

K-065 the Suffering Before the Glory

by Art Katz

Art Katz's sermon explores the necessity of suffering and death in the prophetic ministry, emphasizing the relationship between Israel and the Church and the importance of mercy and seeing as God sees.

Duration: 1:26:38

Topics: "Suffering"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of identifying with God's perspective before speaking or taking action. He uses the example of the prophet in the book of Ezekiel and relates it to his own experience in Yugoslavia. The speaker highlights the danger of being driven by the impulse to do good without seeking God's intention. He emphasizes the need for discipline and a jealousy for God's glory in order to discern the perfect timing and way to act. The sermon also touches on the concept of suffering and how it is connected to obtaining glory.

Transcript

As you invite us to sift your Word, my God, and to probe and plumb the depths of it, and to find its application. Thank you for this privilege, Lord. It's something uncommon in our church experience.

And we ask such a grace by your presence, through the operation of your Spirit, to do it. To sift, to refine, to examine, to turn over, to bring to the light the full amplification, my God, of your Word. Thank you for that.

May we even receive something more than the examination of the Word today, but that certain skills, certain modes of thought and approach to your Word will be engendered in us, that we will carry as a permanent mode of living and being hereafter. That you'll make us more apt students of your Word because of the facility that you'll give us today to open, to explore, and to bring up, my God, the depths of it. Thank you, Lord, for our precious privilege and your Spirit, without which it would be vain.

Receive our gratitude, my God, as we commence today in the holy name of Jesus. Amen. Last night you got the outline of the message, the bare bones, if you'll excuse the pun.

And this morning I want to read a statement that I have written, and from which we will have a springboard to comment and examine this message. It was written because of the misunderstanding and the backlash that had come in the sharing of that message in Israel. Just as a prophetic glimpse of something, the visit

to Israel that preceded the visit in which this message was spoken seven times, and not to be symbolical, but seven is a symbolic number of completion, that in the visit to Israel two years ago, I've not been back since, the Lord only gave me one message, it was Ezekiel 37, spoken seven times in the land, three times in Jerusalem, with a tremendous backlash by people who have known me 15 to 20 years or more.

And when I got back and began to realize, and even was surprised by the backlash and the anger that this word had provoked, I felt that I needed to write something and send it back to those in Jerusalem that were still disturbed and had not perhaps understood my point. And so that's what I have before me now. Going over the message and the underlining of the key points so it should not be misunderstood.

I think it will be helpful for us. So, Ezekiel 37, the necessary death and resurrection of Israel, underlined the word necessary. As with the prophetic son of man of this dread and glorious chapter, so also are we, the prophetic people of God, required to be set down in the midst of a valley full of dry bones.

Here one is required to dismiss all wishful thinking of things as we would like them to be, and to consider them as they in fact are. Which is to say, as God himself sees them, indeed as they must be seen, or we later forfeit any prophetic use by which these bones can be brought back to life again. For to prophesy, that is, to be as God's mouth, to speak the creative life-giving word, requires an identification with God that is total, as against a begrudging condescension to a necessary obedience.

Be encouraged that this is being duplicated today, and by tomorrow you'll have a copy, or even this afternoon, of what we're now reviewing. So we'll go paragraph by paragraph, puts a premium upon you to hear something, and you can stop me at any point, we'll go over what's being said, because I think that these are really concise statements that go over the message given last night, and underline it for our consideration. So the beginning of that chapter, the prophet being brought down, is not just a little bit of poetry, it's a pivotal key point.

There's no speaking except that it first begins with an identification with God in the thing as it is that he himself sees it. To speak as he speaks requires first a seeing as he sees, and that implies a going down, a coming out of some other kind of a view to which we are all disposed, that is more amenable to the flesh, that is not as painful to consider, more the expression of a wishful thinking of something as we hope it to be. Sometimes in the speaking of this I give this illustration, you may have heard it from me, an episode I'll never forget, sitting with my brother Lenny in Brooklyn in a bar, watching the last Joe Lewis fight with an up-and-coming heavyweight from Massachusetts by the name of Rocky Marciano.

It was a pathetic fiasco. Lewis should have retired in dignity rather than been brought out of his retirement to fight this bull, and he was just being lambasted, he was being knocked from pillar to post, you almost had to turn your head away, it was just painful to see. But there came one little flurry, I don't remember in what round, where Lewis pawed at his opponent and my brother, to my utter astonishment, leaped out of his seat and he cried out, that's it, he's got him, he's got him.

And I turned to look, my God, this is pathetic. But for my brother's wishful thinking, he brought an interpretation that was a distortion of the reality. He wanted so much to see the venerable old champ pull it out of the coals, in a last moment's heroism that it distorted the very thing that he was seeing.

I'll never forget that, I don't think God wants me to forget it, because it's a human propensity to bring something into the seeing of it, colored by our own expectation, our own desire. Few of us have the gut to see something as it in fact is. I mean, I can't tell you how loaded this is, that those of us who are quick to

pick up the fallacies, the failures, or the heresies of others, are living with problems and issues of a more menacing kind, and I'm not even aware of it as threat at all.

So seeing, no accident that prophets were called seers, and what a distress and a vexation for Israel, to have someone to see something that is not only disparate and different from your own seeing, but antithetical and totally opposed, and to say that that's God's view. That's uncomfortable, because Israel did not see itself as Isaiah saw it, as we mentioned once before in the first chapter of that book, that the city of righteousness had become a city of harlots. They saw it still as a city of righteousness.

They saw their feast days and their sabbaths and their celebrations as pleasing to God, but he saw it as a stink and an offense and an excruciating pain for God even to have to look upon it. What are your feast days and sabbaths to me? So this chapter rightly begins where it should, the necessity to see as God sees, which is an identification with him, and this will come up again, that by the time the smoke clears, that the one who speaks for him is so one with him, that you can hardly tell where the prophet ends and where God begins. And this is not required of teachers.

A teacher can still be an independent, that's not the word to use, an entity unto himself serving God by the spirit of God, but still a distinct thing within himself working for God. But there's something about a prophet where his own personality somehow has to be obliterated, he has to come into such a union that maybe that scripture, that the spirit of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy? The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. Okay, the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

This gets at it. There's something about the union of the man and the word that is at the heart of what is prophetic, that distinguishes it from other callings in God. So what is implied in that whole Ezekiel 37 chapter is something about that son of man, that though there's no text to indicate it, evidently there's a remarkable requirement to bring that son of man into such a union with God that he's not just rendering an obedience, how do I say it here, as a begrudging condescension and a necessary obedience.

That will never do. It's not because I got to. That kind of obedience will not raise the dead.

And that's more or less where we are, religiously speaking. I guess I got to, but there's got to be such a union with God's heart that we desire what he desires, see as he sees and speak as he speaks. And that is a process that is only obtained through death.

Because we're self-willed, because we're individualistic, because we have our own fanciful thinking, because there's more fantasy in our life than we know, because we've lived in a Disneyland of unreality that God has got ruthlessly to strip away. So we can perceive from this text that the object of God's intention is not Israel alone, however glorious her restoration, but that of the Son of Man. So this Ezekiel 37 text shows that God has a double preoccupation.

One is with the restoration of the dry bones, but the other, which is of equal importance in his sight, is the Son of Man. And the genius of that text is to show that the Son of Man cannot come to the place of God's desire except in the requirement that comes to him through Israel's death. It is a requirement of so ultimate a kind that the only way that the Son of Man can perform it is by passing through something himself, a death himself of a coming into another life, the power of which will raise Israel from its death.

It is the requirement of Israel's death that brings the Son of Man into the place of God to which he would not otherwise have come except by the ultimacy of the requirement that Israel presents. Now that's a

statement. It was so well spoken that we probably missed it.

We have to unpack that. Okay, it's on tape. I don't know that I can say it again quite that way.

The Son of Man would never have come into the place that God intends for the Church of the last days except by the requirement imposed upon it by Israel's own condition. That condition is so destitute of life that it cannot be met by mere religious obligation, however well meaning, but only by a Son of Man who has come into such a place of union with God that he can speak for God and as God, with the authority of God, that God will not confer to any flesh. That means that the flesh of that Son of Man has to be dealt with much more drastically than would be required of others who are in God's service.

So we shouldn't be quick to relish the prophet's call, the prophetic call, because there's a death implied in that that I don't believe God requires of others. So what I'm saying is that the Son of Man is brought to that condition by the very urgency that Israel in her helpless death requires from outside herself by the ultimate prophetic faith and the obedience of the other. Restored Israel will take an eternity of eternities to express gratitude to that church that submitted itself to the deaths required of it, that it could be to that nation God's restorative voice.

Picture what that means. That an Israel that has historically hated the church, been persecuted by the church, that the word church is anathema in Jewish experience. It is so suggestive of everything that Israel has suffered historically.

Forced conversion, exiles, inquisitions, pogroms, every kind of thing that we identify with church. You say, but Art, that's not really the church. That was the Catholic church.

That's not really the church of some heretical institution. That's true, but in the understanding of unregenerate Jews, there's no distinction made. It's all the church.

It's all Christendom. It's all Christianity. My mother thinks that Adolf Hitler was a Christian.

Of course, he's not Jewish. He's not a Muslim. What else should he be? See what I mean? So for this people to learn that their eternal redemption has been obtained by the mercy of God expressed through that church that it has so long feared and detested at the price that the church has been required to pay in order to be God's voice to it.

Namely, multitudinous debts to bring it into such a fusion and union with God that its speaking is his speaking that has raised it from its grave. For it knew and will know that we are cut off, we are without hope, we are as dry bones. And unless something comes to us from outside of ourselves, we have had it.

And notice that in the text it says, and these bones are the whole house of Israel. And breathe upon the slain indicates that they've been brought to that place of death by a violence which is very much in keeping with what Reggie has been sharing with us and what I have spoken previously. A last days desolation scheduled for Israel that will bring it to a death not only of a physical kind but a moral and spiritual kind of hope.

Because the last hope of Israel is not yet the hope in God. Remember what is said of Abraham? When every human basis for hope was gone, Abraham hoped against hope. The issue of hope is critical.

But every basis for human hope had to be gone. That Abraham being now a hundred years old and contemplating his body now dead, where there is no prospect at all that from him could come the fulfillment of God's own word. That he would be the father of many nations when that hope was absolutely destitute of being fulfilled on the basis of his own humanity.

Then God became to him righteousness and that same experience is required for the sons of Abraham. Whether it's ourselves as the church or Israel itself as the nation that they might fulfill the promise given to Abraham on the same basis by which Abraham himself entered namely the utter destitution of himself and the totality and dependency on God for life. This theme of the reciprocal relationship between Israel and the church by which the one is not made complete without the other is the very heart that falls this course in Romans 11.

So there is such a remarkable arching and touching of Romans 11 and Ezekiel 37. The same heart of Romans 11, the mystery of the relationship, the reciprocal relationship between Israel and the church that by your mercy they might obtain mercy. That you move them to jealousy.

That when the fullness of the Gentiles become in all Israel shall be saved as it is written. Who's responsible that the fullness of the Gentiles become in? The church. In every place the whole premium is put upon the church for Israel's restoration.

But a church of what kind? A church that can move Israel to jealousy. A church that can extend mercy because mercy for that church is not merely a category or a piece of its vocabulary. It is its palpable experience.

It's a church that lives by the mercies that are new every morning. As we have already experienced this morning. What we received this morning is not something elaborated by man before we came together.

It was given by God on the spot as a mercy. And nothing will more underline for us the necessity for mercy than to beat to Israel what we called in the last days the most obdurate, difficult of all peoples. The enemies of the gospel for your sake.

Opposing themselves in contradiction and looking upon us as the greatest threat to their Jewishness. When what we represent actually, ironically, is the very hope of its true fulfillment, spiritually speaking. We'll be opposed by them.

We might even be persecuted by them. We might see a reiteration of the persecution of the apostolic church by the Jewish people at the church's inception coming again at the church's end. So, how do we meet that? Except by the mercies that are new every morning.

And as I think I mentioned when I spoke this message in the church that it's by your mercy they might obtain mercy. Some woman involuntarily cried out of the congregation. She said, but Archie, we don't even have mercy for each other.

The church. And I said, that's right. Nor will we, except we see what is ultimately being required of us that we need now to attend to the thing that is immediately before us.

There's a conjunction between what is ultimate and what is immediate. And it's only in the light of what is ultimate that we set ourselves to extend mercy to each other immediately. There's that tension of connection.

So, we will have a mercy to give because we will need the mercies of God every morning. And any man who has ever stood to serve God even addressing the people of God, let alone those who are opposed to him knows how much he's dependent upon that mercy. I'll always remember sitting alongside Ron the other night before he spoke and the table where we sat together was continually trembling from a man who was in fear.

And yet, out of that trembling, still was obedient to speak before people whom he thought to be hostile against him and who would shoot him down. Paul spoke about trembling. Don't think that Paul is some kind of heavyweight who never felt a tremor and sailed through everything with a remarkable courage.

He was in tremblings often, but it never deterred him from his obedience. So, mercy has got to be elevated from being merely a word in our lexicon to becoming the palpable daily experience of our life and our real dependency, the mercies of God. I need it right now.

I needed it last night. We needed it through the whole five-week experience together seeing that we've never ever been this way heretofore. We need it in our marriages.

We need it with our children. We need mercy. And unless we have experienced that palpable mercy, we will not have it to give.

Merely to offer Israel in the day of its extremity a definition for the word, but not be able to extend it, in fact, will be a horrible failure at a critical moment that will not come again. One thing that distinguishes what is prophetic is such a reverence for the sense of time, such a sense that the present moment is always the eternal moment. There's a now that has come that will never come again.

It's once and for all. The world doesn't have this mentality. It's a spendthrift that lets time go through its fingers.

But for those of us who have and are being apprehended by a sense of what is eternal, there is that sense that something comes once. It's once and for all, and it's a moment not to be missed. I feel that way now.

And I'll feel that way again tomorrow. I'll feel that way again tonight. It heightens everything with such a remarkable enlargement of meaning and significance because it is for time and for eternity.

Life and death is at stake. Great issues are being propounded. Who knows what the consequence of these five weeks will be for the nations from which we have come, for the Church, for the souls unsaved, for the Greek as well as for the Jew.

Life and death hanging on everything that is being wrought and perpetrated in these days. That we have to cry out with hope, who is sufficient for these things? We need the mercy of God, and it's a very real and substantial thing. And when we will have a reservoir through our dependency upon God because we have put ourselves in a place of extremity that without that mercy we could not have made it.

Why is the Church so bereft of the knowledge of God's mercy as palpable experience? Because it has lived timidly. Because it has not lived on the apostolic extreme edge of dependency upon God. Because it has set the parameters of its life in such a way that it's not required to take the risks of a kind that require the mercy of God.

Our life is safe, circumscribed, prescribed, and we don't need mercy for that. We can get by. We've raised up a whole generation of 25 to 30 year old pastor whiz kids who are conducting congregations of thousands and doing it with a great flair.

But to be out on the extreme edge where you're beyond your ability and over your head and if God be not God you perish. That's the place where His mercy has got to be real or you do perish. And yesterday when the Lord came through with His mercy does not prepare you for today.

Have you noticed that? The experience of yesterday's mercy does not allow you to walk through today with a sense of calm and you've got it all in hand. However gracious that was we need a fresh installment today for the exigencies, the extremities, and the needs of this day that the Lord has made. We'll always be dependent upon that by your mercy that they may obtain mercy is a critical statement in Romans 11.

For the mystery of Israel is not only her restoration but the transfiguration of the church that is accomplished thereby. Another great statement. If I can say that.

The mystery of Israel will never understand why Romans 11 ends with all the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God. This is, I think, the most ecstatic statement in all Holy Writ. I can't think of another spontaneous eruption of praise to God.

It's called a doxology. A p-a-e-a-n of praise where language itself is stretched to the breaking. Something just breaks out of Paul's heart.

He has seen something that all the depths of the riches and until that cry comes out of us we have not seen what Paul has seen. We only have a text. We've only done a Bible study.

We have not seen the glory of what God is after. Not only Israel's restoration how much that how be it that that will be life from the dead but also the church's transfiguration. Two things are being worked at the same time and the one through the other the transfiguration of the church that is accomplished thereby.

It's the requirement of Israel the insuperable requirement of a people who are the enemy of God for your sake. Requiring from us such a transcendent thing in mercy, in grace, in love, in wisdom in courage, in obedience in prophetic faith that we would never have attained or even sought or even realized as necessary except by virtue of the requirement that Israel's death presents. That's the genius of what Paul claims.

And God is the author of the whole thing to whom be glory forever. He'll have glory not only through a nation that has been restored to its original core but he'll have glory by a church that has been transfigured in the very process of fulfilling its mandate to that people. That's the... To see that is a remarkable thing.

That this will be no small accomplishment requires us to be reminded of the church not as it is presently in all its fragmentation and divisiveness but as the whole people of God in their true corporateness speaking as with one voice in an agreement that cannot be the product of ecumenical arrangement but is the statement of apostolic authenticity itself. I'll go over that. What kind of a church will move Israel to jealousy? The same kind that will make the powers of darkness to tremble and to break and will ultimately displace them in the government of God from the heavenly places.

Not the church as it presently is in all of its fragmentation and divisiveness because this church has got to be a church that speaks with one voice out of one agreement of being of one heart and one mind and one

will. Aren't we glad that the book of Acts describes a church that was once in that condition? That we're not speaking about some hypothetical and theoretical thing but there actually historically was a time when the church and the Jewish church don't forget that. What do they say? You get two Jews, you get three arguments.

You don't know what Israeli politics is because there are no Indians there, they're all chiefs. For that church to be of one mind, one heart, one soul and one will. And Paul could say, now speak the same thing.

What was Paul wanting the church to be? A bunch of automatons? Quite the contrary. Paul wanted God to be glorified by a church in all of its rich diversity. In fact, the Antioch out of which he came, that was the first apostolic sending, was such a church.

And God even takes the pains to detail that by telling us that of those who were found worshipping together, were Jews, Romans, a man from Cyprus, a man called Niger who was evidently a black man. And when they ministered unto the Lord together, the Holy Ghost said, separate unto me. So Paul is not wanting a church of automatons, mindless bobs, blobs who will say the same thing because they have no choice in that at all stamped off the same assembly line.

But individuals. Isn't it a remarkable thing? He who loses his life finds it. God is not wanting faceless automatons who are cut out of the same cloth.

But the remarkable diversity of God, the richness, and yet in that of one mind, one heart, one soul, one agreement, speaking the same thing. And it's clear, we'll never come to that except by the operation of the cross. So that this will be no small accomplishment requires us to be reminded of the church, not as it presently is in all its fragmentation and divisiveness, but as the whole people of God in their true corporateness, not some phony baloney ecumenical hug, but whatever it takes to take individuals and to bond them and weld them and to bring them into the genius of what is corporate.

That's what that church will be. Speaking as with one voice in an agreement that cannot be the product of ecumenical arrangement, but is the statement of apostolic authenticity itself. The church that was of one mind, one heart, one soul, one will, one voice was an apostolic church.

That's what apostolic is. That's authenticity itself. But it's not obtained cheaply.

Such a church would comprise such present extremes as those who are indifferent toward Israel, if not hostile, and those whose celebration of the nation is extravagant to the point of near idolatry. There are such diversities in God's people. There are people foaming at the mouth over Israel with anger and indignation, who are Christian, spiritual, and there are others for whom Israel can do no wrong.

They can bury Palestinians alive and break their bones and you find a way to justify and to explain it. Such a diversity can be found in God's church, either in almost bringing Israel to a point of near idolatry or to condemning her. And yet out of that has got to come a people of one mind, one heart, who see as God sees and will speak as he speaks.

So everything is resting on a church coming to such a place. Both degrees of exaggerated views will require appropriate depths of dealings from God that will constitute virtually their own death and resurrection from those unplumbed subtleties of heart and will that cannot escape the cross. How does God deal with those who are off this way and off that way that they might be in agreement with him? By

bringing them virtually to a death and a resurrection of the unplumbed subtleties of heart and will.

We had a little bit of that this morning in our devotional time. The subtleties of it. How self will insinuate itself and even disguise itself even in the spiritual place.

But there's something about the cross that is unerring. It finds its mark. The death of Jesus was not partial.

It was total. And that's the meaning of the cross. Nothing is exempt.

It doesn't just go for the jugular vein of our vices and our defects. We would gladly bring that to the place of death. But it finds also our virtues.

And we said over the breakfast table that what we're beginning to realize it's not our vices that are our worst problem but our virtues. It's our virtues that do us in. Our zeal for God.

Our jealousy to defend the integrity of the church can be the very thing that is the undoing and the missing of God at very critical points. So in a word, only the cross can do that totality of work that will bring us to be a people of one mind and one heart and will with him. So little wonder that many of us till now have been so quick to affirm and to congratulate Israel in her present condition.

She has been the projection more than we could have understood of our own satisfaction and self-acceptance as the church. That's an interesting statement. Those who have been quick to affirm Israel in her present condition unbeknownst to themselves are really speaking out of a kind of projection of the affirmation of themselves and the church as it presently is.

If you can congratulate Israel as she is you're unconsciously congratulating the church as it is. And I want to say as a spokesman for God neither Israel in her present condition or the church in her present condition is yet acceptable to God. We want to find out where we are.

Our view of Israel is really a projection of ourselves more than we have realized. And it's a giveaway that we're not willing not only for them to be brought to a death and resurrection but for ourselves to be brought. Are we mindless about the larger questions of God's glory and unconsciously unwilling for the sufferings and deaths by which it is to be obtained? We're more jealous for Israel to succeed or the church to succeed than to ask is God obtaining a glory from either Israel or the church? When we move to the ground of glory right away the issue of suffering and death is introduced.

But if we're only satisfied with the issue of success we don't have to consider suffering or death. See what I mean? But Paul does not say at the end of Romans 11 unto Israel be success. He says unto him be glory.

And not only glory but glory forever. It's the last time that God will have his opportunity. It's got to be worked in historic time.

But the consequence of it reverberates into the eternity of eternities. It's the last episode, the final episode involving the church in an ultimate way as being the instrument of God's raising up of that nation that will bring him glory forever. And when you move from the issue of success where our church mentality has been its program, its numbers, its budgets did you like the services all the way in which we view whether it's good and move to the issue of glory we're on another ground altogether.

And when we've come onto the glory ground the question immediately becomes understood by what suffering shall this be obtained. There's a suffering that precedes glory that is not required for mere success. So the issue is the issue of glory and the church that is not occupied with the question of God's glory is ipso facto, not the church.

If you want a single criterion to distinguish true church from false church it's this. That which calls itself church employs the word of God conducts services meets the needs of its people and does all these things but is not occupied with consciously the issue of God's glory is not the church. The single distinctive that makes something apostolic and prophetic is the preoccupation with the issue of God's glory forever.

Remove that and you have removed the apostolic and prophetic distinctive. Do you know what the heck of it is? How do you obtain that jealousy? How do you obtain that distinctive? You cannot fabricate it. It is something that must come from God himself.

And I'll always cherish that one statement that you might hear a dozen times before you finish here. In one of our prayer meetings at Momburger's Trailer one of the brothers blurted out when something broke upon his consciousness he said, you know what he said? It takes God to love God. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and all thy mind and all thy soul and all thy strength.

It is such a requirement that only God can fulfill it by those who are in union with him. That's exactly the same issue as the Sabbath. One of these indexes of Israel's failure is that the Sabbath became a legalism of rabbinical requirement.

You can only carry a bundle this far. You can do this, but you can't do that. This is defined as work.

How come they needed all of those legalisms to establish what a Sabbath is and what its violation is? Because they had lost the relationship with God by which we would know how to seek him in order to find what is his good pleasure on that day. Because on the Sabbath we were to desist from seeking our own pleasure speaking our own words and doing our own thing. So is that to say that on a Sabbath you can't have a picnic or play softball or go for a swim? No.

If that's God's good pleasure for you it's a Sabbath of rest. It did not emanate from you, it's from him. It pleases him.

You're not seeking your own pleasure though you may enjoy it. But for the next guy to go for a swim and have a picnic who has not consulted God and is just arbitrarily doing his own thing thinking it's his right, it's a violation. In a word, the Sabbath requires such a union with God.

That last Sabbath's conduct can be entirely different from this Sabbath's. In a word, the only one who can really keep the Sabbath is that one who is in such union with God as to know what is his pleasure at any given time. And what God gives us as the once in the week he intends for all of our days.

And it's a Sabbath of rest. If you're doing his good pleasure and speaking his own words then from what are you laboring? And the ironic thing is that there's no day that is more desecrated and more profuse with sweat than Sunday particularly for ministers in labors that are theirs more than God's. Why did Jesus seek to do his most extraordinary exploits and miracles on the Sabbath? Because he's trying to make a point before his kinsmen.

It's the Father who doeth the works. I'm not violating anything. It's not my labor.

It's the Father who doeth the works. Same thing with the issue of the glory of God. We cannot have it any more than mercy as a mere word in our vocabulary.

It's a jealousy which is God's own jealousy for his own name and his own honor. And we can only have it to the degree that we're in union with him. And that's why the apostles and the prophets are the foundation of the church.

They are men who come to men out of that relationship and out of that business that can communicate God himself and his own jealousy for his own glory and his own honor. Anything other than that is a near miss and becomes religious. So here, talk about restoration of all things.

If this is not restored to the church how is it then the church? And here's what I want to say. Only on the basis of God's glory will we be able to make the sacrifices that will be required of us in the last days. It will never be made out of obligation, out of religious necessity, out of begrudging condescension.

Only the jealousy for the glory of God permits or releases the quality of sacrifice unto death that nothing else can give. And a sacrifice that will be made gladly even with a rejoicing because it is done in the light of and the anticipation for the glory of God. See, this glory is not just a word.

It's a key. And when Paul ends Romans 11 for of him there's this whole scheme, this whole scenario, this remarkable reciprocal relationship between Jews and Gentiles, Israel and the church is of him. Only God could have conceived it.

Only God could have taken these ingredients that have been so antithetical, so opposed, that have been rubbed into our very being. We've grown up with it. We've taken it with our mother's milk.

There's an instinct of antipathy between Jews and Gentiles. There's an instinct of distrust and suspicion. There is a historic weight of things to support it that tend to justify it.

And yet he takes that least amenable thing and makes that the basis for the revelation of his glory. Because he can only succeed on one basis. His glory.

His power. His enablement. It's patently calculated to fail religiously.

It cannot succeed except that it be through him as well as of him. For of him and through him and to him are all things to whom be glory forever. It cannot be to him as glory, except it is also through him.

That is to say, his own life and his own power fulfills what is of him. But it's fulfilled through the church. The church whose life is his life.

To the same revelation and awareness to which it had brought Abraham before him. And maybe only on that basis of Abraham's recognition of his own death and inability can anything Abrahamic take place. Either for Israel or for ourselves.

Not to know God as the God who speaks and by whose word alone the dead are quickened, who calls those things which be not as though they were, is not to know God as he essentially is and must be made known. If you don't know God as the God of resurrection, who calls those things to be which are not, we don't know God. And there's a way in which we can subscribe to and endorse the doctrine of resurrection and still not know the God of it.

In fact, that might well be the statement of what's wrong with the church. It subscribes correctly to the right doctrines, but it does not know him as the God of resurrection and never will until he has raised it from its death. It may well be that that's the very thing that the charismatic movement is so strenuously opposing.

Trying to flay a dead horse, trying somehow to find some new wrinkle, some new innovation, some new fad that will give us some semblance of life, rather than to submit to the death to which it must be brought. Maybe that's the melancholy of the full gospel businessmen today, that has served such a prominent purpose in God in the 1960s and 70s, but today is struggling to maintain some kind of continuance when everything seems to, from my assessment, to be opposed to it. It has served a purpose in God, it needs to be brought into a death, and that death needs to be recognized and received, or else there's no resurrection.

But once an institution is born that has even served the purposes of God, it then takes on a life of its own and the rationale by which it preserves itself and perpetuates itself and shrinks from and will not recognize nor accept the death required. And for whatever little thing we were, we had to recognize a death that was required. And as I shared with you, the one elder who would not recognize death, God had to threaten him with death.

Literal death. If you'll not leave this property, I will kill you. That's how insistent God was that this whole work, little thing that it was, somehow, had to be brought totally into a death.

Whole abandonment of the property, its ministry, our corporate status and identity, and everything that was attached to it in death. So I would say this. I am suspicious of whether any work is indeed of God that has not passed through the necessity for death and resurrection.

Suspicious of any ministry, of any calling, and maybe of any marriage. In other words, are we satisfied with a marriage that's compatible? That serves our purposes? We are gratified? Our sex life untroubled? And our food prepared? And every other nice amenity? Would you be willing to allow God to bring that to a death? That the marriage would be brought to a plane beyond your satisfaction, but to His glory? See what I mean? We never think in those terms. We have accepted worldly definition of what is appropriate and satisfactory.

And these are deaths that are not obligatory. If you want to be satisfied and continue with a marriage, family situation that serves your ends, God will not require more. But if there's a jealousy for His glory, there's hardly a thing that will remain untouched by Him.

Or that we dare withhold. We could have a history of 30 or 40 years of wonderful marriage, and boom! At a moment appointed by God, things break loose that you could never have imagined. Or with our bodies, or with our health, or whatever thing God wants to finger and touch.

But the principle is central, the necessity for death and resurrection. He himself had to submit to it. How then shall we be exempt in anything that pertains to His glory? And I make a statement here.

I'll try to sum it up without reading it. And I think I said it last night and on other occasions. If we don't understand this process of death out of our own experience, and therefore we can grasp and sense what God is doing with the nation, we will join the world's chorus against the nation as we see it increasingly failing.

And disappointing us in our own expectation. This is the only thing that will save us from finding ourselves on the ground opposing God. I even warned the Methodist Church, the charismatic wing of it, that your very peace platform that makes you so susceptible to the complaints of the Palestinians will bring you to a ground opposed to God.

Unless you understand that what is happening to that nation and being reflected in its treatment of the Palestinians is God's very bringing to death of a hope that Israel had fought to demonstrate to the nations of the uniqueness of itself as a nation among nations. And now patently failing as ingloriously as any nation before it. Doing no better than any Gentile nation, if not worse.

And the world is somehow expecting more of that nation. So unless we understand what is happening and what is its meaning, we will find ourselves growing in indignation against it. Which would be to find ourselves in a place against God.

I had a remarkable success sharing this with a Muslim from Israel, sent by the Islamic Church to the United States to win friends to its cause. And someone arranged for a lunch for us. And I said, my dear brother, if you knew that your suffering at Israeli hands is a prelude to a transformation of that nation by which one day you will be blessed by that same people, you would be more willing now to bear what suffering you must.

And somehow there was a grace of God with me that I was more able to communicate that to an unbelieving Muslim than I have been with the church. So this maybe is part answer to Al's question, why do we need to know these things? Because it saves us from pitfall and from error in finding ourselves opposed to God unless we understand the end to which all things are moving. And the key to that understanding is not our academic review.

The key to that understanding is the experience ourselves of the principle of death and resurrection as being central to anything that pertains to God and to his glory. And therefore why should we be surprised that this nation must pass through it? Why did he allow it to be born in 1948? So there would be something to be deposited into the ground. That first is the earthly, then the heavenly.

Takes away the first to bring the second. The glory of the latter is greater than the first. There had to be an earthly thing first admitted into death.

Out of which death, which had thought to be the hope, comes the true hope. The issue then is not the glorification of Israel but of God. His own goodness prompts him to act as he does.

It is as recipients of his undeserved grace and mercy that Israel becomes most powerfully ultimate witness unto him. And is brought to such depths of broken repentance and corresponding character changes as the world has never seen. We'll not understand the glory that will be revealed except the depth of the desolation, despair, and the final repentance that comes to that nation.

That repentance is a death of such a deep sorrowing that there has never been anything like it in the history of mankind. Because it's not only a recognition of the present sin of that people, but the whole of the historic sin, the sins of their fathers and as their own coming with like a crashing realization in the moment of the Lord's revealing. For us who had hoped for the progressive improvement or spiritualization of present Zionist Israel and that there would be an end of such sufferings, there is the need to reassess whether our own hopes have been sentimental or idealistic.

What kind of hope have we had? Let alone what kind of hope have they had? If we had hoped for their success on the basis of what they are as a secular nation. It's more a revelation of our false hope as well as theirs to have hoped for their success on that basis. Contrary to what we should have rightly understood in light of the whole tenor of the gospel and the prophetic scriptures.

If we had any right sense of God and His way we would not have been surprised by this. Can we therefore not suspect that Israel can only be called to life prophetically out of our own experience of death and resurrection? Is not this death made necessary by the stubborn depth of human pride convinced of its own intrinsic righteousness despite its doctrinal suppositions to the contrary? It's something like subscribing to the doctrine of grace outwardly and externally and verbally, but inwardly our real life is predicated on human merit and good works. And nothing will have revealed that faulty deception except what is our reaction to Israel as being the object of His mercy and of His grace.

But they don't deserve it. It's not so much a revelation of them, but of us. It finds us out.

So the issue of Israel's resurrection from the dead becomes then our own compelling us to that transcendent ground by which we ourselves are transformed and to which we would not ourselves otherwise have been required to come except through her. It may be that individual saints could attain to this kind of resurrection life but I think for the church at large Israel and what it requires is God's provision for bringing us through. I'm wondering if that's not also a reason why Israel has to so parallel the actual experience of the suffering servant Messiah before them that they too need to experience being rejected and despised of men of having no comeliness that we should desire them.

They parallel His route to Calvary and even unto crucifixion and also unto resurrection. It's a remarkable identification with Him that has God finally to break upon their consciousness that what we're experiencing God Himself in His own person bore for our sake and we were the ones who indeed actually affected His death not realizing what that meant. So the church can learn it vicariously.

Israel is required to learn it experientially because I think its millennial calling as a nation requires it to make Him known as He is. You wonder why Paul's conversion could not have been effected at less cost. Why did it require the demise of a brilliant man whose face shone like an angel who debated with the philosophers and they could not gainsay the brilliance of the things that he spoke at whose hands mighty miracles were performed.

Yet the sacrifice of that life was required for Paul's conversion. That speaks volumes and it may be a picture of what will be the final sacrifice of our life for their restoration. Doesn't this touch the issue of glory? I think of that statement when the Temple of Solomon was dedicated and the glory of God filled the temple where the priest could not minister.

But it says that the sacrifice could not be counted nor numbered for multitude. There was such a river of blood issued in sacrifice that had to do in every way with the glory that subsequently filled that temple and therefore the sacrifice not only of Stephen but of those that have been made widowed and orphans by His own relentless fury against the church was necessary also in bringing him to such a brokenness by which the genius of his apostolic call could be realized. And God did not count that as too elaborate.

That that sacrifice could not be counted nor numbered for multitude. If that's what it took to effect the conversion of a Paul, what would it take to effect the conversion of a nation as ruthlessly opposed to the faith as Paul was in his own day? My house is a house of sacrifice and anyone who gives himself to the

church knows it. There's a suffering in the church, you've heard me say this, of an exquisite kind that no other kind can begin to touch.

There's an uncanny kind of suffering of a mental anguish, of an emotional anguish, of a spiritual anguish, of a disappointment, of a betrayal of the things that are uniquely the experience of those who give themselves that church must be church. That you would not have to suffer if you were satisfied with only the Sunday version thereof. His house is a house of sacrifice and if it'll be a glory it'll be because the numbers of it could not be counted.

How much of our own present Christianity is a desperate keeping alive of what God would make desolate and unredeemed Israel the projection of our own vain hopes? Nothing is more calculated to make the church awake from its dreams and sleep than the deepening intractable and insoluble crises of Israel. To pray for the elimination of that which now vexes and threatens Israel however humanly it is to be desired is to find us perhaps praying against the very instrumentalities raised up by God to obtain that death the very death of Zionist and charismatic hope by which alone the prophetic and enduring glory is birthed. So again the critical issue whether our prayers are religious, mechanical, humanly motivated, well-wishing or really the prayer of the Lord himself in keeping with his own will and that kind of prayer requires such a union and relationship with him and with each other or we cannot discern the mind of Christ and the wonderful book on that of course is the book on Intercessor, Reese Howells, where they had such a quality of relationship together because they were on a college campus that they had immediate access to each other's lives that they could call the time of prayer at a moment's beckoning but more than that one of the great illustrations of the quality of their relationship was Reese Howells' ability to reprimand and publicly rebuke a member of that prayer circle for praying his own personal prayer and he would say to him now you pray that in your prayer closet that is not apprehending the mind of Christ.

It's a good prayer but it's completely out of keeping with what God is now revealing and bringing forth so to obtain the sense of his mind is something that is reserved as a revelation only to the many, to those who are in such a union it will not come to people who are in a religiously self-conscious prayer circle and are just doing their thing it's a qualitatively different thing that very much hinges on our corporate-ness to apprehend the mind of God corporately requires a corporate-ness that is one in truth and not merely the confluence of bodies in a circle praying their individual prayers and when you think how critical the issue is it's not just that we feel deflated by it but a historic moment can be missed because we know from that book that they prayed, for example, the Battle of Britain that great air battle against the Luftwaffe that was performed by 19-year-old British pilots who had just barely had rudimentary training defeated the great veterans of the air not so much as the evidence of their ability but as the evidence of a God with them through the prayer that had been prayed for that battle.

Hitler's turning to Russia rather than to Great Britain when Britain was hanging on the ropes and he had every opportunity to succeed in removing from the Allies the staging place for which the final invasion of the continent took place but to this very hour military historians and analysts are completely bewildered of why that decision was made it has no basis in logic it was made because it was prayed for they prayed that he would be deceived and move in a direction opposite that would set in motion the things that finally brought his defeat so I say all that to say this we're not talking about a little play thing or that we enjoy the value of such true corporate prayer historic things are being wrought in moments given in time in a little place in Wales hardly known to anyone in the

world yet well known to God and to the principalities and powers so anywhere where there's this kind of quality of relationship and praying the mind of Christ that will only be revealed in such a context actually affects the issues of history but how do you come to that quality of relationship now why didn't that guy who was reprimanded go home and mope and pout and that he was humiliated before everyone why didn't Reese House take him aside privately why did he have to publicly I don't think that that guy batted an eyelash and I'll tell you that one of the greatest experiences in my Christian life I was very young in law just beginning as a missionary to the Jews they came and knocked at my door in Kansas City three Japanese men standing at my door I don't know how they had ever heard of

me but they wanted me to attend their conference in Tokyo what do they call themselves a movement the original gospel that a revelation had come to their founder out of the defeat and death of World War II he was a Presbyterian of a nominal kind and he went up to a mount alone to seek God and the Lord showed him the acculturation of the faith and that they had never really known the authenticity of the gospel and he came down from that mount a transformed man that he was educated and dignified he came into leper colonies no church would have him and he would come go over the barrier that separated the preacher from the congregants and embrace and kiss and hug lepers never once contract their disease healings on the spot by the very union with him and I tell you I can go on I've got

pictures somewhere in all my life and I'll always cherish God had given me this opportunity to see in a Japanese people a movement of a people noted for saving face for keeping safe distances for concealing their true identity of such fervent burning love of such union that I saw people like a candle like a braided candle twisted women together and men together separate in such intensity of prayer and union that you thought the very heaven must be pierced there was a power of God a presence of God I walked through their conference hall one day I saw a little girl that I had noted earlier with her legs flopping like jelly she had been born that way had never ever walked and she was laying in the middle of a circle of women who were praying about something else and I just I stopped for a

moment I looked at that scene I saw the intensity the fervent quality of their prayer like nothing I had ever seen anywhere and I had hardly walked away when a shriek came out of that room like the shot that was heard around the world I came running back to find out what had happened and the girl was standing perfectly straight and she wasn't even explicitly prayed for and they said Art this happens all the time in the field of faith and love in which we move this is a vision I praise God that I saw it unhappily that movement has since gone down the tube after the death of its founder but I caught a glimpse of what the faith was and what it can be again and all the more stark and and penetrating when it takes place in Japan I was in their grand meeting in Tokyo when the local rabbi born

in in Israel came in with his Brooklyn born Jewish wife into an atmosphere that instantly smoked them it was so utterly Hebraic though it took place in Japan it was the quintessential root into which we have been grafted and though they did not know these terms they were staggered by the demonstration of Japanese who sang Hebrew choruses and when the 1967 war the six day war came it seemed at first like Israel was finished missionaries flew out of Israel for their safety professor Tashima the founder of the movement chartered a jet filled it with the people from this movement and flew to Israel to stand with Israel in the hour of its final extremity I mean I can go on and on with the illustrations I have caught a glimpse of what effectual fervent prayer means that is all together with

loving one another with a pure heart fervently through obedience to the spirit we've hardly begun to touch this but I don't think that our prayer is going to be his prayer until we do and that we have an incentive for it

that because a nation will be dead before us waiting for a voice that can raise it that can only be a voice of such corporate speaking so so long as we are trying to keep alive what God is wanting to bring to death for us whether it's our own ministries our own calling, our own marriages how then shall we come out of a death unto a resurrection alone by which such a word can come if that word is not a resurrection word it will fail and that's a different kind of speaking than we have known and this in fact this willing to submit to a death of what is human and religious

and sentimental was demonstrated in the obedience of the Lord himself when despite his own human desire after hearing of the sickness of his friend Lazarus abode two days still in the same place where he was had he acted prematurely out of his own human compassion to hasten to the bedside of his beloved friend so as to alleviate his suffering he would have rendered null and void the purpose of God this sickness is not unto death but for the glory of God that the Son of God might be glorified thereby I'm thinking to speak this tonight or soon in these days is like the other side of last night's message is the companion message of Jesus and the resurrection of Lazarus that when Jesus heard that his friend whom he loved was sick in a sickness unto death he remained two days longer where he

was and to be allegorical and to quote from the prophet Hosea he has stricken us and how does it go where is Reggie? but on the third day he will raise us up after two days ok here is the point everything that is human everything that is sentimental everything that is right by every reckoning would have called Jesus to the bedside of his friend but he did not respond to those promptings he responded only to the Father because there was only one issue for Jesus not the alleviation of human ill and suffering which you could easily have effected and performed but the glory of God the Father and this is a remarkable demonstration and one that was for him not only a suffering and a death of everything human he was a man he was the son of man this Lazarus whom you love your friend and if you do

this for strangers how much more for your friend whom you love are you going to let him languish in his sickbed and writhe in his sweat without an explanation and he knows that his sisters have sent for you and you don't come and the disciples thought well sure Bethany is only a Sabbath distance from Jerusalem where Jesus' life itself was so recently threatened so no wonder he is not going because he wants to preserve his own life he is unwilling to take the risk of his own neck to raise his friend out of a sickbed and you know the interesting thing that Jesus knowing what their thoughts were did not at all address them he bore their reproach even of his disciples he bore their misunderstanding their misinterpretation as part of the death that he had to bear that when he stood at that

grave a word would come out of his mouth of such a power and such a force that would raise the dead that the power of that word was altogether relative to the suffering of the one from whose mouth it came there is a suffering that precedes the glory that word had a prophetic weight that raised a man from death in the fourth day he was already unto stinking altogether proportionate to the deaths that Jesus had to bear in his humanity to compassion to love, to desire to see hurt alleviated and what a test for us as shepherds and pastors that we know that there is someone that we can immediately alleviate who is going through something with God by bringing a word and yet to bring it is to forestall the glory of God is to cheat God of the depth of the thing that he is working and if you don't

bring that word and people know that you could have and what kind of a shepherd are you and what kind of a pastor and look at your indifference and lovelessness you are going to be misunderstood inevitably there is going to be a reproach that needs to be suffered if you are not moving on the plane of the alleviation of human ill but on the plane of the glory of God and to have a church in that condition that will

remain silent and wait longer where they are when we see Israel going from buffering to harassment to catastrophe to collapse when everything in us wants to rush to the bedside of the patient and to alleviate them from their present ill rather than to see them go through the whole season of things unto death then comes the resurrection and the glory how about Elijah it says Lord

I alone am left so where was he when the other prophets were being slain by Ahab and by Jezebel why wasn't he out there on the firing line why wasn't he standing in identification with them he was somewhere concealed and hidden that in the appointed moment of time God could bring him forth out of obscurity and out of hiddenness to stand before Ahab and say as the Lord my God lives before whom I stand it shall not rain nor dew but according to my word don't you think that he had so often to resist the very natural impulse to stand in identification with other of his prophetic brethren who were being hewed down and wasn't he being tormented and harassed didn't he hear the voice of people saying well how about you shouldn't you be doing something shouldn't you and could he explain why he

could not when the Lord had put him himself in a cave with a rock over it where he couldn't speak he couldn't go and he couldn't do and had to suffer the reproach of his inactivity and his silence that in the historic moment of God's use he would be available for that use in fact I'm very fond of saying that the last day's snare for the church is its propensity to do good there'll be so many good things needing to be done in fact my own conscience was a bit troubled shouldn't I be out there on the anti-abortion picketings and how about Bosnia now a country I've been in in Yugoslavia many times I think I know Yugoslavia as well as I know Brooklyn and that country is being decimated and shredded and here I am sitting in this idyllic setting and not doing anything shouldn't I be doing

something and this impulse if there's a necessity to do will ruin us we'll find ourselves involved in good things and fail to be in the place of God's intention for that which is perfect so it requires an extraordinary discipline flowing out of such a jealousy for the glory of God the Father that will restrain you from merely acting on the level of the good you'll not go to the patient but you'll wait two days longer until he's dead until the fourth day until in fact he's stinking and then comes the revelation of the glory of God ironically however much our silence before that time will be construed as lovelessness only a faith that works by love will suffice in that once for all critical moment isn't that a remarkable paradox our silence and our inactivity when there's so many seemingly

good things to be done will be construed as lovelessness it's the one accusation I've heard beyond any other in all of the years of my prophetic life for whatever degree it was and yet it's greatest love not to do greatest love to remain silent until the Lord calls you to speak and before we leave that point I want to say a word about the significance of silence for prophetic speaking nothing more debases the word of God than prolific and unnecessary speaking before that time what gives that word the fullness of its power is that it has had full opportunity to gestate and to come to such an optimum place in God but by speakings that are unnecessary and that precede it we dissipate that life away that energy and that power something about the spirit of the prophet is subject to the prophet

something about knowing something that could be spoken and not speaking it merely because you know it merely because you see something is not your invitation to address it how many times will we go into churches and immediately catch sense of this, this and this but we're not at liberty to speak of it so we will dissipate away the life the power of the word by speaking about good things or unnecessary things we need more to cherish silence and that also puts a premium on a church that can live with each other in that silence without coming unglued can we enjoy each other and be at peace in each other's presence without

unnecessary speaking do we have always to be bright and clever and informed and opinionated if there's nothing to say and God's not prompting something can we just quietly

sit and sense the presence of God in each other and be at rest there's such a continual press to betray the prophetic calling to disqualify the word of God to lessen its power by valuable expressions that are good but ruin us for the perfect this requires a security in God that we know that we are accepted in the beloved we don't have to demonstrate anything to him nor to each other we are what we are by the grace of God and there we sit in the peace of God and in the rest of God until his spirit prompts so there needs to be a much greater respect for silence which is altogether related to speaking I'm sure I'm convinced that we have often shot the life and the power away prematurely I can look back on occasions when I have been provoked into conversations and discussions even singing old

show tunes as we're driving to a meeting that when it came to the time of the speaking I knew that the virtue had gone out of me it had dissipated away beforehand this waiting two days longer is a statement of priestliness priestly waiting priestly sacrifice that after in the Old Testament ordination of the priests and all their sacrifice and blood and anointings with oil and the wearing of garments the final ordination was waiting seven days at the door of the tabernacle in silence as if God is saying one last thing before you're released for your ministry a death of whatever yet lingers that needs to be seen, needs to be heard needs to be expressed ministerially if you can sit for seven days without speaking without doing, without going then you're free to go and I always say in the

Acts 13 first apostolic sending that when they were found ministering unto the Lord, then the Lord said separate unto me he found men in the place of worship in the place of relationship to God who would have been as content to remain in that place as to go and until he finds a people in that priestly demeanor there'll be no sending and there'll be no speaking Jesus was the demonstration of the priestly son the high priest and the apostle of our confession after he had heard that his friend was deathly sick yet he remained two days longer and even to the pain of knowing that his friend was writhing in a sickness unto death and would die in that condition without his appearance and without any explanation when Lazarus died he did not die with the knowledge that he was going to be

resurrected he died with the knowledge that his friend Jesus who had purported to love him did not come to his aid in the moment of his final extremity and isn't that a reproach that we're likely to hear from Israel to the church, where are you?

Israel is now still rebuking the nations for their failure a half century ago to have taken in Jewish refugees their ships came to our shores and we sent them back to the ovens not knowing that was God exacting and requiring a full judgment but there'll be yet another holocaust and it may seem to them that we are indifferent and silent why aren't we contending and fighting for their place in Israel and their rights and the negotiations for their land and their security as so many are exhibiting a certain kind of love for Israel but the greater love I'm suggesting is the love that is silent the love that does not initiate its own action does not seek to alleviate the present distress but allows that distress to have its full work even unto a death that cannot be explained to the

victim because the end thereof is a resurrection unto glory you read John 11 it's loaded and here's one thing that I was reminded of this morning before I came nothing set in motion Jesus' own death than the resurrection of Lazarus, that was the last straw for the religious community this man was a troublemaker many were coming to him and if he allows to go on, the whole nation will turn to him for the nation's sake,

it's needful that one man die this resurrection of Lazarus the straw that broke the camel's back there's something about resurrection that is so ultimate that it sets in motion the final things and even that which resulted in Jesus' own death why do I say that? because it may well be that our being the instrument of God to resurrect Israel will set in motion the things that

will affect our death that the powers of the air cannot abide that instrument of God's use that has affected a nation's restoration that means their end and such a fury will be poured out against us as was poured out against him that makes our death a requirement it's necessary for the nation that this man die, this corporate man because if they go on like this in such resurrection power and such ability to raise a nation, to raise the dead then our place will be lost our place is not just the religious Sanhedrin that's just the earthly expression our place is the heavenly's over it, through which the human things were only the physical expression so just to summarize and to conclude that somehow it was required of Jesus to be an utterly devastated son cut off and out of the land of the

living that out of his resurrection and his glorification could a church be birthed and the whole redemptive program of God for his creation what should we expect for Israel then, whose glorious restoration is also a key to the nations but how is this affected the prophet is no mere spectator but agent his fidelity alone releases the powers which bring new life his vision is critical to the fulfillment his seeing as God sees all the more because he sees the situation at its human worst and yet to believe for the restoration seeing it at its worst maybe that's the kind of seeing that the church needs that there'll be no real redemptive work in the church until we will first see it at its worst and not blind ourselves like my brother hoping that Joe Louis was going to turn the fight around

because he's playing feebly with his gloves therefore the prophet is dealt with as severely as Israel itself for if he is to be as God's mouth he must first become one with God's heart for out of the abundance of the heart alone does the mouth speak and that by a willing obedience consistent with all past obedience and not a final moment's religious obligation this is a tremendously important point it says he commanded the son of man to prophesy and the ability to respond to that command is not something that will be found in that moment unless it has been preceded by consistent obediences in all that has been required before that moment that that obedience is the sum total of all the previous obediences that go before it so that shows again the connection between the ultimate and the

immediate it's a people who are disposed to a continual obedience that when the ultimate obedience is required they shall not fail that obedience is itself a death to those final prejudices and envies and securities and reluctancies that would just as soon leave Israel in its grave than bring the prodigal back from the dead to share the father's favor for only death will free the son of man company from those final subtleties of pride and prejudice that qualify it at last as God's prophetic people I mentioned that last night there's something that lurks somewhere in the church that is not happy for the restoration of the prodigal son that wants to have the glory alone of being the son of his delight and that whatever it is that keeps us in that place needs also to be brought to a death

for the obedience is not mechanical but out of the heart the mouth speaketh actually desires to see the restoration of that which will compete with it seemingly for the favor and the glory of the father shall we pray?

I don't know how or what but I just have to say this Lord that I don't think we would be talking about these things if somehow the subject of Israel were not on your agenda for us that there's something about that

subject that nation its centrality the kingdom that comes through it that somehow opens the questions of all the issues of the faith in a way that we would not otherwise have been required to examine it and to know it and so we thank you for the mystery of that and indeed it is a mystery and how much better do we understand that to be ignorant of that mystery is to be left wise in our own conceit thinking we've got it together hot shots ready to save the world and we're hardly in anything approaching the condition to which you've called us so we thank you Lord again our fear is losing anything my God that has come out of your heart teach us to be a people who cherish silence cherish words hold them and cup them and retain them seek their meaning let them dwell richly in our hearts allow them to be applied to our lives where we are to be required of by the words that we hear to walk in the light of them so we bless you Lord and we thank you again for being so precious to us thank you Jesus help us to steward these precious things that you're giving

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