

Ger-10 the Principalities and Powers of Darkness

by Art Katz

Art Katz emphasizes the urgent need for the church to restore apostolic truth and confront the spiritual forces of darkness in society.

Duration: 1:08:26

Scripture: Matthew 27:40, Mark 15:39, Ephesians 3:10

Topics: "Powers of Darkness"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of understanding the true wisdom exhibited by Jesus on the cross. He highlights how Jesus forgave those who were crucifying him, even though they were responsible for his death. The speaker also challenges the audience to move away from their ego-centrism and focus on God's eternal purpose for the church. He calls for a repentant acknowledgement that the church should not be driven by personal preferences, but rather by God's perspective. The sermon emphasizes the need for the church to have the determination, endurance, and fortitude to wrestle with the moral battles of life and fulfill God's purpose.

Transcript

I'm so happy to be able to stand up so that I can ask you if I can take my jacket off. How about my tie? Shall we give the speaker utter freedom? I want to invite you men also to get comfortable. Hallelujah.

We have a work before us in these days of a remarkable magnitude, namely the restoration of apostolic truth. The bringing again of lost dimensions to the understanding of the church, profoundly overdue and for which no man in himself is capable. So, in these two nights, last night and tonight, I had the same task.

Last night the mystery of the restoration of Israel through the church and tonight the principalities and the powers of the air. And both themes are co-joined. As you'll have the capacity for the one, you'll have the capacity for the other.

That both have been lost to the church is the statement of our unhappy condition. I was not commending Israel for the sentimental interest of the saints. This is beyond sentiment.

This is an apostolic perception of the place of Israel in the purposes of God. Might even offend our sentimental sensibilities. But the issue is as much for our sake as for theirs.

So, I hope I have your sympathy tonight because last night also I came loaded with papers and notes and outlines and when the hour to speak had struck, my eyes failed me even as it's happening now. As if to say, it's not by such a means that these mysteries are going to be communicated. Only the Lord, the head over his own church, will wash us by the water of the word that he will give, will radically adjust our mentalities and restore the things that have been lost.

It's not an exaggeration to use the word work, it's a work which only he can perform. So, as we drove up tonight, we were singing in the car. Great is thy faithfulness.

Great is thy faithfulness. Morning by morning, new mercies I see. All that I have, his great hand hath provided.

Great is his faithfulness. O Lord, unto me. So Lord, we make that our prayer even now.

Only by your faithfulness. Only by the life that comes from above. And from within.

Having this treasure in our earthen vessels. Lord, as the high priest and the apostle of our confession. We who have a heavenly calling.

A privileged brethren. Address us from this night on. With a new kind of solemnity and seriousness.

As if you were speaking to sons and daughters. Who do not need to be babied. To a church that is coming of age.

And indeed will be made mature even by your word. In these days. A word that no man can bring by his own ability.

Nor any church fulfill by its ability. Lord, we're in this together. And who is sufficient for these things? How long have you waited to hear us cry that word? But we are embarrassed tonight.

Our Christianity has been so safe, so timid, so predictable. So conventional, so respectable. That when have we had to say that? We have all lived in a Christianity that we can perform.

But it has not turned the world upside down. Nor has it made jealous your people Israel. And this much we understand even from the beginning.

That that church that is equipped to confront the principalities and the powers of the air. Over its own cities and nation. Will by that same qualification move Israel to jealousy.

It's one and the same thing. So Lord, address us. Have mercy on the servant that you love.

Whom you've taken by surprise by the number of people who are here. Who thought that we would have a casual beginning tonight with about 20 people. But you know who's here.

Speak now. Great Alpha and Omega. Give us the beginning my God that is in your heart of wisdom.

That you might bring us to the conclusion of these days. That is an Omega conclusion. And that will require much from us.

For we're asking much. We thank you for this. A privileged people.

Speak now. For thy servants hear. In Jesus name we pray.

Amen. So if anybody wants to leave now is the time. I'm really deadly serious.

There might be some who wish they had left earlier at Lausanne. Before the Lord had brought us down on our knees before him. In an utter surrender to his demand.

The true speakings of God are becoming more and more expensive. And I'm not talking about the collection box. And frankly I'm happy that such an hour has arrived.

Would to God it had always been this expensive. The Lord would have had a glorious church before now. So what do you know about the principalities and powers of the air? What should we know? Isn't it some antique aspect of Paul's rabbinical Judaic upbringing? A kind of idle curiosity for us.

I mean how relevant is such a subject in this modern age? Some reference to some invisible spirit realm that broods in the air over the nations. I'll tell you that the theologians have not taken Paul seriously. Or the church in general.

Much to the detriment of the church. And to the victimization of the world and the nations. As we Americans like to say this is where the action is.

And that church that will not recognize that fact and fight at that level dooms itself to futility. Though it may continue to conduct services endlessly. A futility as it pertains to the purposes of God.

And the church that will not embrace his purposes however happy their services is not the church. Certainly not an apostolic church. And you will excuse my simplicity and naivety.

If it's not apostolic neither is it the church. Let's look at a verse in Ephesians chapter 2. Verse 1 and 2. Did you read that verse? Yes. Here is one of Paul's few references to the powers of the air.

A phrase whose very nature offends our modern mentality. It's contrary to the scientific and rational and empirical spirit of our age. Because it refers to an invisible realm.

So perhaps this is just a kind of biblical mode of speaking rather than a statement of some very earnest and literal reality. And so has the church dismissed these references. All of the brilliant German theologians.

Even the Swiss ones. Karl Bach for example. Until the Second World War.

Then they were willing to consider. Perhaps we were hasty in dismissing this as Paul's mythologizing that this was some kind of Hebraicism or some element out of his rabbinical and Judaic past. This Jewish apocalyptic angelology.

World War II changed everything. Why? Because for the first time in modern history the principalities and the powers of the air that had up to that time been content merely to adversely influence nations had now taken one captive. The principalities and the powers of the air that had up to that time been content merely to adversely influence nations had now taken one captive.

The result was almost the total extermination of my Jewish people and the obliteration of Western civilization. We had a demonstration of its deadly power We had a demonstration of its deadly power and

its murderous nature and wisdom and if it could happen in Deutschland and if it could happen in Deutschland in the land of Goethe and Schiller and Fichte and Hegel in the land of Goethe, Schiller and Fichte and Hegel Schopenhauer and Mozart and Beethoven and so on What about Switzerland? What about the USA? What about the USA? Where was the church at that time? Totally powerless Inept Incapable even of discerning the nature of the phenomenon Let alone being able to counter-attack it In fact, I think it's safe to say that the very absence of a vital and apostolic Christianity in Germany the failure to see the full realization of the Reformation and the bloody extermination of that radical Reformation wing that might have assured it, the Anabaptists created a spiritual vacuum into which these demonic powers came And what began in the basement of a beer hall with a bunch of punks and homosexuals and drifters and weirdos, occultists, scum, took over the very apparatus of the whole of the state and of society. There is a very expensive price to pay in the absence of the apostolic reality of true church.

And don't you cluck your tongues at the Germans. But go from here to that spitzer place and watch the same phenomenon at its inception. Powers of darkness moving with complete sway, totally unchecked, bringing their victims into hell without any resistance.

I can't get the sight out of my memory when we went here a couple of nights ago and watched these kids with the needles in their arms in a public place, in a park by the chief church of the reform movement, I think. They were like pin cushions every two hours. And when they could not find the vein in their arm, they rolled up their pants.

I saw one man holding up a mirror for a young girl that she could find the vein in her neck that she could use. God will put the indictment for that at the door of the church. I don't want to spend too much time on this.

But you cannot understand the phenomenon of Nazism without understanding the powers of the air. And how many of its leaders were disillusioned idealists and spiritualists, men who were actually spiritually questing for something, disenchanted and bored with middle-class burglary success, wanting some kind of deep engagement of their souls and spirits, and not being able to find it in a conventional Protestant Catholic society, moved into the forms of occultism that later became Nazism itself. It's the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air.

The spirit who now works in the Sons of Disobedience, now works, working tonight in Sons of Disobedience, in this very city, in this reformed land, and over the face of the earth. It's now working. I marvel at the faith of God.

He has put all his eggs in one basket, his whole confidence and hope for the redemption of his creation, that is now being so desecrated by these powers and blasphemed and ruined, rests exclusively with the church. No other agency, no other institution can understand this spirit realm, let alone combat it. But the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but spiritual.

And only a spiritual people can wield them. Let's turn to chapter 6 of the same book of Ephesians. Be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might, Paul tells us, verse 10.

If there's not that possibility for me tonight, or for us in the calling which is ours in God, we of all people are most to be pitied. In fact, if we are not willing to be made weak, and to know what it means to experience infirmity, where if God be not God, we perish. We will never know the power of his might.

And that's why we have not known it. Especially being Swiss, or Jewish, we like to have the control of the situation. And have the ability to handle what is before us.

On the basis of our prowess, our expertise, our ability, our strength. Anything other than that is a humiliation. To be schwach, weak, foolish.

And that's why God is not going to allow our present Israel to succeed. However impressive a show it made. And came within an inch of succeeding.

Other nations have taken 2,000 years. We Jews only need 40. To resuscitate a dead language.

To establish our own civilization. Become the third or fourth greatest military power on the earth. We almost succeeded.

On the basis of Jewish expertise. And ability to form an Israel. Which is not the Israel of God.

Because it does not glorify him. If we're going to know the power of his might. We will have to know what it means to be weak.

And to welcome it. And to suffer the humiliation of it. As I'm willing to do before you tonight.

Who thought I was going to get off easy with just a small little audience. In a kind of a casual way we would have made it through the evening. But I walk into a full room.

And bang the time has come. It's time to begin. In a serious way.

We cannot misspend the occasion. Who is sufficient for these things? And who of you is deceived to think that if there's any authority or power or clarity coming from me. That it's my own virtue.

Don't be deceived by appearances. If you could feel the deep exhaustion that is in my body. And the dullness of my mind.

And not knowing humanly how to begin. Or what to continue or conclude. You'd go to bed.

We're going to have to know the rest of God. We're going to have to restore the Shabbat of God. And not just for Samstag.

But every day needs to be lived out of that rest. Ceasing from ourselves. Our own ability religiously speaking.

Which may impress us. And may impress others. But you know what the powers of the air say about it? Jesus we know and Paul we know.

But who are you? They're only required to recognize the power of his might. To those who have voided their own natural strength and ability. So let us put on the whole armor of God.

That we might stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood. But against principalities and powers against the rulers of the darkness of this age.

Against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Not the same heaven that our God occupies. But a lesser strata.

That is over the earth in the atmosphere of the earth. Which defies our scientific analysis. And yet we use the phrase there's something in the air.

Anyone who has ever crossed borders into East Germany or Czechoslovakia knows what I'm talking about. Or come into Egypt or an Islamic country. There's something in the air.

And we can feel it just as we cross a border. Because there's a particular prince over that locality. With a whole hierarchical demonic order.

Related to the history of that place. That exudes such an uncomfortable presence that it can be felt. We're not speaking about an imaginary thing.

But a real. And God is trusting that we are going to unseat those powers. Who are tyrannizing entire races and nations of men.

Unaware of the demonic influence that is upon their life. Because it even cloaks itself in the institutions of society itself. Someone needs to blow the whistle.

And let the world know of the massive deception that is taking place. The spirit that still prevails in the world. Now.

Working in the sons of disobedience. Who are not even aware that they're being played upon. God has only one answer for this.

An apostolic church. That wrestles. We wrestle not against flesh and blood.

But we wrestle. We wrestle. Not some individual virtuoso.

It's either going to be we. Or a none at all. What a mandate we have.

That before we can even enter the combat. We have to come to a corporateness and an integration of life one with another. By which even that wrestling is made possible.

Which runs contrary to our nature. And our love of privacy. And comfort and convenience.

Which allows us to be Sunday Christians. With our impressive programs. And charismatic agendas.

But does not in one wit threaten the powers of the air. I almost want to say at the beginning. If you're not prepared to be a we.

Why bother to attend the balance of these nights? If you're not willing for a radical alteration of your lifestyle. By which we can indeed become a we. As against we now represent.

A collection of individualities. Who are willing to sit alongside each other for the purpose of a service. But not much more.

We the wrestling. And what shall we say about wrestling? It's not a polite activity. This is not Tischtennis.

However much I like the game. This is bloody. Sweaty.

Full of impolite grunts. This is more than just the issue of skill. However important skill is.

Even the issue of strength. But in the last analysis. Wrestling is an ultimate kind of combat.

In the last analysis the issue is moral rather than physical. Do we have the determination? The ability to endure. The determination not to lose.

The willingness to give everything that's required to obtain the victory. Do we have the grit? The stamina? The fortitude? The holy determination? Who are now so easily depressed. The air goes out of us so quickly.

I don't feel like going to the meeting. If the Lord says maybe somebody looked at us in the wrong way. Or they didn't greet us as we think we should be greeted.

And we're out of commission for a week. So emphatically. Sensitive.

Touchy. We wrestle. I'm almost willing to congratulate the Lord tonight for allowing the principalities and the powers of the air to exist.

That he has given us the mandate to Israel. That he gives us ultimate requirements. For they are given for our sake.

Or else we would be content with much less than the apostolic call of God. That unto him there should be glory in the church. Thank you Lord.

These two components the restoration of Israel and the principalities and the powers of the air are vitally necessary to the apostolic mindset of the world. The Lord did something at Lausanne. It was so glorious that the first tape was ruined.

But there came a time after we had gone down on our knees and said yes to the God who had called us to the ultimacy of this task to move in Israel to jealousy who has been so historically and justifiably turned off by anything that is called the church. That the only way that we could fulfill such a requirement is by our own transformation exactly the intention of God. And I watched it happen in a night.

As God will birth a nation in a day he birthed a church in a day in a night. Something happened to our faces. A new earnestness.

A deep high seriousness. The whole casual air of the church went out the window. We just seemed to be girding ourselves for our true calling.

The whole corporate atmosphere had changed in that moment. We had been made a people of God. By saying yes to an ultimate requirement.

Beyond any ability to fulfill in ourselves. Exactly the same with the powers of the air. Who is sufficient for these things? This is going to take more than just a formula in the name of Jesus.

This is more than even the issue of individual deliverance. In fact I'm willing to be foolish enough to say tonight that that might even be in some degree a deception allowed us by the devil. That we might think that the whole issue of demonic spirit is the issue of individual deliverance.

And miss the cosmic issue itself. Because we would like to be rid of something with just a phrase in the name of Jesus. But this requires much more.

A people who are themselves freed from the influence of the powers of the air. Who tyrannize entire nations by manipulation, by threat, by fear. Jesus made an open spectacle of them at the cross.

But he didn't altogether expunge them. Their power is broken but even in that condition in the ignorance of mankind about them they still continue to exert their terrible influence. But wherever there is a congregation of God's people who have been freed from that influence who are themselves a people without fear do not tremble for their security cannot be induced or seduced or enticed by ambition, by lust, by reward who do not live at the horizontal and lateral visible level of life.

But see the things that are invisible and eternal. And know that every good and perfect thing comes down from above from the Father of Lights in whom is no shadow of turning. And not from an employer.

Not from the state. Or the health or the security of the economy. A people who can suffer opposition even persecution and reproach because if they get serious about the powers of the air who will then have to say Jesus I know and Paul I know and the church at Zurich too then you can expect that you're going to experience a new quality of opposition and oppression and persecution that you've not known before.

The fact that we have not is to our shame and to our scandal.

That this should be absent from our experience as believers and that we should attribute it to the fact that we're not living behind the iron curtain not recognizing that the powers are just as effectual here as there and will express their fury here just as well as there when they see a people rise to a stature that threatens them a people who will have to come to the same place to which Jesus came to which the Anabaptists came and to all who have suffered for the faith in every age such a sublime and total confidence in the living God both his power and his sovereignty that we should walk through this world without fear the prince of this world comes but he has nothing in his power don't you know I have the power to crucify you or to release you Pontius Pilate said to Jesus come on, get

nervous be like every other man show your insecurity that shows the phoniness of your God talk and your professions about him that shows that you agree with our wisdom of what life is really all about and what undergirds reality taking care of number one self-survival self-preservation come on, get scared show that you're just a religious phony because we have you now in our power Jesus said you could do nothing against me except that we're given you from above but do you know what children often it is given from above and will you bear it then and drink that cup because I'm going to tell you now the whole point of this seminar that you'll hear at the end the thing that shall conclude what Jesus began and this conflict between the powers of light and darkness of what was expressed at the

cross of Christ Jesus when the total malignity of the powers of the air their hateful, spiteful, destructive and violent wisdom was ventilated without restraint on one who is completely defenseless in his weakness and what he exhibited then in ultimate extremity and trial was another wisdom another moral way that when that dumb gentile clod who was at the base of the cross, that centurion saw him die who had no religious qualification a trained murderer had seen one after another writhe on the cross crying out for their fleshly lives or spitting out curses watch this one die who yielded up the ghost lay not this sin to their judge forgiving those who were murdering him even those for whom he came bearing their mocking jeers and taunts come off the cross and we will believe you but he

could not he would not and when the centurion saw this who had no biblical framework of understanding whatever cried out involuntarily truly this is the son of God I wonder if we are not coming full circle and we

are being moved to a final demonstration of the same wisdom that was expressed at the cross through Christ that can only be expressed in ultimate and utter trial and by which the powers of the air were openly spoiled and made a spectacle but the completion of what he began remains with us by a demonstration of the same wisdom the same patience and suffering the same ability to forgive those who are tormenting us the same love for our enemies the willingness to bear suffering in the fulfillment of the eternal purposes of God isn't that what it says in Ephesians chapter 3 we'll end

with it now but we'll pick it up tomorrow the mystery of the eternal purpose in God Paul asks for a grace even to make it known that all might see what is the fellowship of the mystery in verse 9 he says for me was this grace given and I am experiencing a measure of that grace tonight to say as much as I have said requires grace this is not a lecture folks we're being called to an event in God a word that performs a work in them that hear it it takes grace to communicate what has been so long lost to God's people one can almost say willfully lost for we've had no stomach for apostolic reality for us charismatic would have been enough because we intuited well enough that apostolic reality requires an apostolic suffering it takes a grace to communicate this mystery what will it take to

fulfill it by the remnant church of Jesus Christ everywhere in the world God give us grace to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God and still greatly lost who created all things through Messiah Jesus through the intent that now or in order that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places my God what a mouthful no wonder they said Paul is mad he's not fit to live they threw dirt on their heads and found that they would not eat or drink until he would be killed this is apostolic madness or it is ultimate sanity one or the other that God has created all things the whole of creation, the cosmos the nations, it's societies, it's institutions

it's cultures the whole natural basis by which the earth can be populated and sustained not that the nations should glorify themselves thereby but to the intent in order that through the church why don't we just stop right there and fall on our faces without having to hear the rest of it we're suffering from a gross inferiority complex we have an inadequate sense of the church which is his glory of which he is the head that filleth all in all that he created all things that through the church my God forgive us that we thought it was an institution for our benefit to bring us a succession of Sunday services and give our children opportunity in the Sunday school and a place to get married and buried how do you like the service how many of you will be saying that when you leave tonight how

did you like it how did you like the speaker have you noticed what we do everything is measured in terms of how it affects us do we like it did we enjoy it when have we considered him and until we will we will have a sick church locked in its egocentrism did you like it did you enjoy it and if you don't you can always find another place another speaker, another congregation and we don't become the we that can wrestle may God give us an apostolic view which is to say things as God himself sees them the church as the eternal masterpiece of God not some institution that serves the purposes of men because God has created all things yes, look out the window and see the whole apparatus the panoply of society and civilization it's not for itself it's to bring an order and a provision in the

world to sustain the life of men that there might be a church that fulfills the eternal purpose of God that's what it says in verse 11 according to the eternal purpose which he accomplished in Christ Jesus and if we will not be occupied with his eternal purpose we'll have no consequence for the present that's the very nature of the church a peculiar organism whose principal passion is to fulfill an eternal purpose of God and

will be relevant in time to the degree that it does so and what is that eternal purpose for which reason he has created all things that through the church the manifold wisdom of God whatever that is might be demonstrated to the principalities and powers of men whoever they are and this is the eternal purpose of God I want to conclude tonight with just one prayer Lord

put eternity into our hearts grant us an eternal mindedness or we will be no earthly good now for the church cannot communicate the issues of eternity to its own generation how then is it the church Lord open our understanding open our hearts see our embarrassment our shame that we have lived so beneath your intention satisfied with so much less than your desire not at all occupied with eternity or your purposes for the church in it grant us a grace impart something right now Lord I'm making it a prayer however desperately we need instruction and this kind of teaching we need the event of God in our lives we need the sense of things that only you can give God forbid that the word eternity should be only a concept a sterile bloodless anemic term let it palpitate in our hearts as those who

are not waiting to die to occupy it but as those who are already present in it that enables us to walk through this world in another way immune to its seductions and its power seeing the things that are invisible the eternal weight of glory that makes the BMWs and the Mercedes pale and be eclipsed already a people freed from the powers of the air because they are out of the place of deception and into the realm of reality those who are no longer seduced by BMWs and Mercedes those who are no longer seduced by BMWs and Mercedes they are out of the realm of seduction and deception and into the realm where reality is where eternity is where the real issues are and the powers are terrified to see a people who have come to that place it's another wisdom may we demonstrate it to our own

generation as well as to these mocking usurping spirits who have made merchandise of men by stealing from them the sense of the things that are eternal and that lie beyond this life and make them to think that this life is the whole thing to be driven to pursue, to acquire, to obtain to think that it's all over at the grave only to shriek at the reality of an eternal destiny unremitting and irrevocable without remedy a hell only an apostolic church can give answer to our generation and fulfill the eternal purpose of God but it's going to take much are we willing? let's bow before the Lord who calls us to his eternal purpose you pray out of your seat you didn't come to be an idle spectator we are participants together in an event of God whose time has come transact something with the Lord

give him a repentant acknowledgment that you were satisfied with much less than his desire that you're the one who says I like, I like, I don't like, I like measuring everything in terms of how it affects you with an insufficient regard for his glory his honor, his name his purposes let's get earnest, folks our God is the God of truth and will only hear us and meet us on that ground you pray

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