think and how and if and maybe.

And so there's something cut out for us but you know what the heck of it is? That's how you talk when you come from Brooklyn. The heck of it is that this cannot be compelled that such a church and such a people as one with such a prophetic cogency and power and authority must be something voluntarily obtained and given. And you know what the heck of the heck of it is? That unless you choose this radical apostolic and prophetic option, you know what the other alternative is? Apostasy.

I believe that we're moving to such radical polarity at the end of the age that there's not going to be any prospect any possibility of some middling place of neutrality. We're going to be radically apostolic or we will be radically apostate. And it's the issue of Israel that will determine the one or the other.

Even today and in these days you're going to be making a decision one way or the other. You'll receive this word or you'll reject this word. You'll open yourself to the work of the cross by which God may have such a people or you'll be unwilling for the price of it and think in your naivety that you can continue in some kind of lesser place and yet be with God.

I think we'll either be among the persecuted or the persecutors. The apostolic or the apostolic. And the issue of Israel will find us out.

So an enlargement of faith is critical for us. And it's an enlargement not about our understanding and subscription to doctrine. Not a compendium, an enlarged compendium of doctrines but a faith that enables us to speak a word that can raise the dead.

There's faith in faith. And that process is also the work of the cross. So the enlargement of faith is related to the enlargement of our knowledge of God.

Faith in the last analysis is the confidence and trust that we have for God in exact measure as we know Him in truth. The lack of faith in God is the lack of the true knowledge of God. And He's not such a one as ourselves.

And you know what will give us a more correct and profound knowledge of Him? The revelation of God as is given by His dear Israel in the last days. Nothing more reveals the character of God at the heart of God than the judgments of God and the mercies that will follow. If we balk from that, if it's too painful for us to consider, if we have no stomach for His judgments, if we attribute them to men rather than to God, we are forfeiting the very means by which we would have come to a knowledge of Him that would have served us in good stead and enabled us to be a prophetic people.

Be a knowledge that will stretch us unbearably to breaking. I think maybe the principal factor for the apostasy that will mark the last days of many falling away from the faith is an increasing displeasure with God. Or a cry of where is He? And how come He's allowing this? And where is His righteousness and justice? And where is His love and where is His promise? And I thought that the Israel of 1948 was going to be the thing and it was moving progressively to fulfillment.

I thought I was going to be raptured. I thought I, I, I. And conditions come. Contradict what was our best knowledge of God, which we thought so sacrosanct that if anyone raised a question about the truth of rapture or present Israel being the fulfillment of prophecy we would have been considered heretical.

I think God is going to stretch us unbearably. He's going to have a field day in stomping our categories. There's going to be a breaking up and a chewing up and a spitting out.

Not of things that are necessarily in error but are necessarily equipped. That may be a truth in measure but not the whole truth. That may have been given us by God but He will not allow us to retain.

That it served for a season but He takes away the first that He might bring the second. I think that we're going to be dealt with as the church as severely and as radically as God will himself deal with Israel. Not because He's malicious but because He has an intention for us of a millennial and eternal kind that pertains to His everlasting glory.

My punchline right there. I should have saved it for the last message. You will be offended by God in the ruthlessness and the severity of the dealings of God with Israel in the last days that may I believe even require not only Israel's defeat but Israel's expulsion again into the nation of Jews in the United States fleeing for their lives and in every other nation as fugitives from a Hitlerian hatred that eclipses the Nazi devastation and will be global and be the experience of Jews in every place.

This shooting of Jews on the Brooklyn Bridge is the first presentiment of such a wholesale ruthless dealings and severe things falling upon Jews as they would have not thought possible in the lands where they have obtained safety comfort and prosperity. It's coming and they don't even know it. And there are some of you here from different places and out of state who already have a mandate like ourselves to prepare places of refuge, physical places of refuge in this country where Jews who will find themselves brought there out of duress and flight from persecution.

Thus sayeth Art Katz and would to God I were a false prophet and you have no idea how critical a location Phoenix is in the escape mechanism and route of God for a remnant of my own people in their last days persecution. The Corrie ten Boom drama was a foretaste, what shall I say, preview of things to come where an heroic church at the jeopardy and the risk of its own life will be required to take Jews into their attics and into their basements and hide them and secret them away from those who are driven by the fury of demonic powers to annihilate them. Or you don't know why they shall be so ruthlessly pursued? Because the king is contained in the heavens waiting for the restoration of all things spoken by the prophets since the world began and if you only but consult the prophets they only had one pervasive theme the restoration of Israel in the last days out of a long history of apostasy and alienation from God and that their restoration to God and to the land is the release of their king to come and to be a prince over them and to reign over them and over all nations from the holy city of Jerusalem and the holy hill of Zion which will be of his theocratic rule.

You know why these things sound so alien to you and strange?

Because we have been robbed of them historically by generations of spiritualizing what's the other word for doing with the scriptures where you avoid the literal statement of the word, the truth, and find a way to give it a fanciful spiritual rendering that says that Zion is not the locust of God's kingdom but another fanciful term for the church and many other such constructs that had their origin all the way back in time even to the church fathers in origin who was inspired by a Jewish philosopher by the name of Philo and so we're I don't want to get into all that we have been robbed of the literal anticipation of a millennial rule in the kingdom that of necessity must have a capital in the earth, one chosen not because it's lustrous or formidable or physically impressive but because

it's the least of all things it's the holy hill of Zion and the law shall go forth from that place and the word of the Lord out of Jerusalem so truly and literally, not figuratively but literally that nations will study war no more and beat their swords into plowshares it all waits on the restoration of this people to their land when I will restore them and I will return them whether that has yet taken place is a very serious question I believe it's future and that when it takes place it will take place so dramatically so astonishingly and supernaturally that not only will Israel have to recognize that its own very God whom it had impugned and cast off and derided is their savior but that the nations themselves shall observe the saving work of God because it shall take place in all

nations he's not going to do it in a corner and if he's going to do it in all nations who do you think will be the instrument of that doing that so reveals him that to meet any one of his instruments is to meet him face to face, none other than a profoundly sanctified church who recounted privilege to suffer whatever the consequence for itself in being the agent of Israel's deliverance for it does not live its life unto itself but for him the issue is the eternal glory of God I tried to speak about that this morning and I don't think I succeeded very well this is a phrase that needs to be contended for that scripture in Judah about contending for the faith once and for all given the saints is not so much the issue of its doctrines, God bless the doctrines absolutely necessary to be kept

beautifully and truly but the substance of the faith the character that understands that the ultimate consummating thing for which all things tend for which everything that has preceded us had this as its intent and for which reason we're even circled about tonight by an invisible cloud of witnesses oh you don't believe that oh you little faith that reason is the consummating glory of God that shall fill the earth when he shall come and preside as king in the very city and place where he suffered his greatest humiliation and I'll

tell you that unless this jealousy for that glory is at the fount of all of our doing for Israel and for God we will assuredly fail if our whole undergirding is the love for Israel I have not a great confidence that that will suffice in the rigor and demand of

what shall be called for in the last days relationship with that people the greater issue for which Israel is only the means and not the end is the glory of God forever where does it say that in Scripture Romans 11 33 through 36 where Paul who glimpsed what I believe the Lord is enabling me not to glimpse spoke in language that could not be contained oh the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God who has been his counselor who has given to him and shall be given again for of him and through him and through him are all things to whom the glory forever the issue of Israel's restoration is not the end it is a means to an end which is the glory of God forever it takes place in historic time these very last days through the church as the single instrument and agent of

God to that end and when it's effected history ends the millennial age commences the issues of eternity have been decided and determined for that generation the Lord occupies and inhabits his throne the son of David and he must be descendant from that lineage because it's the throne of David and the Lord shall go forth out of Zion and the word of the Lord shall have Jerusalem and nobles and children and every filthy muck and perversion that now prevails sweepingly over the earth shall cease for the law shall go forth righteousness of God shall be made known and a nation an ancient nation called to be a light unto the nations a priestly nation will now function in their calling restored and filled with the fruit of God as the source of their life and being for he has raised them from

the dead why is it so strange to you that resurrection is at the heart of this mystery Christ's life death and resurrection is the eternal paradigm of God the central hermeneutical key not only for the issue of Israel but to all of the faith our faith for Israel is the revelation of our failure in general I'm not asking you to understand that I'm saying it to put it on the tape but what I'm saying is this resurrection is the name of the game not as mere doctrine however blessed a doctrine it is but the reality and the power of it that literally raises the dead that raised Jesus that will raise us will raise them that this is the pivotal center of God's whole justice working and why have we failed to recognize it for Israel why have we thought to applaud Israel and hope that it would have

been established and have been a spanking success without resurrection because it's on that basis we would have loved to have it for ourselves can't we get by without death and resurrection can't we succeed religiously with programs and other well meaning things out of our own expertise we would love to do so because however glorious resurrection is it must invariably be preceded by a death that we're unwilling to Israel will not have that choice but we will Israel's death is inevitable but of being raised from the dead is the issue of our willingness to taste death and to embrace death that we might be through death and unto resurrection a prophetic entity capable of bringing life by a resurrection word and not a well meaning I hope I hope I hope word okay introduction preload the

thinking the unthinkable the unthinkable thing is exile and expulsion I've only recently come back from Israel every door to my speaking day was shut only one door was open an Arabic congregation but I did have for a first time a sit down opportunity with some leaders in the land in the messianic evangelical community to share my papers and I got I think a serious hearing and it came to this point where they could agree with me yes devastation is inevitable it must come as a requirement the very conduct and character of Israel invites it but why exile why expulsion can't they suffer a more limited form of devastation someone something like dying to self but we want a kind of dying that is not absolute that

leaves certain loopholes that permits the ongoing life of things that are not in

themselves inherently offensive to God you know what we shrink from both as the church and as Israel a totality of God we shrink from an abandonment to God we're unwilling to pull out all the stones and we will have mud on our face when we stand before the Lord in the day of his judgment and hear played back our little pretty and puny remarks about our love for Israel and our affinity for Israel our concern for Israel all the while unwilling to suffer the deaths that would have fitted us to be Israel's deliverer this unwillingness to something as radical as exile is a stopping short of the full abandonment of God and I believe and I hope to give you biblical scriptural support to make a very good case that the scriptures indeed indicate a last days devastation unto expulsion of Israel

again into the nations in my last trip to Egypt from Israel only weeks ago I found myself five hours south of Cairo in some of the remote areas I've never been as a minister in village churches so primitive I thought that the clock had been turned back to biblical times of believers on dirt floors and living rotting corrupting little shacks of whom the world is not worthy and it is my privilege to be their minister as a Jew as a foretaste of the blessing that will come to the nations when a whole nation shall be raised up in its apostolic calling to bless the families of the earth and they received that and were blessed by that and I hope to go back and I said to one of the patriarchal figures one of the village churches I said my dear if my Jewish people were to be cast out into your

midst would you receive them and take them in we were almost if we went a little further south we would have been into Ethiopia but there's a place in the minor prophets that says that there will be an expulsion beyond the rivers of Cush which is Ethiopia and so I'm expecting a far flung dispersal of this people into all nations why not only for their sake but for the nations sake because the very first act of Jesus as judge is to call the Gentile nations before them and to judge them eternally on one question only what did you do for and with the least of these my brethren I have to say that as much solemnity as I'm able now to express that my high flying Steven Spielberg people and all of their wonderful originality and ability and wealth making and fame obtaining capability are going

to become in due season shorter time than you think the least of these my brethren they will be dragged and beleaguered beside themselves and be unkempt I still remember as a history teacher showing in my classroom in California March of Time film of the Warsaw Ghetto a Jewish woman with hair stringing down her face with one stocking up and one stocking down holding a dead child and walking in circles like a caged lioness mad utterly mad by the child that had died in her arms off the curb on the sidewalk off the curb and on in the most painful scene of a human devastation how long before that historically speaking was she mixing her tuna fish not with mayonnaise but with butter and maybe having a few Gentile servants to help but within a short time when the judgments of God fell in the

severity and the suddenness of that here's a woman with one stocking up and one stocking down you know that Jewish women when they arrived at Auschwitz took out their compact mirrors and their makeup and fixed themselves up thinking that they were going to some kind of detention camp until the war was over and virtually went right from the cattle cart into the oven and I believe that we're going to witness devastations that will eclipse that in these last days and in our generation and my statement is that these things are not inadvertent but must necessarily come because of the millennial destiny that God has for this nation because he's going to demonstrate himself because he's going to reveal his mercy when deserved and unexpected because he will reveal his power when no nation will

befriend them when the Lord himself by the exercise of his own sovereignty will raise them up and restore a remnant of them and bring them back to rebuild the cities that have been devastated and laid waste and that are in ruins these are not my words they are the words of Scripture repeated again and again and again and I've been reading them for years but you know what I used to say I always believed those were the cities of antiquity you know what I'm prepared to say tonight with full confidence it means Haifa, Tel Aviv Jerusalem Tiberias and every modern city of present Israel will be rebuilt as unto the Lord by a restored people when he shall return them after a last days devastation through the mercy that comes to them through the instrumentality of a church who will extend mercy

that they might obtain mercy even at the risk of their own lives the issue is not so much the issue is the survival of our faith when we have to live through a time like that and the most obvious question is where is God for those of us who are impervious offended by his judgment that will be the first question where is God, where is his faithfulness for his covenant people how does he allow them to suffer, haven't they suffered enough already, they were within grasp in 40 years 45 years, look at the miracle of modern Israel, they've transformed the wilderness, they're a high tech society they've resuscitated that liturgical language, they only needed a few more years and get through some of the difficulties and they would have made it why this devastation and expulsion again into the

nations how far will God go and the reason that we will be offended is because we have never allowed him to go that far with us we've never welcomed his devastations with us we have jealously protected and kept ourselves with a kind of minimal faith and relationship sufficient for our needs but short warning as they say in Pentecostal circles can I hear an amen this devastation of Israel is calculated for our devastation the devastation of all lesser faiths and to bring both Israel and the church into a qualitatively new one my wife says don't point remembering there the one thing that would have explained and given an understanding for these judgments and these catastrophes is that they are the consequence and the judgment for sin and that's the way that Israel in ancient times

understood its calamities but present Jewry cannot conceive of themselves as sinners justifying devastations that would come from God they lack two things and we reinforce them in their lack one is the knowledge of God and his jealousy for his glory and his holiness which necessarily touches the issue of sin it's remarkable how we don't see as God sees and as I hope to explain in some future session it's not only the sin of present Israel that God is judging but equally as well the sin of our fathers which we make our own when we have not severed ourselves from the sin of our fathers in a repentant way makes us heir to all of their sin and all of the judgments that are invoked by it.

God is waiting for a repentant acknowledgement not only the sins of present Israel but the sins of our fathers lest we suffer the judgment that though it be deferred must one day inevitably come and why should that be strange to Jewish thought because we will now go to the ends of the earth to find any Nazi criminal, let him be 80 years old let him be Peter Pottering on the edge of his grave and we'll give him a full trial and rack him up one side and down the other and get the last ounce of justice for his crimes however long deferred we feel that such justice is required how will we stand before God when he says oh then how about what is yet not requited from you and that though I have deferred in my judgments hoping that you would come to a place of repentance out of your experience of

calamity you failed to do so and when I gave you in the last time a holocaust you construed it as being the work of a single madman Hitler and did not at all understand that my hand was in it and therefore you shall be required yet to experience a greater judgment for which that judgment had it been received as

judgment might have saved you and if you'll receive finally my ultimate judgments you'll be saved an eternal judgment which would have come without remedy you and your saints we don't understand the glory of God the millennial destiny of Israel and the church we don't understand the sense of God we don't understand sin and therefore we will be bewildered and offended when these things must necessarily come the very failure to interpret catastrophe as judgment invites future

catastrophe but there has not been a church willing or able to interpret for Israel the meaning of its own history we have too readily agreed with Israel and chose to see ourselves as being at fault it was the failure of the church and certainly there is plenty of reason to acknowledge failure but we have not understood these judgments as God would have had them to be seen because we did not see as God is and yet the remarkable thing is that unless we understand the judgments of God and agree with them and even to some degree proclaim them and speak them not be out of the same mouth able to speak the word of hope and life to Israel that will restore it God reserved for the great prophets of exile and judgment the privilege of speaking and prophesying also the day of their restoration and

their return and that kind of prophecy for us will not just be the information about it but the fact of it a word that will establish and create it out of our own mouths so I'm just quoting now from a source that I have been studying where he talks about one is pushed to realize that religious belief cannot simply draw on the traditions of the past but must be ready to resynthesize them creatively and faithfully in order to say yes to a present that is disturbing and a future which is problematic and I see this as the whole issue of the faith of the church of the last days can we come through into a dimension of faith of a dynamic a radical quality of faith a resynthesizing of things not that were wrong but were shallow and investing them with a depth of understanding and authority and

power that enables us to say yes to the things that are disturbing and to a future which is problematic the issue of Israel is the issue of the church but the church of an ultimate kind we cannot institutionalize any normative single perceived pattern of how God works in history for to say how God works is to say who God is we think that we can define God or that we can explain God that is not his explanation we're talking about another God so events themselves will set before us the test of understanding God as he in fact must be understood and loved and honored and served the severity of God will require us to a whole new depth of understanding about him and when his mercies come to fill out the whole magnitude of God's being we will have a faith that makes us capable of being for him a

mouth that saves this was the task that Jeremiah and Ezekiel had they were faced with new conditions, new events, new crises, terrifying future judgments, devastation expulsion, exile but because they were authentic prophetic men and not false prophets who were willing to give a shallow false but to speak the word of the Lord uncompromising God gave them revelation and understanding that the judgment was only a preliminary to restoration and to return we're going to see that one last time before human history concludes it's a vision that will sustain us until the day of eternity, the vision of God as he in fact is where man cannot define him and we have not really submitted to him as Lord until we have submitted to him as that kind the God who performs strange works the God who will

judge, the God who will be severe before he will be merciful if we have some saccharine notion of God that is warm for our own heart but is less than what God is in himself, we will not only be offended by God as he in fact is but might find ourselves alienated from him or not in a place to be an instrument for him in the effecting of these last days things that is unto him as glory forever well maybe that's as far as I can go in a first night are we willing for the tensions of knowing God as he deserves to be known or do we want a

comfortable faith that is smug and complacent that has been satisfactory for our purposes but will not stand for his purposes in these last days requirements that's already a kind of I think it's a kind of a dying to hear me but it's only the beginning of the

kinds of deaths that will eventuate in our resurrection faith that cannot be offended not only cannot be offended by God but cannot be offended by Jews people will be very offensive, very abrasive when they come upon us in their last days extremity, utterly disoriented unkempt, undone unable to conceal their long standing disdain for Gentiles and finding fault with our hospitality which we are extending to their refuge at the risk of our own lives when if there's anything in us that is yet alive to being offended it will be touched and if we register offense and we show them only a religious demeanor that was just wanting to be dutiful and religious we will have failed in the whole point of God's last days strategy of scattering Israel through the nations in their final extremity that

they might find refuge in a time of flight by those who have anticipated and prepared to receive them and to bear them in all of their derangement because the love that will be exhibited is not some kind of saccharine schmaltzy affection for Israel in the distorted image that we have of Israel and of Jews that titillates our soul but Jews as they in fact really are in their most base and bereft condition because we have met and have come to know God as He really is in His ultimate and sublime condition and that knowledge will fit us to show them His face in that extremity unto believing and so the redeemed of the Lord shall return and mourning and dying shall flee away because in the midst of their extremity a revelation had come to them of their God in the last place that they had ever

expected to find it in the face of Gentiles by whose faces they have met God face to face because they have seen the magnanimity and the mercy and the graciousness of God and Gentiles willing to extend themselves unto death who can bear every offense and not be offended there's a brother in this room tonight who was offended some years ago when a Jewish bum was picked up off the road in Minnesota, a hitchhiker in stinking rags and brought to us because we're Ben Israel I was away and I heard the report later you can check with him if I'm in any way exaggerating this, I've never forgot it and I repeat it frequently, this nothing destitute hobo, no Jewish was shown a place to sleep and some food was obtained for him and before the Jewish brother who had received him could turn on his heel

and bid him goodnight, this decrepit character began to complain, the food wasn't good enough and the hospitality was not good enough and this quiet error who was so well ordered and never expresses any kind of turbulence or emotion or can be bent out of shape felt something rising up out of the depths of him that was an astonishment, I think it's called murder laughter laughter laughter you're laughing saints and rightly I want to say I believe this with all my heart God is putting a scenario before us, it's already in motion, that's why we are in Minnesota and not Phoenix or West Palm Beach or Fort Lauderdale 20 years ago when my foot came down on that property God said end time teaching center community refuge and there are people in this room who have exactly that calling and know

what I'm talking about, but it's going to be more than having bagels in the freezer laughter it's going to be extending ourselves unto death with people who are going to be in such a fit and mood who have been radically and suddenly uprooted from their security and lifestyle and thrust out into the wilderness and be hated and pursued in a complete collapse of every hope they had in America as somehow being their paradise and looking at your gentile faces and seeing in your face the face of the enemy who is in pursuit of them and yet no matter how they test you and probe you and don't we have an uncanny way to do that and haven't we done that historically to the church in all ages and haven't the greatest giants of the faith

failed that test including Martin Luther who invited rabbis to

his home and he was going to show them the messianic meaning of the prophets and they would be saved and come into the evangelical faith and these stubborn rabbis refused and came up with such cunning alternatives to what is the evident literal meaning of those verses that Luther was beside himself and was thereafter vexed with that people and came to a place of relentless hatred against them so also Chrysostom the golden mouth orator of the apostolic church many of the greatest giants of the church have failed the test that came to them through the Jew of a wonderful uncanny facility an intuitive unconscious mechanism of rubbing you raw even when we're saved and filled with the spirit what will you do with these there's a crisis of historical proportion in a single moment of time that we

cannot afford to miss for God says in Ezekiel 20 I will meet with them face to face in the wilderness of the nations and there I will plead with them and there I will bring them bond of my covenant under the rod of my authority that they might return as the redeemed of the Lord to Zion though they did not leave Zion in that condition they'll come back with singing and with joy upon their heads everlasting joy shall be upon their heads for in the midst of their duress of the ultimate crisis of their Jewish history they found him whom can know his life eternal let's pray for this great drama which we are not only invited to have part but the critical and the key part where they shall not return at all so Lord I just thank you amen I don't know that I can ever remember speaking as bluntly as

this pulling out all the stops so to speak not just doling it out in measure wondering whether the hearers can bear it or understand it but letting go because I believe that the hour requires it and that indeed the crisis of Israel is upon us and it shall not lessen and it shall not be reserved for those that are merely in the land but in Brooklyn and as an Israeli brother told me this morning there were signs at the Arizona State University death to the Jews right in the streets of Phoenix Arizona in February of 1994 and it's only the faintest information of things to come Lord precious God I'm asking the work of your spirit you said more than this people can contain and consider in one night I'm asking by your spirit to put into their spirit something of the solemnity and the truth of

this the great drama to which we are called church of the last days one that we would not have sought for ourselves we would have been happy just to have planted trees in Israel and to chuck some Jew under the chin and give a little slap on the back but this to be a prophetic people an oracular people whose word constitutes an event that can raise a nation from the dead or they'll not be raised Lord bless us and continue on with us and bring us all the way through in the understanding that you have a portion for us in these days may we come of age in the hearing of the word and to whatever degree that the night was prophetic let it be not just informative or even inspirational or challenging but let it be the event that works something in the era that was not there before the word came

even resurrection even the jealousy for the glory of God even the willingness to suffer to be part of a church that can be one as you are one and whose word therefore can go forth in unmitigated power to the raising of the dead Lord I'm asking for an event we need an event the hour is late let this word be that word that one day not long from now a word will be called for from us that we can speak that will save a nation who is cut off without hope and dry bones thank you for this mystery and for being called to it grant every grace my God as we show ourselves willing to thank you and give you the praise for these very privileged days in Jesus name Amen Oh Oh

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