

K-461 Jewish Resistance to the Gospel (1 of 2)

by Art Katz

The sermon explores the Jewish view of righteousness and how it contrasts with the Christian view, highlighting the significance of works in achieving righteousness in Judaism.

Duration: 53:52

Scripture: Isaiah 2:4, Amos 9:12, Matthew 6:33, Matthew 25:37-40

Topics: "Jewish"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher shares a story about a woman who was saved after attending a meeting where he spoke. The woman's son had been impressed by the preacher's conviction and shared his experience with his mother. Intrigued, she read the preacher's book and it raised questions that eventually led to her salvation. The preacher uses this story to illustrate the challenges and opposition that believers may face in the last days, particularly when their ideals and humanistic presumptions are shattered. He emphasizes the importance of corporate witness and the need for believers to bear the fury of their people with grace and love, just as Jesus did when he was attacked.

Transcript

And it's edited by one of my favorite guys who unfortunately passed away before I ever had the opportunity to witness to him, Arthur Cohen, whose book on the Holocaust is one of the most staggering commentaries written, called the Tremendum. He could not find a word that would encapsulate the trauma and the significance of the Holocaust. He wrestled the agonized over it, and his book is a remarkable statement of a Kabbalistic kind, that when you wade through his philosophical convolutions of mind, you finally come to the payoff, and it's staggering.

You know what his final answer is? It's a Kabbalistic answer. The reason for the Holocaust was to perfect Israel, not unto righteousness, but unto deity. That Israel is God.

It's to deify the nation through its suffering. How else can you explain it? You see what I mean? When you'll not understand and consider it as the issue of judgment, and see in Jews some kind of preponderant virtue for which the calamity like the Holocaust is totally incompatible, that's why the guy who wrote me back from Jerusalem called it trash, then you've got to come up with some elaborate theodicy, some explanation, and that's his explanation. And yet I love the man, and I understand his agonizing and his attempt to reconcile.

So he's edited with another significant Jewish theologian, contemporary Jewish religious thought. You can't name a subject, including Christianity, that's not commented upon in this book. How would you like to hear Jewish thought on the subject of righteousness? We've heard a German theologian giving us a Hebraic view from the Old Testament, but it might be interesting to hear, as it were, from the horse's mouth.

And I'll just read you highlights. And this commentary on righteousness will bring us to the subject of Torah, because you'll hear from him that the issue of righteousness for a Jew is the issue of Torah fidelity, Torah faithfulness, which sounds like very virtue itself. Only when you look in the same book as to how they understand the word Torah, you'll find it a staggering description.

I think we need to hear this. We need to consider this, because it's with these people with whom we will have to do. And they are the, how shall we say, at the heart of Jewish thought and understanding.

These are the skillful articulators whose influence spreads out throughout an entire Jewish community, so that even those who are not as skilled or as gifted are affected by what men of this kind believe and propound, and is at the heart of their Judaism and comes in not only to the religious Jewish community, but even to the secular. So this will be, I think, insight for us. And that will require sobriety and maturity on our part to hear that it will affect how we will understand these people and relate to them in the last days, which is the whole issue to which we're attending.

We're on a collision course with the Jew. We're moving to a place of inextricable collision. How we meet that, what we do and say, how, what our word will be, whether it will be righteous in that day, and our attitude that will not be scornful or contemptuous or derisive will be the issue of their salvation.

Well, there's a little biography, this article on righteousness. Every one of these articles are written by different authorities. Some of them are orthodox, some conservative, but there's a... If he's Kabbalistic, he'd be orthodox.

Habermann, let's see what it says about him. Oh, so this is not Arthur Cohen. He's the editor.

Arthur Cohen is the editor. He himself is not orthodox. Joshua Habermann is senior rabbi of the Washington Hebrew Congregation and received his doctorate from the Hebrew Union College.

He's co-chairman of the North American Board of the World Union for Progressive Judaism and president of the Foundation for Jewish Studies. He has published critical studies on Steinheim, Rosenzweig, Buber, and other figures of the German Jewish theological renaissance. You know, when you read their little statement of their qualifications, you want to find a hole and slip through it.

You know, like Kit Kat's high school dropout. You know, these guys with distinguished degrees that are on this committee and that. So we're reading the best.

This is the cream of the crop, and that's what we need to consider. So he's defining the word righteousness as illustrated in biblical and rabbinic usage. Is morality in its totality or the moral ideal in all spheres, private, social, and religious? Any comment about that? Have you ever heard me on the word ideal or idealism as the last refuge in hiding place? Of humanism? To be idealistic is to conjure up out of your humanity certain ethereal or high or lofty standards, which emanates from you rather than from God.

Can you understand why there are men who would prefer to live and regulate their conduct by ideals rather than by the word of God or the spirit of God? Because so long as it's human in its origin, then they're in the saddle. When you shift from ideals to God, you're on another basis altogether, in which your lofty idealism will often be totally contradicted and brought down. But, you know, today, even the word orthodox and conservative have lost their original meanings.

So you'll find, as I found in the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York, which is supposed to be conservative and the training ground for conservative rabbis, such unbelievable liberalism and atheism from my own professor that I was staggered and choked and spluttered like a fool in that classroom, that they would take such utterly cynical and ungodly attitudes about God himself. You know the famous episode that took place when one of the students behind me, we were discussing God's treatment of Job as compared to some other figure, and it seems to show an inconsistency in God, that he was softer and more deferent to this one, but to the other more requiring. And they were disputing, you know, how can God not be consistent? And some hotshot graduating that year to be a rabbi cried out, he said, well, he said, God's on a learning curve.

You ever seen Mount Vesuvius erupt? I couldn't contain myself, I turned in astonishment. You impotent ass, I don't think I said it, but that was the gist of it. You're going to be a graduate, you're going to be a rabbi, and you're going to commend this God who's on a learning curve to your congregations? How dare you imply that you're superior and that God is a novice and is in training? And I went on like that.

The teacher then spilled out into the hallway, and he and his girlfriend accused me of being judgmental, and the professor who didn't hear it got the report from them that this fundamentalist Jew is judgmental and condemning us. I wonder why lightning didn't come right through the ceiling and strike him. And so I got a note from the professor a couple of days later, please see me in my office, and I went with my hat in my hand.

He said, your conduct, he said, I can understand you taking issue, but not against the person himself. You can debate over a principle or over an issue, but not ad hominem, not against the person, not against the man. I apologized.

I said, you're right. That was utterly wrong. I said that I just, I was beside myself.

I could not believe that anyone could dare pronounce anything as impertinent as that against God. And so it just, it just came out. He said, well, so long as you're here, he said, who are you and why are you here? And what are you about? And I told him.

So we need to pick up. I hope we're in the right spirit about this. And I hope you sense that I trust my own right spirit.

We're not raising this up as an object for ridicule. Our purpose is not to ridicule our Jewish kinsmen. Our purpose is to experience the pangs of God, of compassion and concern, because he sees right through subterfuge.

He sees their idealism. He sees their humanism clothed as religiosity and knows that they're utterly lost and yet are persuaded of their own rectitude. So what we want to do is see as God sees and come to his heart of compassion toward them and for them, not to ridicule, not to condemn, because how many of us have come out of backgrounds like this and in some of us, some of this yet lingers in one form or another.

There but for the grace of God go we. And these are our kinsmen. They're in this condition.

So we need to identify because we're going to be relating with them face to face as the righteous who will clothe them, feed them, give them to drink, not only of the things that are physical and natural, but of the things that are spiritual. It's this mentality that we will encounter in the last days that will be utterly shattered because is there anything more devastating than one whose ideals have been shattered, whose vain hopes are demolished, and whose humanistic presumptions have been shown to be destitute? And there's no explanation now for the remarkable thing that finds them in the wilderness, stripped and losing their fortunes, their honors, their degrees, their diplomas, their credentials, and they have nothing. Nothing strips like the wilderness.

Maybe the thing that comes closest would be the Nazi concentration camp of the Holocaust where they lost their name, their hair, the fillings of their teeth. They lost their identity as men and became numbers. They were stripped, utterly stripped.

And so the wilderness will have that effect as well. And so they'll come to us as a bundle of collapsed disappointment, of expectation, of idealisms that have completely collapsed and destitute of anything. And how we address them at that time will be the issue not only of their physical rescue, but of their eternal salvation.

So the Lord is preparing us, I believe, by touching this today to compare the biblical view of righteousness with a Judaistic or rabbinical view. So he says in the biblical and rabbinic Judaism, the right way is defined in terms of Torah commandments. We'll see now many references to Torah, which so intrigued me that I turned to the article on Torah and there the Lord lowered the boom, as you'll see when we get to it.

Righteousness is the pattern of conduct that is stipulated by the covenant relation between God and man and its implications for relations between man and his fellow. God's holiness and human righteousness are inseparably linked in the covenant. We would say, amen.

And provides the foundation of Jewish ethics as an imitatio dei. How would you say that in Latin? Unchangeable God. Or the imitation of God, isn't it? Or is it unchangeable? Imitatio.

Imitatio. Imitatio, like the imitation of God. You seek to imitate, take that image of God, emulating God.

And that's the foundation of Jewish ethics. We talked about ethics the other day. Again, principles conceived by men as grounds for righteousness. In the absence of God, they're not a bad thing.

But in the presence of God, they're, what's the word? A pitiful substitute. Righteousness is the summation of God's demands to observe what is right and to do what is just. The righteous man is rewarded with life for his fidelity.

Abraham and the most righteous of his descendants reversed the process by which the Shekinah was required to withdraw from the earth. For the wicked causes the Shekinah to depart, while the righteous cause it to dwell on the earth. And the citation that's given here is not from scripture, but from rabbinical writings.

This is a little interesting point. The Shekinah, the presence of God is not so much the issue of God as the issue of man. Man's righteousness determines God's presence.

It's not God's presence determining man's righteousness. It's man upon whom the emphasis and the focus is given. And so how does he see Abraham and his descendants? That because they were righteous, they brought the restoration of God's Shekinah.

And I don't want to altogether dismiss this, because there's an echo of this in what we read today in the psalm that Naomi gave us, where the horn of David buds, that a certain condition is fulfilled in his people that is called Zion. So there's a remarkable proximity, there's a closeness, but a miss is as good as a mile. So we know that if we are to attain the Zion by which the horn buds, it's not our accomplishment.

It's our submission. It's the work of God in and through us that has brought us to the reality for which God waits. But I think the emphasis here is invariable in Judaism, is more upon man than upon God.

And you'll hear more of this later. I'll be saved by justice, a repentance, a repentance by righteousness, we would agree with that. Ultimately in the messianic future, God will instruct us in his ways.

They shall beat their swords into plowshares. Here again, we're virtually on the same page with this writer and with what is being spoken here. Nowhere is there a greater gap between Jewish and Christian thought than on the redeeming power of righteousness.

To the Jew, the commandments of Torah are both sacrament and salvation. They are vehicles of divine grace, insofar as in their joyful performance, the Jew is brought into the closest possible relation with God. New Testament distinctions made by Paul between the righteousness of faith and the works appear to the Jewish mind as irrelevant.

But if such a distinction has to be made, rabbinic sages would affirm the efficacy of righteous works, even in the absence of true faith. I'll repeat that last part. You're going along, you're nodding, yes, we understand what's being, and then boom, comes the punchline, which, though we thought to be on a parallel track, all of a sudden we find we're going off in very different directions.

I'll read that again. So New Testament distinctions by Paul between righteousness of faith and of works appear to the Jewish mind as irrelevant. But if such a distinction had to be made, rabbinic sages would affirm the efficacy of righteous works, even in the absence of true faith.

What does James say? If you have faith, show it by your works. But your works are not an activity independent of faith. They are the issuance, the effect of faith.

Here is a remarkable position that there could be works independent of faith, not only that, but they can substitute for faith and constitute righteousness by that work. So here again, man and what he performs is the primary focus. Christianity is often ridiculed by men like this.

You mean all you got to do is believe? You guys are getting off easy. That's kids stuff. You just have to believe in Jesus.

Is that all you have to do? Well, we really have our work cut out for us. We've got to actually perform something. We've got to do this.

We've got to do that. We've got to perform this with great and painstaking accuracy. And you guys have only to believe? You mean if Hitler believed, that would have saved him after all of his horrific and vile acts? You guys believe that? Well, if that's your God, I'll have no part of him.

See, that's a counterfeit, that's a shallow, easy, patsy God is the way they perceive us. When you put on the glasses of works, man's activity, man's virtue as by what he performs. Whatever has been lost in fulfillment by virtue of the loss of temple and priesthood is more than ample made up in the plentitude of requirements that have to do with orthodoxy, with kosher practices, with observances, with times and seasons, that the rabbis have elaborated in unbelievable detail.

So there's no limit to a whole body of things that can be performed according to rabbinical requirement. When we come to the issue of Torah, which I'll read to you next, you're going to hear this, that rabbinical requirement is as holy as the law of Moses, and that Moses himself is called the great rabbi, and every lesser rabbi shares in his anointing and in his authority. So that rabbinical requirement is as valid and as demanding as the law of Moses itself, and as constitutes together the whole thing that is called Torah.

Torah is not just the five books of Moses, it's the whole corpus of rabbinical legislation that is as much anointed and authoritative as what God gave Moses on Sinai. So even in the absence of true faith, there's an efficacy of righteous works. In this spirit, Joshua made his famous comment, the righteous of all nations have a share in the world to come.

Show me where you can find that in scripture. Here's an interesting point. In this spirit, Joshua made his famous comment, the righteous of all nations shall share in the world to come.

And then the source that's given is TOS period, S-A-N-H period, Sanhedrin 13. It's out of the Talmud, not out of the Bible. But here's an interesting thing.

He gives it the same value and authority as being out from scripture. As Joshua said, not as Joshua was supposed to have said, or is thought to have said, but as Joshua said, because it's quoted in the Talmud, it has the same authority as scripture itself, if not greater. So what did Joshua say? The righteous of all nations have a place in the world to come.

Which gives a whole different view of eternity and how eternity is to be obtained. Not by a salvation through the blood of the sent Messiah, but through the works even of unbelieving Gentiles, if their works have an efficacy and constitute righteousness. The righteous of all nations.

So there's no message that needs to go out. There's no salvation that needs to be known. They'll find it in their way by their righteous works, and we'll obtain it in our way by our righteous works.

Because Joshua said so. But where did he say it? Not in scripture, in the Talmud. But how is that put there? Some rabbinical commentary became incorporated because it has the same value and authority as that of Moses itself.

We have not understood. Lord give me grace here. What's the word? If I say sinister, we've not understood how sinister the root of Judaism is as a counter system to biblical faith.

And what has been the cost of it for those who have subscribed to it and have been turned by it against the faith of God in the Messiah whom he has sent. We cannot begin to assess the cost of this and the consequence because we have been much too honorific, much too complimentary, much too honoring. Because when they said Torah, we thought they meant the five books of Moses.

But when they say Torah, they mean the whole corpus of rabbinical teachings. So someone has, in the book, the Holocaust, my book, I take up this philosopher who has now passed on, whose name I always

forget. He raised some ultimate questions that I tried to answer in the book.

One of his questions is, the Holocaust, he said, could not be the judgment of God for sin because the victims primarily were those that were most religious. Polish Jews, the whole of Polish Jewry was wiped out. The whole of European Orthodoxy were the vast victims of the system of annihilation whereas the unbelieving and the secular Jews in the West were relatively untouched.

So how could it be God's judgment for sin? And my answer is, you're assuming that God looked with favor upon what you call religion. As if that rabbinism to which these Orthodox Jews subscribed was pleasing in God's sight. Because it has an aura of piety and sages and practices of a kind that even could move us to envy.

And yet if the root of the system is the celebration of man and of sages and of rabbis, is that a system that God would approve, particularly when those rabbis and their pharisaical fathers were instrumental in the death of Jesus and still commend that death as appropriate. As I was told by the Lubavitcher Chassidim that broke up the meeting at Vassar College when I spoke there and 12 of them came into the room, broke open into the room and terrified the audience and stood up and never sat down with their black fedora hats and beards and black eyes blazing out at me. And I'm trying to finish a message on Abraham and circumcision, when you can cut the atmosphere with a knife, terrifying.

It was the mafia hit squad. And one guy, and then if I open for questions, they just let loose. You dum-dum, you idiot.

Who do you think you are coming with that Goyesher King James Bible? You don't even speak Hebrew. They went on like that. If your Jesus were alive today, he said, I'll always remember, we would do to him now what our fathers did to him then.

The depth of vehemence and bitterness against Jesus. And that there were references in the Talmud against him, they don't use the name, but it's thinly disguised as being the illegitimate son of a union between a woman with a Roman soldier and a magician who was an occultist and another word they use beside magician. Sorcerer.

A sorcerer. And by his sorcery turned Jews away from the law and to himself. And so there's a vehement bitterness against him that underlies this remarkable, saintly, white bearded appearance of civility and niceness.

When that mask is but moved away a little, you'll see the teeth barred in a way that will frighten you. The Sadducees, which were the liberals who did not believe in resurrection, reflective of the priesthood and the temple hierarchy, who were corrupt, were opposed to him, but also the Pharisees, whom he reserved the most vitriolic statements, called them whiten sepulchers and such things. He didn't address anyone with the same vituperation by which he spoke harshly to the Pharisees.

So that continues. We need to understand how they would look upon a figure who sweats, urinates and defecates and allows men to fall at his feet and cry out, my Lord and my God. To them, then and now, that is the height of sinful idolatry and the celebration of man as God.

Isn't this a remarkable paradox? The whole of Judaism is the celebration of man as God. But when God comes as man, they're offended and cannot recognize him and must remove him because he offers in himself an alternative to a system of righteousness obtained by works and requiring faith in himself. So

everything about the Lord in his coming is the most calculated, how shall I say, offense against the sensibility of man.

So that only the Father can lead men to the recognition of the Son and the Son to the Father. That's why he had to say to Peter, when he said, who do men say that I am? And who do you say that I am? And Peter said, thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. Flesh and blood have not revealed this to you.

Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jonah. This is the beginning of blessedness. But you did not come to this by deduction.

This is not the result of your brilliant analysis or even being in my intimate presence and seeing my works. The Father hath revealed this to you. God so set the stage, so loaded the gun, that except revelation be given, there's no way that a Pharisaical Jew or a Sadducee or anyone in a place of eminence could recognize him.

All the more, when he should die as a criminal, outside the camp, on the dung heap, as the worst of offenders and be crucified, hanging on a tree, is the most, which is it? Curse. It's a curse. There's nothing fouler, more degenerate.

Saul was beheaded, Paul was beheaded, because the Romans recognized that crucifixion was only for slaves in rebellion or the most vile kinds of criminals. Any other offense that required capital punishment was obtained through decapitation. That was honorable, but to be put up on a cross and to be stretched and broken and pierced and submit to the rays of the sun and thirst and die by asphyxiation as the fluids came up in your body and you could no longer stretch when your legs were broken.

That kind of cruelty and death was reserved only for the vilest of men. So you're a Jew who's pious and know that God is holy, holy, holy and lofty and distant and this figure is God in the flesh? It's to laugh, it's to scoff. And indeed, exactly what they did, come down from the cross and we will believe them.

We need to understand that God has stacked the cards against human presumption. And the only reason we believe is because of a mercy that has come to us or we would be fixed in the same kind of alienation from God as they. And that will very much affect how we relate to them.

Even the disciples on the road to Emmaus did not understand it. The necessity for the death of their own hope for redeemer of Israel. We had hoped it had been he who would have restored the glory of Israel.

But alack alas, we saw he's a dead cadaver. It took days and weeks, it took the resurrection. It took Jesus in his resurrection for 40 days conferring with his own disciples to begin to give them a semblance of understanding.

And then it took a Paul under the mind of the Lord and the operation of the spirit to develop the beginning of some kind of systematic theology that became our present Christianity. Jesus himself, I'm fond of saying, is the hermeneutical key of the faith. The scriptures are not conclusive.

There are ways in which the issue of Messiah can be understood or misconstrued. Whether it comes once or comes twice, whether two Messiahs or one or a suffering Messiah or the nation itself is the Messiah. The Lord in his own coming, in his own suffering, in his own death gave the distinctive key of interpretation.

But if he himself is rejected as the key, then the nation is left yet without explanation and only with the shame and the scandal of the death of this one who seemed to be a political misfit who rubbed the Roman authorities the wrong way and suffered the consequence and is of no more concern for us Jews than the man in the moon. After 40 years in the faith and almost the entire time in full-time ministry, now punctuated by my time in New York and studying examination, we have no idea of the depth of opposition, intractable hatred against the faith, against believers, against Jesus himself, against his name. The cards are so totally stacked against any communication of the truth to this people as if God has raised the most formidable opposition to the fulfillment of his own purpose and will and designed by his wisdom that the agency through which this revelation is to come of himself is the church.

I mean, Lord, come on, give us a break. So, it's going to take wondrous grace, miraculous power. God, Christ formed in us before their eyes can be opened.

Nobody should know that they are the enemies of the gospel for our sake. And I can't say how desperately we need that for our sake. And that seminar, the last seminar that I brought to Trinity Tabernacle Pentecostal Church in Brooklyn began with that statement.

They are the enemies of the gospel for our sake. And then I went on to explicate the wisdom of God for that provision because it compels us to God and to the radicalness of the apprehension of himself. Christ in us, the hope of glory, the incarnate God in us or else we will be meeting them on the same basis by which they conduct themselves.

A certain knowledge about God, God reduced to principles, hoping that he will help us. They say the same thing and they believe at that same level. But God in us is altogether something other and is the key to what will be salvational for them if we attain to it ourselves and are not ourselves living the Christian life judaistically.

There are more Jews, there are more Christians living judaistically and legalistically than can be counted. If you're forsaking the grace and still yourself in your own humanity in the driver's seat and only employing the faith as principle and praying just for help that you can succeed, you're more judaistic than you know. So, okay, this is what I was hoping for.

We need to see this remarkable contrast because it's not just a little accidental confluence of events. What this is are the two pivotal modes of being and a perception not only of God but of reality, of value, of truth, of righteousness that are contending in this world. What is judaistic probably has its counterpart in Catholicism as well as forms of even seeming Christianity.

So, we're getting at two foundational views that are in total opposition and will fight to the death to avoid the one or the other. And this has been struck with the advent of Jesus and now we're coming to the final expression of this conflict that we need to recognize and know how to bear. We'd be a bunch of patsies if it were not for them and their continual critique.

And that's all the way back through the history of the church. And even the golden-mouthed orator, what was his name? Chrysostom. Chrysostom was driven to an anti-Semitism because of the baiting of the Jews of those early Christian communities.

That, that, that, that, that, that. You Gentile dum-dums, you think you know who the Messiah is and you can't even read our language and you've got it all wrong and you show no testimony in your conduct and

even your savage attitude toward us clearly demonstrates that you're up the tree and you've got it all wrong. And that one day we will be back in the place, now we're presently dishonored and cast out in your midst and are your victim but the day will come when God will restore us according to the scriptures and then we'll show you that that kind of exacerbating activity against the church drove even its best saints to an attitude against Jews that was unhappy.

Even Luther himself succumbed to it. So the church, God has allowed this provocation coming from Jews. They are the greatest test of our reality.

They have, whatever they lack, there's a remarkable sense for what is authentic. They could spot a phony and they say right, right through the Christian televangelists who later stumbled into the most atrocious sins, they, they knew that from the first. They didn't have to wait for the collapse while we're all the time supporting these characters.

So God has provided a great boom to the church. This critical opposition by them so that when we can impress them and win them, we have really come to the faith. And they're coming will be life from the dead.

And I want to say that they're coming will only be because of life from the dead. It'll, it'll take resurrection reality, resurrection testimony, resurrection grace against their critical opposition. Even their violent opposition.

We might see the resumption of martyrdom. But again, Rick, you know, I believe this, that there'll be a Stephen people brought to their death by Jews in their fury against us, thinking that we're seeking to convert them to some Gentilism and away from their Judaism. And they're defending their faith by killing us.

And we have to bear that in the same way that on those occasions when I've spoken at universities, and I love to speak at them because there's always a proportion of Jews to be found there beyond their number. And when they get stirred up, you cannot believe the anger. Talk about vitriolic bitterness.

They're spitting out because a guy like me looks like a paid functionary, a flunky, a missionary, the worst word in the Jewish vocabulary. And they let you have it. How about the Spanish Inquisition? How about the Crusaders? How about the Jesuits and the Inquisition? What about, what about, what about? Because you represent them.

You're a Christian? You're a Jew? You're a Christian? You're a Jew? That's, that's what you represent. And you want to say, hold it just a minute. No, let me explain.

You can't ascribe those things to the church. That's that. These are not really believers.

There are unregenerate Gentiles who wore white crosses on their tunics. They didn't know the Lord any more than a man in the moon. You can't, there's no time to defend.

There's no time to argue. You have only to receive their barbs. You're a pincushion, and then you have to just absorb their anger, their bitterness, which is decades and generations in the making.

And then after they spit it out, you might get a word in edgewise. In fact, the greatest testimony that you can give is not having to defend, and just to receive the onslaught with patience and forbearance, as

happened in City College in New York, where the attack was unbelievable. When I spoke on Isaiah chapter six, the moment the word came out of my mouth went right to the ground with a thud.

I thought, Lord, where are you? Haven't we been praying for this meeting for months now and fasting? The first gospel outreach in the history of City College of New York, 95% Jewish. Didn't you lead us to expect that this was going to be a significant breaking into the Jewish community in New York, and the word is falling right from the beginning? And then when I stopped, they started with their questions and answers. You've never heard more barbed questions in your life.

Rabbis with the Van Dyck beards, Yarmulkes, the place was loaded. They were out for bear, and they got it. And I was just devastated.

I was crunched. And went home with my tail between my legs, like total failure. And the worst, most disappointing and anguishing thing for me was not the anger of my kinsmen, I expected that, but the disappointment of my Christian brethren.

To look into their faces, and their faces are speaking volumes. Cats, we thought it had been you who would have restored the glory of Israel. Don't you know how to pray? Don't you ever hear of fasting? Don't you know that this was a significant occasion for which you should have prepared yourself? You're a failure, man.

Your word is flat. You have no answer. You have no cleverness.

These guys are just making a mock of you. They're chewing you up and spitting you out. Can't you say anything? That's what it was.

I went home in that condition, and lay in that condition for weeks, licking my wounds like a dog, until the telephone call came. Mr. Katz, I'm a Jewish woman. I've been hearing about your faith.

I have certain questions. Could I find some time with you? I said, lady, is this, am I the best that you can do? Don't you have any better alternative? Well, if you insist, you come over. Sure, she came over.

Skinny thing with her veins popping out, chain smoking, asking me questions. The last question is, what must I do to be saved? I said, well, I'll tell you. If you call on the name of the Lord, she'll follow me to prayer.

So she took my hand with her little bony hand, and she follows me word for word. And passage from death to life, the light of God came into her face. She was saved to the uttermost.

She became an evangelist in her apartment house. Up and down the stairs in the apartments, talking about Jesus and handing out tracts, this little thing, who had one foot in the grave. And she comes to the door, putting her coat on her shoulders.

I said, by the way, I said, how did you think to call me? Oh, didn't I tell you? No. My son was at that meeting three weeks ago at City College. And he came home so absolutely impressed.

He said, Mom, I've seen something today of a kind that I've never seen before. So a man came and simply spoke his convictions. And before he could finish, he was so jumped on.

People came upon him so savagely. And he not once answered them in kind. He bore that entire attack.

I've never seen anything like that, Mom. I was so impressed. I got his book.

And I brought it home. She said, I read the book. And that raised the questions that led to her salvation.

So that's a little mini episode. But I think it depicts our future. We're going to have to bear the fury of our people.

All the more brought to the most intense level in the collapse that will come to their security, their affluence overnight with great suddenness and will be looked upon as a Christian crime. Again, a second Holocaust coming for the same reasons as the first. Intrinsic, invidious references to Jews in the New Testament that give rise to anti-Semitism and spread this blot and brought this anger against us finally to the point of violence where we're propelled out of our New York, out of our Chicago, out of our Toronto penthouses.

And we're placed now on the road in wilderness places with nothing more than what we have on our back. We've lost everything. And it's all the fault of Christianity and this Jesus.

We have always suffered because of him. And we're suffering because of him now. How are you going to answer that? But, but first to just receive their anger, their frustration, their fury, and let them spit it out.

Let them get it out. And then as God will give grace and open their ear and as they receive mercy, and they know that we're giving mercy at the cost of our own life, they may be open to hear. God will meet with them in the wilderness face to face.

So Lord, prepare us for that encounter. Thank you Lord. Seeing that you're going to uproot an entire people, jank up, wherever they are in their world and disperse them through all the nations, as you tell us in Amos chapter 9, that none will be exempt.

And that's why Jesus, now seated as King, after that horrific event and his coming, judges the Gentiles of all nations who call him Lord. When did we see you thirsty, naked, and hungry? Lord, as you did not do this unto the least of these my brethren, you did not do it unto me. The fact that they say Lord shows that they employed at least Christian vocabulary, but they have not the Christian reality, so much as to recognize in the least of these Jews, their Lord, and his brethren as our brethren.

And to be willing to extend to them, whatever the cost, mercy. Because righteousness takes no view of the cost. If it does not cost, it's not righteous.

If there's no peril in our identification with them, and in providing those things that will sustain their life and give them understanding, it's not righteous. And those who give it, as we read in Matthew 25, Jesus calls the righteous. Okay now you righteous, enter the kingdom prepared for you.

You've passed the test, the ultimate test, and what you did in that critical final moment is what you in fact are. You didn't rise to the occasion in a moment of magically found heroism. What you expressed in that occasion is what you consistently were in all your moments that preceded it.

You're righteous. And righteousness requires a line of conduct, even when it brings the one who performs it into the place of risk and death. That's righteousness.

That's what I did at the cross, and that's what you did before my people come and receive the place prepared for you in my kingdom. So, the Aaron Collision Course. Joshua made his famous statement, which is not to be found in scripture.

Rather daring is the statement found in another rabbinical source, which cites a rabbi, Abba, who said, It is written, your fathers deserted me and did not keep my Torah. If only they had kept studying my Torah, even if they forsook even me, all would turn out well, provided they keep studying my Torah. Study to show yourself approved is even more extended in rabbinical Judaism.

It's study to show yourself saved. Study is salvation. Even if they deserted me, this rabbi said, if they had only continued in studying the Torah, it would have been well.

Because the Torah and its study under rabbinical supervision is ultimate value, even as against faith or other obedience, or even the knowledge of me. You can even forsake me, but don't forsake the Torah. Well, when you read later, hear later what they understand by Torah, that's really a shocking statement.

And it raises the question of why they would put all their eggs in that one basket. This is a post-Christian phenomenon, that the apostasy that led to the devastation of the Temple in 70 AD, after the advent of Jesus, is the time of the birth, within that first century, of what is today's rabbinical Judaism. I forgot this rabbi's name, this sage, who contracted with the Roman emperor who destroyed Jerusalem, to use Jaffna, a city outside of Jerusalem, as the base now for rabbinism, and the development now of a system that will replace a destroyed Temple, and a dispersed priesthood, and be coherent for the Jewish community, to continue in its existence as Jews, through synagogue worship, and study under rabbinical supervision, and with the observance of rabbinical statutes and directives, that they would give.

Even when it's in contradiction to the scripture, it is superior to scripture, and that's the basis for present day Jewish understanding and practice, even by Jews who are not orthodox. So that when you talk to them, they'll say, well if my rabbi does not believe in what you believe, that's enough for me. There's such a remarkable confidence in their rabbis, because they are sages and students, who know not only Hebrew, but Aramaic, as my rabbi Blumenthal did, who was a fifth generation Talmudic scholar, and can quote you the Talmud by the yards.

When I stayed overnight at his home, and was there the next morning, when he studied with his ten year old son, a page out of the Talmud, that was appropriate for that day, I marveled, that kid had to recite, had to memorize the principle text, and engage in a discussion with his father, over the details of that Talmudic portion. I said, shouldn't that kid be out playing marbles? You know, aren't you destroying his childhood? And what was the portion for that day? It had to do with flower sacrifice, F-L-O-U-R, and the ingredients, and how it's sifted, and measured by, it's so obtuse, so remote, so it's not even practiced anymore. Why are you bugging this kid, and filling his head with this kind of detail? Oh, he said, my brother, don't you know, he said, that even if this is no longer in practice, that the study of it prepares the student for a greater appreciation of Torah? That it's by studying the details of the law, and it's rabbinical elaboration, that fits one to better understand the scripture? And beside that, he said, the day will come when this will be restored, and my son will then know all about it.

How can you not love a man like that? Whose children are under the most precious obedience. You'll never hear a voice raised, or a moment of disrespect, for father or for mother. And when I last, one of the last visits, I don't know who was with me, I think Reggie, I'm not sure, we met them in their basement.

They have a beautiful home. Why are you eating in the basement? Well, we're preparing for the Passover. I said, what do you mean? It's still a week or so away.

Well, we have already scoured the house from the attic right through to the first floor with our children, with flashlights under the bed for any vestige of leaven. And so in order not to incur more leaven, seeing we're so close now to Pesach, we're living in the basement. And that will be the last place to be cleansed so the house will be fit for Passover.

Can you not love a people like that and whose hearts are like that and yet so laborious in detail and so Christ-rejecting? Because Christ seems to them to be some ridiculous, off-the-wall, goyish, in fact, I've been rebuked by a number of them. Why do I believe in this Greek mythology? This is Greek. A son is born out of some miraculous union with deity and lives in the earth and then dies and is resurrected.

That's total Greek mythology. And you believe that, Cass? And you're a Jew? Shame on you. And are you keeping kosher? What are you doing for Passover? Are you cleansing your house? So we need to understand east is east and west is west and never the twain shall meet.

We're occupying the same terrestrial ball but we could not be more different in our fundamental attitudes and understanding and conviction than with the men in the moon. And the remarkable thing is they're not holding something as an opinion that's negotiable. What they believe is fact and truth and God and verified by time and by tradition.

And he has on his wall the pictures of the sages. Look at these men, they've lived consistent lives. He said, all I've got to do is look at your Christianity and it's riddled with corruption, with deceit, with fallen men, with pastors running off with their organists.

Here are men whose lives have been impeccable in virtue and you're trying to tell me that you're in the truth and that we are mistaken? To put it in a word we have our work cut out for us. I'll tell you what, if we should succeed in this ultimate challenge it will make saints of us. And it's not an issue of individual success it's the issue of corporateness.

The witness for which they wait unbeknownst to themselves must come forth out of a body. The body of Christ of which he is the head and supplies to every joint liberally.

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