

# God as a Factor in the Secular Affairs of Men?

by Art Katz

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of considering God's claim on the land of Israel and the consequences of ignoring God, highlighting the need for repentance and seeking God's counsel for peace and resolution.*

**Scripture:** Genesis 9:27, Genesis 12:3, Psalm 24:1, Proverbs 3:5, Isaiah 8:20, Isaiah 40:28

**Topics:** "God's Sovereignty", "Peace and Reconciliation"

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## Description

Art Katz emphasizes the necessity of recognizing God's role in the secular affairs of men, particularly in the context of the land of Israel, which is often debated without acknowledging divine authority. He argues that the exclusion of God from political discussions leads to insincerity and unresolved conflicts, suggesting that true peace can only be achieved through submission to God's will. Katz challenges the audience to confront their disregard for God, asserting that the current crises may stem from humanity's failure to seek divine guidance. He calls for repentance and a return to God, who alone can provide justice and reconciliation in a world fraught with division and violence. Ultimately, Katz insists that acknowledging God is essential for any meaningful resolution to the issues facing nations today.

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## Transcript

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I don't know if anyone has noticed lately, but God, so long restricted to mere Friday through Sunday religious acknowledgment, is threatening to become a factor in the more serious affairs of men where He is usually excluded. I have reference to the legitimizing of the claims for the land of Israel as being promised to the sons of Israel by the God of Israel. Doubtlessly nations have invoked God in behalf of their sundry causes from the Crusades to 'Manifest Destiny' to 'holy wars' against the infidel or the heretic.

The rational-secular temper of the contemporary world however has tended to inhibit these magisterial justifications for sanctioned violence in more recent times. Now, however, God has come full-stage in one of the thorniest issues of our time, the disposition of the land of Palestine as sanctioned by centuries old usage and possession as against its return to the people to whom it was ostensibly intended as the 'promised land' according to the God of the Bible. The fact that these biblical references are often

employed opportunistically by cynical and unbelieving men does not absolve us from its claim.

In a word, integrity compels us to consider what we would ordinarily impatiently dismiss as irrelevant and incompatible with our preoccupation with the weighty issues of men and nations, namely, God Himself! But which God? Is not Allah the designation for supreme deity as is Jehovah? Are there competing deities? Is not God one and His word one? Even if Mohammed is His final prophet, would God's testimony through him negate that of all the prophets who have preceded him (and who consistently refer to the last days restoration of the nation of Israel upon its divinely-mandated borders)?

If God be God, does it not make the political negotiations of men independent of Him puerile? Has He not spoken? How can we be ready to employ violence in pursuit of our claims if "the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof and the nations and those who dwell in them"(Psalm 24:1)? What have we gained for ourselves and our posterity if we, by force of arms, should succeed only to find ourselves in opposition to God? What would be the enjoyment of our spoils let alone its blessedness?

If we are not willing to open ourselves to these questions, to lay our suppositions and premises before the bar of truth, what hope for peace or resolution anywhere? What can be hoped for in the quality of life lived on property however self-righteously obtained if we are not willing to submit to truth at the foundation of all our being? If on the other hand, God is found to be a fiction, an exploitive device suited to the national, ethnic and cultural preferences of men, let us divest ourselves of the verbiage that clutters our debate and contentions and get to the naked issues of power.

Let us 'eat, drink and be merry (sic), for tomorrow we shall (surely) die!' Are we willing even to consider then that our present predicament may be related largely to the insincerity with which we have held the question of God? that the patent disregard of Him whether as Jehovah or Allah (as effectual atheists in our practical affairs no matter our professed 'belief') is in fact itself the cause of our paralyzing extremities, and that the ignored God (whose eternal verity we must one day soon embarrassedly face), is not too adverse in employing the crisis to turn our reluctant attention to Him who is, after all, the Creator?

What can be hoped for in sincerity with men first with the 'other' but then ultimately even with our own in view of our insincerity with God? Merely to employ Scriptural or Koranic references to make our 'case', prove our point, justify our position, is itself the deceit of man employing God. If we shall be so with Him, what shall we be with men? All political process is reduced necessarily condemned to sham. True peace is after all more than the absence of violence. However our interests be obtained in independence of God, what will be its legacy?

How long before the 'enemy' becomes internal and from within our own ranks when our own life is not predicated upon truth; when our own souls remain unresolved and conflicting battlefields, cesspools of hate and bitterness not assuaged by our 'gain'? Have we not come to a pitch in world events beyond secular solution? Have we come to realize that our insoluble dilemmas are themselves the consequence of the omission of God and His counsel from a mankind that prefers to isolate the secular from the sacred (lest our selfish interests be threatened)?

Is not the answer to our regional and global ills our repentance for so grievous and presumptuous a slight? By very definition, if God indeed is God, He alone is righteous and free from the subjective distortions of men and can therefore objectively adjudicate His own Creation with justice and equity. Better to hope in His solution, who can reconcile His own promises made to the patriarchs (and at the same time be compassionately mindful also of the legitimate needs of all the sons of men), than to submit its

exacerbating, humanly unresolvable issues to the vindictive passions and brute power of mere men.

That, historically and inevitably, reduces everything to desolation and ruin. In a word, have we not come full circle? Our backs are in the corner; we are compelled to hope in God! God at last, if He be God, is Himself the issue. Unbeknownst to themselves, the Japheth nations of the world await the restoration of the tent of Shem (Gen. 9:27) in our own return, as Semitic brethren, to sanity and truth found only in mutual submission to their one God and Father! The sin of that rejection is written in our inevitable willingness to have recourse to that violence that mars the image of God in man not only in the victim but also the perpetrator.

What will be the character of any nation so obtained or so perpetuated; what is its distinctive its purpose for being? It will have lost its soul irretrievably, it will be 'dead' even as it lives. Israel so established will become a parody of its intention to demonstrate to the Gentile world its presumed distinctive as a moral and ethical nation, and any relationship with the descendants of Abraham a fratricidal hell rather than the fraternal blessedness by which all the families of the earth should have been, and yet hopefully will be, blessed (Gen. 12:3).

In a word, "...should not a people seek their God? Should they seek the dead in behalf of the living? To the law [the whole counsel of God] and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isaiah 8:20). This was addressed to Israel in the midst of a political crisis of a national kind. The divine intruded into the real affairs of men through the prophetic exhortation. My contention is that that God is God still and desiring to be both heard and sought. May we repent of the arrogance of our indifference and turn to Him who can alone save us from the looming catastrophe which our historic rejection makes inevitable.

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