

In the Year of King Uzziah's Death, I Saw the Lord

by Art Katz

The sermon emphasizes the importance of seeing the Lord in His sovereignty and supremacy, which can only be done through the death of our false expectations and the disillusionment that follows.

Scripture: Isaiah 6:1, Luke 24:13

Topics: "Seeing God", "Disillusionment"

Description

Art Katz emphasizes the transformative power of disillusionment in his sermon 'In the Year of King Uzziah's Death, I Saw the Lord.' He draws parallels between the death of King Uzziah and the necessity of experiencing loss to truly see and understand God's sovereignty and holiness. Just as the disciples on the road to Emmaus had their eyes opened after a profound loss, believers today must confront their own 'Uzziahs' to gain a clearer vision of the Lord. Katz argues that the collapse of false expectations can lead to a deeper faith and a more authentic relationship with God, ultimately preparing the Church to fulfill its role in Israel's restoration. He challenges listeners to embrace the reality of God's plans, even when they involve painful transitions.

Transcript

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In his commentary on this text (July 13, My Utmost for His Highest), Oswald Chambers writes:

Over and over again God has to remove our friends in order to bring Himself in their place, and that is where we faint and get discouraged. In the year that the one who stood to me for all that God was, died; I gave up everything? Became ill? Got disheartened? Or I saw the Lord?

Really saw Him in a way that He was not known before, nor could have been known. In the way that the two disciples on the road to Emmaus could not have known until their 'King Uzziah' died whom they thought would have restored the glory of Israel! (See Luke 24:13-35). Even in His resurrection their eyes

were still 'holden' (prevented Moffatt) until His nail-pierced hands broke the bread and handed it to them (Amplified Bible)!

It seems like a law of disillusionment which is proportionate to the extent of our unreality. The present state of Israel, like the "prophet mighty in word and deed," like King Uzziah himself, is God-given, but given in order to be taken away! Until then as Chambers says, "I see along the lines of my prejudice only; I need the surgical operation of external events [to affect] an internal purification." Therefore, in my opinion, the soon-coming collapse of the present state of Israel might be God's greatest provision for the reality of the church itself. For it will reveal the Lord anew, "high and lifted up," but only enthroned in that demise as a recognized judgment and timed sovereignty! If, like the Emmaus disciples over the crucifixion of Jesus, we look upon this future event as an unhappy, lamentable and perhaps preventable mishap, then our eyes are still beholden and our faces downcast.

Israel's necessary demise, like that of the Lord Himself, is a sacrifice necessary to bring out of the death of false expectancy the very reality that enables the Church to be the salvific agent of Israel's ultimate restoration! It was out of the suffered anguish of failed expectancy that the early Church had its true birth in a hope that far exceeded what it had entertained so long as their Master was alive. Cleopas' retort to Jesus on the road to Emmaus, "Are you only a stranger [a recently arrived visitor] in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass in these days?" is predicated on the assumption that one's physical proximity to events provides a superior knowledge of their meaning. It is not unlike that same presumption held by believers living in the land of Israel today who maintain that they are the only ones who understand Israel's prophetic future.

Perhaps nothing less than a resurrection, out of the death of the present state, will save us from the same rebuke of the Lord: "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken. Ought not [the nation] to have suffered these things and to enter into [its] glory?" Is this the "external event" that alone affects the "internal purification"? And what can we be really to the Jew in their own failed expectancy except that we first experience it?

There is an "efficacy of disillusionment" for marriages, for fellowships, indeed, for disappointment with the church itself that we sorely need. We had thought a fellowship would have been 'ideal'--and perhaps have embarked in the search for yet another one-not recognizing the 'King Uzziah' given in order to die. It is seeing the Lord's sovereignty, the supremacy of His Lordship in a death of a 'king' that enables us to glimpse Him as Holy, Holy, Holy. Only then are our condemnatory and critical lips ready to be purged as unclean, that we might speak a saving word for the people Israel. It is the failure to see the Lord High and lifted up that would have satisfied us with the success of the present state of Israel. We have mindlessly assumed that we have the Lord's agreement, though it fall short of His glory. Do we dare see the Lord as He in fact really is? And can that seeing be ours without there first being the death of the 'Uzziah' "who stood for us all that [we thought] God was"?

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