

God of the Nations - Part 2

by Art Katz

The sermon explores the profound implications of sonship, resurrection, and the character required to rule in God's kingdom, emphasizing humility and the restoration of Israel's role in governance.

Duration: 28:52

Scripture: Genesis 6:5-8, Genesis 9:1, Genesis 9:18-27, Exodus 3:14, Psalm 2:6, Romans 11:33

Topics: "Nations"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of understanding God's rule over his creation throughout redemption history. He refers to biblical events such as the flood and the story of Noah's sons to illustrate this point. The speaker also mentions his own personal experiences and the reaction he received when discussing this topic in Canada. He highlights the mystery and depth of this understanding, particularly in relation to the descendants of Shem and the calling of Abraham to bless all nations. The sermon concludes with a focus on the significance of resurrection and the authority given to the crucified and resurrected Jesus.

Transcript

What is the day in which God declares the decree, Thou art my son, and this day I have begotten you, and I have set you on the holy hill of Zion? What day is that? By the way, the day of his resurrection. As we read in Romans chapter 1, verse 4, the sonship has come through an obedience unto death, and the father, in the approval of that sacrifice, has exalted the son, not only to raise him from the death, but to give him a place on high, in rulership from the throne of heaven, and to set him in the time of Israel's return upon the holy hill of Zion. Thou art my son, your sonship is attested by your sacrifice, and my approval for resurrection is the qualification to rule for which I give you the nations as your inheritance.

If that's required for that son, what's required for the sons to which we are called? How shall we be fitted into the theocratic purposes of God, except also by the decree of a sacrifice of death, resurrection? And it's only in the resurrection reality that the governmental purposes of God are established. Who shall rule and reign with him but overcomers who count not their life as dear unto themselves? So the father was pleased by how Jesus's ministry commenced, by going down into a watery grave, in identification with a sinful nation. When he came up, the Holy Spirit, as a dove, came upon him that John the Baptist could recognize, this is the Messiah of Israel.

Though he's my cousin, I don't know him by anything natural, because God has said to me, you will recognize him when the Holy Spirit shall abide upon him, which is the statement of God and his approval of a son going down into death. It's kind of a paradigm for all sons. We have to ask the question, whether our baptism constituted that? Was it getting wet? Was it an ordinance? Was it a religious requirement? Something that people said we needed? Or was it a conscious bringing our humanity, not its worst, but its best, into the waters of death that we might be raised up into newness of life? Because only sons of an overcoming kind shall rule and reign with him.

The issue of government, the issue of rule is the issue of resurrection. And the issue of resurrection is the issue of death. I don't want to belabor that.

But here in the German commentator on this point, you are my son, I myself have begotten you, reveals itself as a creative word, one that originates a new existence. What's the new existence? King on the Holy Hill. The chosen king is drawn to the side of God.

He becomes the heir and representative of his rule. Thus, in the Old Testament, the king was not by nature son of God, nor did he enter the sphere by the natural things, but at the accession to his kingship, he was declared to be the son by the definitive will of the God of Israel. That's a mouthful.

This is not, this is my son, I declare the decree by any natural reckoning, but by a supernatural reckoning that issues from an obedience unto death and a resurrection from death. That is the qualification for the king and his rule. Here he speaks again about the significance of resurrection.

The message of the Old Testament now for the first time really shines forth because the crucified one is the resurrected one. To him has been given all authority in heaven and in earth. He's the son and heir.

He's the true son of the father. I can almost say a son of Shem, the true son of Shem. In Jesus Christ, the New Testament sees the king of God, who in the comprehensive sense has approached and fulfilled the kingdom of office as the anointed one of the Old Testament.

He's the true son given all authority in heaven. I wonder if that requires a death, that God can entrust his authority for the rule over creation to a son in whom there's no threat of taking to himself any self aggrandizement as politicians do. What may be a politician or a ruler who has not used his office for his own self aggrandizement? God is waiting for a son who is completely free of any prospect of taking advantage of his place of authority for his own self exaltation.

Jesus is that son and death is the testimony of any such impulse that would ever rise up out of his humanity. The resurrected one can be entrusted with the father's authority to rule. How then also those who shall rule and reign with him, which is the privilege of overcoming sons.

Jesus is the paradigm son. He's the pattern son, but we can examine his sonship as the key to rule as being also our own. It's a privilege to rule and reign with Christ.

Who will replace the fallen angelic powers who have been usurping their place in the heavenlies that God intended as an accompaniment to his governmental benevolence over the earth. The original purpose of those angels created by God was to aid and abet in his governance over creation. But what had they become in their rebellion? The gods of this age.

And instead of facilitating God's rule and turning the attention of men to himself and to worship, they become the gods of this world. Not only turning men away from the God who is God, but turning them to themselves. They should be worshiped in turn as the gods of this world.

They have to be ousted and cast out from their original place. This has got to do with the fullness of the Gentiles being come in, in many ways. A number, I believe, proportionate to the number of fallen angels who constitute the principalities and powers, occupying governmental places, but using them illicitly for their own self aggrandizement, even to the manipulation of nations.

When they are cast out, who will occupy those places of rule? Who will be in agreement with God and not opposed to God? And can rule in the character of God. Ruling is not just shuffling papers. It's not bureaucracy.

It's bringing the wisdom and the way of God to men. Can you picture what the millennium is? Israel restored to its governmental role as the locus of God's kingdom and going out to the Gentile nations, as well as receiving the representative of nations. And from the heavenly place, now, not just a realm of principalities and powers opposed to God, but sons who have been formed and been brought to maturity in this life to rule and reign from that place in concert with redeemed Israel.

No wonder that the trees will clap their hands. No wonder that nature itself, creation, groans and travails till now, waiting for the showing forth the manifestation of the sons of God. When we lose this context and still celebrate sonship, we're on the ground of deception.

And that's why the whole concept of sonship has fallen into a suspicious kind of elitism of men who think that they'll never see death. They'll never die, blah, blah, blah, blah. They have extracted the word and taken it out of the governmental context of God and the kingdom of God and celebrate it as a thing in itself, as being their own personal distinctive and looking upon others as being in Babylon, as if they are an elite.

How can you rule and reign with Christ being an elite having an elitist mentality? Because the rule of God has got to be in the character of God, selfless, humble, meek. Your king shall come to you lowly and meek. When he came down on the back of that ass upon which never men sat, they shouted hallelujah.

They shouted Hosanna for the coming of the king. What shall they shout for the kingdom that comes in the same character? If we're elitist or superior in our spirituality, we're ipso facto nullified as any candidates to rule and reign with him. Where is this character of the son formed and shaped? That we shall rule and reign with him, not as self aggrandizing hotshots who occupy an elitist place, but humbled by the privilege of ruling and reigning with him.

What is the parousia and the Lord's coming when we shall, as they say, be raptured but meeting the coming king and being with him forever and accompanying him to his place of honor and rule at Zion? That's why we need glorified bodies to greet him in the air, to accompany him to his, that's what the Greek word means, and to see him receive the honor due him who suffered and died in shame, now to occupy the role of king from the place where he was crucified. And thereby to rule and reign with him, ascending and descending upon the son of man. Remember when Jesus saw Nathanael, he said, you're impressed that I show you standing under the tree? I'll show you a greater thing, angels ascending and descending upon the son of man.

It's a shaded allusion to the consummation of the ages, that this is a greater thing. In fact, the Lord would not have gone too far to say, it's the greatest thing, that those who are taking off of dunkeeps shall sit with princes and be among the princes of my people. Those drug addicts and guys that were sexually deranged and immoral and in the world and out of prisons, the lowest, the scum, we all are that.

He has taken off of the dunkeep and made to sit with the princes of his people. The word prince is an indication of rule. Why did the young ruler come? What must I do to inherit life, to inherit eternal life, to enter the kingdom? He wasn't just talking about prolonged existence.

He wasn't just talking about endless life. He was talking about the privilege of participation in the kingdom of God forever. We have lost that Hebraic sense of what the destiny of our faith means.

And for that reason, we're unwilling now to submit to the conditions by which our character will be formed for that. Rule and reign is not something that we're going to magically obtain in the day of the Lord's appearing if we have not been progressively fitted and formed to rule in keeping with the character of God and bring the moral dimension of God the Semitic character of God into the Japheth nations because they have not seen the issue of sonship in the context of kingdom rule. They have divorced the issue of sonship that comes through death and resurrection that we might rule impartially and well with justice and righteousness and without any corruption that would come by the self-interest that has avoided the cross.

Now, where is the ultimate? Ooh, I'm really going off the gangplank now. Where does the ultimate crucifixion and ultimate death to the last vestiges of the subtlety of self take place that would have cast a shadow over our ability to rule righteously and well with Christ in keeping with his own character? When we will bow to enter the tent of Shem. The last thing that identifies the issue of Japheth rebellion and self-will that has characterized the nations from the time of the Tower of Babel and yet resides in most even Christian hearts is met at that place of ultimate humbling when we will bow in the place where we would least desire before a specific people who are the Semitic tent themselves transformed but we need to bow to enter.

And someone said to me last night talking about our class, how many of us have so bowed? Why do I say I'm going off the deep plank? Because I can't say it, I'll say it for the Lord. Because I'll tell you what, dear saints, I spent hours yesterday after our session and I picked every book out of my bookcase of commentaries on Genesis. I read the Anchor series on Genesis.

I pulled out Klaus Westermann, one of the great German authorities, Von Raad, another German authority, everything that I have access to. I read Karl Barth. I looked up the index of any reference in the Genesis 9 of the statement of Noah in blessing his sons that would give me some inkling of what this Tent of Shem meant.

You want to know something? Zero. Zero. By the greatest commentators of Scripture, non-compassment is blank.

And they acknowledge that, well, no one could really say. It's hard to say. There's an air here of mystery that no one seems to be able to understand.

So, kid cats, Brooklyn boy makes good. He's suggesting something of the kind that I spoke in Canada and I'm putting before you. This is ultimate mystery.

And there's something about my 73 years on this earth as a Jew, my 38 years in the church, and what happened, in fact, in Canada with, shall I almost say, the rage, the anger disproportionate to the event itself, suggesting that what was touched here lies too deep for words and even beyond the consciousness of those who exploded and reacted with that depth of vehemence and emotion, calling it Jewish. And so I'm suggesting that the cross, the death, has not had its final and deepest working. And it waits for this.

And not just for Gentiles, the Jews themselves, who are not Semitic by virtue of our birth, because Semitic is not ultimately a generic or racial or ethnic thing. It's the spiritual condition that this son himself attained by his own obedience to the father unto death, both in his baptism and in his crucifixion. And therefore, I have exalted you.

I've raised you up from the abysmal depths of the death to which you submitted yourself freely. And I have exalted you by giving you a name above every name. And to you, every knee shall bow and every mouth confess, I'm giving you a status and a stature and a name equal to my own.

Talk about the father deferring to the son. That very deferring is the revelation of the character of God. And I'm putting you on the Holy Hill of Zion.

I've declared the decree this day. Thou art my son, and I have set you on the Holy Hill of Zion and given you the nations as your inheritance. Remember the first statements that I read from both of my sources, that the church has lost this understanding, has romanticized, has spiritualized away the literal, specific, hard fact and truth that the whole of redemption history from the beginning, even the lamb slain from the foundations of the earth, is the issue of God's rule over his own creation.

That's what we see in the book of beginnings, Genesis. The flood, God's judgment, one family saved, three sons, a remarkable episode of a man getting drunk inadvertently, tasting for the first time the fruit of the vine and being taken advantage of by one son in particular to shame him. Maybe tomorrow I'll bring another source of the one book that I found that had some deep insight is not any of the classic theologians, but it's a man I've never heard of before.

And he suggests that this ham took delight in the embarrassment of his father's failure and told the other brothers sharing the gossip in a malicious way so as to denigrate and to demean the father although God says thou shalt honor thy father and thy mother. And so he could not induce the other brothers to share with him a taking advantage of the father in his fallenness, but they having something of the integrity of God himself, walked backwards with a cloak and draped it over the naked father and avoiding having to look upon him in that condition and therefore enjoyed the blessing spoken prophetically by the prophetic father Noah that the blessing for Japheth is that he would be enlarged. And indeed he has been as we can see in the history of nations.

But that's Shem. Now Reedward says and God bless and bless the God of Shem. Blessed be the Lord.

Verse 26. Here's the prophet. Well, it begins with 25.

Then he said, waking from his wine, waking from his drunkenness, cursed be Canaan, a servant of servants, he shall be to his brethren. And he said, blessed be the Lord, the God of Shem. Not blessed be Shem.

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Shem. And the word God there is different from the next sentence. And they came to be his servant.

May God enlarge Japheth and may he dwell in the tents of Shem. The word God in verse 27 is not the same as the word God in verse 26. Very interesting that the word God in 26 is Yahweh, Jehovah, the distinct God of Israel.

But the God of enlarging Japheth, may God enlarge. That is Elohim, the God of creation, the God of all mankind. So God uses one designation of himself in blessing Shem and another in blessing Japheth.

And that is not accidental. I tell you, dear saints, this is so deep. It's a mystery.

We're walking on eggshells not to offend against the Lord, but neither to ignore the Lord and miss something that is set at the very foundation of the whole Heilsgeschichte, of the whole salvation history of God, going back to this inadvertent episode of a man drunk and waking from it to curse and to bless. Blessing the God, what would you make of that? Why didn't he bless Shem directly? And many of the translations say, bless Shem. Why do other translations show that the blessing is bless the God, the Lord God of Shem? Because even the translators could not figure it out and thought that, how do you bless God? You bless Shem, but how do you bless God? And you want to hear my opinion? Yeah.

Yes. God is blessed when he is glorified by the fulfillment of his redemptive purpose through the election that he chooses out of his own freedom, a people, a place, a Zion, a nation, a tent. He's glorified.

He will be blessed by the fulfillment of the mystery of that which he has chosen and by which all nations shall be blessed when they shall be broken in their arrogance and self-sufficiency and independence and accede to the means by which God has provided in one place only and through one people only, that they might dwell in that tent of Shem and in dwelling, lose their Japheth character and become themselves a Semitic people with Shem. So blessing all the families of the earth. Started with Abraham, but it ends with all nations.

Oh, the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God who has been his counselor. You see why we couldn't sing it before? We didn't have the dimensions of the glory of God's intention and the specificity of his choosing because I am that I am and I will be who I will be and I will elect whom I will elect and I will have mercy whom I will have mercy. Eat your heart out.

You would have preferred Germans. You would have preferred Americans. Eat your heart out.

I have chosen Shem and I blessed him from the beginning because it says that it's implied in the language and the grammar of these verses that when they took the cloak and put it on their shoulders, it is singular and the Hebrew commentator says it's because Shem, the firstborn son initiated the action to which Japheth lent himself, but it was really Shem's design to honor the father by walking backwards and covering his nakedness. That's why he received the greater blessing and the greater honor. He'll not be enlarged in terms of commerce, trade, power, military might, but he will render a service to bless all the families of the earth.

But the great irony is that present day Israel is not Shem. Present day Israel is not Israel. It's yet Jacob.

And that's where the true sons of Shem, despite their ethnic origin, will reveal to Israel what its own calling is by making her jealous when they see in us what is their own call to be the Shem tent for the world. They have to hang on to our skirts before the nations will hang on to theirs. It's a foreshadowing and a completion.

Zechariah ends with the Feast of Tabernacles and all nations coming up to obey it and also implying clearly a curse on those nations that are yet reluctant and unwilling to break into Baal. They don't want to enter, to come up to the Feast of Tabernacles, to Jerusalem, not only to acknowledge God, but the people whom he has redeemed is to bring upon yourself a curse. The fact that that threat is made indicates how deep is the intransigence in Gentile hearts, even after Israel's restoration, yet to acknowledge it and to come up.

They will not. They're chafed. There's something in their gut, in the very depths of their humanity that will not accede to God's things.

You can't tell you how deep and how stubborn that is and how it resides yet in the church. And we're not even conscious of it until the issue is put before us about our own point of entry. Isn't it interesting that Orthodox Jews to avoid the use of the word God, use the word Hashem, the name.

What is the tenth of Shem? It's the tenth of God. It's the character of God. Shall we break and pray a little bit? I think I can easily take another session tomorrow.

I have hardly got into some of the riches of the things in which the Lord had my notice this morning. But I think he's done good groundwork to prepare us. Let's thank the Lord and apologize for the church and for ourselves of having idealized these scriptures, romanticized them, having lost the rudimentary intention of God in his salvation history is the rule of his own creation.

That men will not study war. If they'll not study it, they'll not practice it. Right now they have 13, 12, 11, 10, 11, 12, 13-year-old kids bearing arms in Africa and in other nations.

And in Afghanistan, everything is death. So Lord, when we say thy kingdom come, we say it with a new comprehension. Your kingdom is your rule.

And we pray my God for its soon coming. And you're waiting both for Israel and for the church. You're contained in the heavens.

Waiting for the restoration of all things spoken about us since the world began. We bless you Lord. Help us Lord.

Give us an understanding. Open up considerations my God that have been lost to us. Bring us to the myth and grit of redemptive history and the mystery spoken by Noah and carried on through the descendants of Shem out of which Abraham came, who was called out of his nation to become a new nation and to bless all the nations of the earth.

So my God, we bless you. Let nothing fall to the ground my God. Let it find a deep place in our hearts and our understanding.

Continue on with us Lord if there's more yet to say, to understand and to be defined. Help us to be the sons my God who shall rule and reign with you in that kingdom. God forbid there should be anything that keeps us from that overcoming.

Thank you Lord. Find us out and bring us my God to an ultimate place of submission and breaking even in the place that you've designated. And we thank and give you praise for your so great wisdom and your so great way.

In Jesus name.

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