

# K-492 the Holocaust and the Knowledge of God

by Art Katz

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*The knowledge of God is everything, and rejecting God's word leads to captivity, death, and hell.*

**Duration:** 1:10:53

**Scripture:** Isaiah 5:11-12, Isaiah 5:24, Matthew 6:33

**Topics:** "Holocaust"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of having the right mindset for those who want to walk with God. He starts by sharing a personal experience of finding newly born chicks that had fallen from their nest, illustrating the consequences of not being able to hold the weight of new life. The speaker then references Isaiah and highlights key themes of judgment, righteousness, and the consequences of rejecting the knowledge of God. He concludes by mentioning a verse that is relevant to our current time, emphasizing the need for a kind of mindset that aligns with God's word.

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## Transcript

My God, as the God alone whose seeing is perfect, my God, there's nothing that has escaped your attention from the commencement of man, my God, and the birthing of Israel to this present day. All things are open, naked, and transparent to your view. And your view, my God, is the true view, and we aspire to see, my God, as you see.

Grant us, my God, such a measure of it as you know and understand that our frames can bear. We know that we are at a distance, my God, from that seeing. We have been insulated, my God.

Our minds are not fitted for your perceiving and your concepts, your understanding. And yet it's on that basis that men shall be eternally judged. And so we're asking mercy again, my God, now, that you would communicate your view, your understanding, Lord, and grant us the strength to bear it, and that we might take it into our spirits and into our consideration, Lord.

And we know that it will require infinite adjustments in the practical outworking of our life when once you impart, my God, that kind of view. So we yet request it, we desire it, Lord. We thank you for the privilege of it, that somehow in the depths of the tragedy of the Holocaust, the great epical event of modern times, and one that is only a precursor to a greater to come, that there's an understanding that waits, that is not to be

found in any other place.

Grant us grace now, Lord, and lead us understanding by understanding into the depths of the things that you have prepared. We bless you. We thank you, my God, for the wonderful work of your spirit, for being our guide, our teacher, for being the one who was with Israel, my God, in her afflictions.

For your word says that in all of her afflictions, you were afflicted. You're not a God to stand off, far off, and just to look down passively, my God, at the agonies of your people. You're in the midst of them, and the greatest sufferer of all.

So come, my God, and touch our hearts with a sense of yourself. That is the ultimate knowledge of everything, the knowledge of God, as you in fact are, Lord. We desire that, that there'll be no shock of adjustment for us when we enter into the day of eternity, Lord, that we will know you before that time as we ought, and then just rejoice for the confirmation of seeing you even as we're seen.

So, Lord, bless us together now. Bring to this table yet whom you will. We thank you and give you the praise for our great privilege this morning and in these days, in Jesus' holy name.

Amen. Well, the foremost thought in my heart this morning is the knowledge of God. My people perish for the want of knowledge.

An interesting question is raised by Jewish commentators of the Holocaust. How is it that of all of the world Jewry, that that segment suffered most greatly, that was equally the most religious? It was Polish Jewry that suffered the greatest devastation of the Holocaust, virtually wiped out whole total communities, demolished, dissolved. At Yad Vashem, they have a new exhibit.

It's like a courtyard of great granite columns and in it are sculpted the names of communities that no longer exist. In present day Yugoslavia, Poland, Balkan nations, Eastern Europe, just a list of cities and towns of Jewish shtetls, s-t-e-t-l, villages that were completely extirpated and rooted out. The vast majority of them were Orthodox, even ultra-Orthodox.

The Hasidic movement was born in Poland and had its greatest adherence there until World War II. So, that's a remarkable question. How is it that American Jewry was spared? Western Jewry that is utterly secular was spared, but religious Jewry were the worst sufferers of the devastation of the Holocaust? And the question is raised so much as to say, where's God? Where's justice in that? But who is astute enough to raise the question that needs to be raised with that kind of thought? How could you answer that if that were to be pressed upon you? How is it that the greatest sufferers of the Holocaust were not the secular, but the religious? And where's God who should have more evidently honored them and preserved them? That his justice and righteousness would have been more demonstrated by devastating the secular than by devastating the religious.

What question does that raise? It's a great question. Maybe the greatest question at the heart of all the questions. What premise is unspoken in that statement that should not be allowed to pass, that needs to be examined? And in examining it, we come to the heart of the matter.

But merely because Jews were impressed and look upon that as the highest, most authentic expression of Judaism, orthodoxy does not mean that God is necessarily impressed. In fact, what impresses men, but might be most grievous to him. And it might be that especially they will be the victim of a judgment because what was celebrated is not the knowledge of God in fact, but what men have held dear to

themselves.

In fact, I think you can trace direct lineage from present day Hasidic orthodoxy to the pharisaical party that was critical to the death of the Messiah. And in an outreach that I wouldn't want to see repeated, but I'll always remember at Vassar College in upstate New York, where I spent the day in ministry and a school that had now become co-ed, originally a girl's school. Some Jewish guy looked up at me and he said, you'll get yours tonight.

I thought, whatever does he mean? And that night in the middle of a message on Abraham and circumcision, the doors burst open and in came about a dozen black fedora-hatted Hasidim who had come up by car from Brooklyn to destroy the meeting and the messenger. And it was a night of terror and they planted themselves around the room. They never sat.

And one was about this distance from me, glowering and shooting daggers with his eyes. And one of the remarks that I made, and by the way, the Christians freaked out that night. As if someone had lifted the lid from a garbage can, the screeches and the howls against these Jews was decidedly un-Christian.

And one of these Hasidim said to me, if your Jesus were here now, we would do to him what our fathers had done. So there's an unbroken continuum of sin. And I thought that was a significant statement.

Well, I want to take off on that and hope that the Lord will lead me to share with you something out of Colbert on the knowledge of God that is really choice and a few other things that have come to my attention in these days. But we're at that place in this, the first page of this paper where I had a, an encounter with Elie Wiesel from whose book we read on the last session. And who in his public address that day in New Jersey, many years ago, said that he had been studying the scripture with a rabbi twice a week.

And the Lord didn't allow me to ask it publicly. There was a question and answer period, but privately, I went up to him after the session and I, I asked him what is described here. Let's read this to what degree it's at the bottom of the first page.

He would acknowledge that the Holocaust and all previous Jewish calamity as being the fulfillment of what was prophetically forecast for us in the latter days as written in the conclusion of the books of Leviticus and Deuteronomy. And he replied, I refuse to consider that. That I think that that statement has been echoing and reverberating up into the heavenlies ever since, but it's a summation.

You know how one phrase, one phrase and one statement and one word can sum up a whole condition. I think that that is this statement is that kind of a phrase because it begins with a significant word. I, I refuse.

It's not whether what is stated there is right or wrong or God's word or perspective, but that there's something higher than God's word. And it's the I who can approve or refuse. I mean, just, I don't know how to deal with this or to underline this, what that denotes, what that has to say about the exaltation of man over God and over God's word.

I'll just throw this out as an axiom. I think you would agree with it, that the attitude toward God's word is the attitude toward God. That the rejection of God's word is the rejection of God.

You can't have some kind of exaltation of God and despise his word. The God that you're exalting is not the God of the word, but the God of your own imagining. And that's, that's tragic.

And though you may celebrate it and build a whole culture around it in the end, the falsity of that will kill you. It's like the day that Elijah confronted the false prophets of Baal and commanded them to build their sacrifice and call on their God. And he would call on his God, let that God be God who answers by fire.

And they agreed to that. Because they really believed that their God would answer. That's the depth of their deception.

And they leaped on their sacrifice all through the afternoon and they cut themselves. They were disappointed and he mocked them. But the point is they expected an answer.

That's deception. To not, to not even know that you're deceived and to expect that the God whom you're calling upon is going to be one who answers. And maybe we're saying the same thing in the Holocaust.

Those who called upon the God that they knew and as they knew him did not answer because they did not know him in fact and in truth. How does that scripture go? I think I mentioned it last night, that to know him is life eternal. It sounds like almost like a little cheap phrase or a cliché, but to know him is life and not to know him is death.

The knowledge of God is everything. And if men have gone on for a long season, even historically for centuries in a false knowledge of God, having rejected the profoundest and most acute revelation of God given the nation, what will the end of that be when God will call for it? And what would you say was the most acute and profound revelation of God for the nation, which was rejected of God as he in fact is in judgment and not as men think him to be. Crucifixion.

It came in judgment. It was Christ crucified as the judgment of God. And it said much more, the statement of God about man and man's condition and sin.

God and his triune character. And we're going to talk about that. And though that had its initiation 2000 years ago, God allows a set of circumstances to issue from that.

The collapse and the fall of the nation, the judgment that Jesus predicted, not one stone on the other, the dispersal, the end of the priesthood, the end of sacrifice, no covering, no atonement for sin. What does that mean when you go through 2000 years without atonement and there's cumulative sin that is not covered or dismissed because without the shedding of blood, there is no remission for sin. And a council of rabbis can decree an alternative mitzvot, good deeds, fasting and call that the Yom Kippur, the day of covering or atonement, but it cuts no ice with God.

It's a construct of men in the same arrogance as this statement. I refuse to consider that is the same arrogance as biblical faith may be ended. There's no temple nor priesthood by which it can continue, but we will decree a Judaistic alternative of a rabbinical kind that will be just as good.

And you no longer need a temple in which it can be practiced. It can be purveyed over the world through synagogues, which we will oversee and conduct. We are in an unbroken continuum with biblical faith, with Leviticus 17 and without the shedding of blood, there is no remission for sin, with priesthood and temple as against what has grown up with the destruction of those things as God's judgment of those who fail to keep it with a human or humanly ordained alternative, which is today's Judaism, which is rabbinical and not biblical.

So the issue is in Judaism versus Christianity. And if you get some chance to look at this article later, do it. It's the indignation of the Jewish community as against Christian missionaries, seeking to induce Jews to forsake their Jewishness and quote, become Christians.

When the fact of the matter is it's an effort to bring unbelieving Jews back into the framework of a biblical understanding and a relationship with the God of the Bible through sacrifice, no longer of the temple and of calves and bulls, but the once and for all, given in the Son of God himself. So we need ourselves to understand the parameters of what the faith is about and what the controversy is about, because it's going to become heated again in the last days and as controversial and as furious as it was in the beginning, that the same party that said to Paul, this man is not fit to live, will say it of us again. And for the same reasons, in my own conversation with rabbis over the years, especially remembering an episode in Kansas city, when I was serving the Lord there, this rabbi looked at me with a smug disdain and contempt.

And he said, blood sacrifice was primitive Judaism. And we have long since graduated from that. We have evolved to higher forms of religious life.

So can you see, you begin to get some of the sense of what the issue is, which I don't think that the church itself understands. And therefore we're easy victim to trembling before Jewish indignation as if, yeah, maybe we're trying to steal the souls of Jews when the fact of the matter is for secret to save them from a rabbinical deceit, which the end of which is death. And in fact, the wearing of black and black beards and black fedoras is so death celebrating and ominous and powerful that it's shot through with death.

And anything that takes the form of life requires schnapps, if I can put it crudely, that their night long Shabbatons and celebrations, there's booze on the table. And, and even the Hasidic dancing is a fleshly thing to promote something that appears like life and activity, but it is not the life of God. Now, isn't it interesting to read from the same Elie Wiesel from whom we read in the first session, his vivid depiction of the horror of the Holocaust.

And now hearing him many years later saying, I refuse to consider that. And now here's a quotation from a book called Smashing the Idols and a chapter entitled the missionary menace. So this is Elie Wiesel.

How do these missionaries operate? First of all, they know where to go. They make contact with lonely students, bewildered ones, those starved of love, attention, and friendship come with us. The soul hunters tell them, be one of us.

After all, we are Jews like you better still only by becoming Jewish Christians or Christian Jews, will you be truly Jewish? So it is by offering to teach these students about Judaism that the missionaries entrap them and do not let them go. To begin with young people go for the same reasons they go to an entertainment or to a social gathering to spend a few pleasant hours to escape boredom, to see and to do something different. Some enjoy the evening, others go away frightened.

I feel less revulsion for Christian missionaries than for their Jewish accomplices. The missionaries are at least honest. They proclaim openly that their aim is to absorb as many Jews as possible into their church.

They aim to kill their victims Jewishness by assimilating it. They give each individual Jew the choice between Judaism and Christianity, always doing their best to influence that choice. I've got to just interrupt this because I'm marveling at just how intricately the Lord is establishing these days that the Tuesday night Bible study on Ephesians takes aim at that statement.

This mentality in this category of Judaism and Christianity is itself a lie, but it's a lie that the church itself has allowed to be propounded as if these are two valid distinctions of religious alternative rather than one faith, one covenant, promise, one spiritual commonwealth to which Gentiles have been invited by the grace of God. See what I mean? How we allow this mentality to be perpetuated. The Jewish colleagues, however, the Jews for Jesus, for example, are dishonest.

They are hypocrites. They do not have the courage to declare frankly that they have decided to repudiate their people and its memories in telling their victim. This is a judicious man and a writer who's won a renowned award for literature and peace using words that are so charged victims and telling their victim that it can be Jewish and Christian at the same time as if the history of Christianity did not give them the lie.

They are laying a trap of trickery and lies, even more detestable. They play on their victims vulnerabilities. They always exploit weakness, ignorance, and unhappiness.

They offer the victims a new family to replace his own. The comradeship he lacks at a no obligation religious atmosphere. Remarkable, no obligation, whatever happened to the cross and taking it up.

Later, it's too late to turn back. Operation enticement has been successful. So that's particularly distressing.

Three statements, the man who was witness to the Holocaust, the man who was confronted years later to consider to what degree that suffering is the fulfillment of God's word in the books of Leviticus and Deuteronomy. I refuse to consider that. And then yet, even later writing this article against Jewish believers and calling them missionaries, devious and they're those to whom they come victims.

So I'm writing that the refusal coming as it did from the most eminent Holocaust survivor and commentator may itself be a statement of its course, even that statement of its course. What is the root of the cause of the Holocaust is God's judgment on the self celebration of man at the expense of God that elevates man's opinion over God's word. And I just want us to look at Isaiah chapter five to get a sense of this.

This kind of lament of God is repeated in many places in the prophets. And here it is in Isaiah, a series of woes proclaimed by the prophet in verse 11, woe to those who rise early in the morning that they may follow intoxicating drink and so on. But in verse 12, but they do not regard the work of the Lord, nor consider the operation of his hands.

I would just for modern paraphrase, I would say they do not interpret events in life and in history as being God's work and being the operation of his hands. Therefore, my people have gone into captivity. The consequence of this rejection of God as being sovereign and omnipotent results in a judgment of my people have gone into captivity because they have no knowledge.

It doesn't say some or a little, but none. They have no knowledge. Their attitude is antithetical to knowledge.

It's, you know, it's all or nothing at all. You can't have some. Their honorable men are famished and multitude dried up in thirst.

Therefore, Sheol has enlarged itself and opened its mouth beyond measure. Hell, the end thereof, is not just a captivity and a consequence in this life, but that which is also eternal. Verse 15, people shall be

brought down.

Each man shall be humbled. The eyes of the lofty shall be humbled, but the Lord of hosts shall be exalted in judgment. Remarkable key themes in this poetic statement through Isaiah and God who is holy shall be hallowed in righteousness.

Notice the conjunction between judgment and righteousness. And what's the judgment? Captivity, death, and hell for the rejection of the knowledge of God. At the end of verse 17, in the waste places of the fat one, strangers shall eat.

It sounds like eating Israel's produce, not Israel itself, but those who have defeated her. And I won't take the time to read this, but so remarkably apt for our own time. Verse 20, a kind of a mocking attitude toward God in verse 20, those who call evil good and good evil, really is a descriptive of our own generation who put darkness for light and light for darkness, bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter.

In fact, even in this reference, from Elie Wiesel calling missionaries and describing him as calling light, dark, and dark light. It's a reversal of things as they are true in God's sight. So woe to those who are wise in their own eyes in verse 21 and prudent in their own sight.

Verse 24, therefore, as the fire devours the stubble and the flames consumes the chaff, so their root will be as rottenness and their blossom will ascend like dust because they have rejected the law of the Lord of hosts and despise the word of the Holy one of Israel. Therefore, I always mark the therefore, therefore, the anger of the Lord is aroused against his people. He has stretched out his hand against them and stricken them and the hills tremble, their carcasses were as refuse in the midst of the streets.

And for all this, his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still means that the judgment is still an ongoing prospect and experience in the life of the people who have not been chastened or made repentant by these afflictions that are described. His hand is stretched out still remarkable for how many texts there are like this in scripture. And yet when the greatest calamity strikes the nation, there's no thought of turning to scripture for its explanation.

But instead the direction is sociology, political science, some kind of secular attempt to find an answer to the calamity that has come, but not to seek it in the word. So this thing of Elie Wiesel is significant beyond all speaking because he's a sole survivor and because he's the most articulate spokesman on the Holocaust that his refusal despite that multiplies the offense many times over. And he refuses and yet refuses what ought to be to a Jew, especially its first and evident explanation, namely the turning to the God of scripture in this is human opinion and will elevated over that of God himself being the very nub of sin and evidently our continuing condition seeing that our ablest spokesman still continues to sound it.

I want to read something from Karl Barth on the knowledge of God because it strikes not only at Jewish presumption that because one is religious that that that one necessarily has the knowledge of God because here's a whole religious rabbinical orthodox system called Judaism and yet it's entirely ignorant of the judgments that we have suffered in the past for the rejection of the word. How many of you know that Talmudic or rabbinical Judaism does not center in the word but in the commentaries of men? Do you know that? And it's the studying of the Talmud more than the word that constitutes normative orthodox Judaism. What men have had to say that may have begun over a commentary of the word but then becomes a commentary on the commentary on the commentary and this rabbinical school as against that rabbinical school on some highfalutin or finicky hair-splitting issue that what shall I say to say it's irrelevant

you guys have to help me.

It's hideous to major on minus when the issues of the judgment of God's people have not been understood and we're at the threshold of the next and we're still and these are the religious pandering over things that have nothing to do with that and consider that to be normative Judaism and look upon Jews who are outside of it as being outside the faith and men like myself as being soul seers and weaning Jews away from that which is their heritage. I mean it's a it's a controverting of every value and in fact if you put aside titles and look at religious and spiritual realities there is an affinity between normative Judaism and nominal Christianity. They share the same mindset and attitude their casualness toward God though they are not averse to employing scripture to gild what they are about religiously but it does not communicate the knowledge of God.

In fact just before I call you for a moment to raise this question why would men prefer some kind of a religious form that is not the knowledge of God in truth than that knowledge? Why is there an instinctive and deep inveterate aversion from the knowledge of God and a preference for a religious substitute? In fact it would not be an exaggeration to define religion as that human amalgam of practice and thought that gives men the form of something in which they can engage themselves to their own satisfaction and shield them from the true knowledge of God. So can you answer that? You would think that people would rush to the knowledge of God in truth if it were available. Why would they in fact prefer whether it's Catholicism or antiseptic Protestantism or Judaism or new age forms or occultism some alternative to the knowledge of God in truth? What was that statement that Jesus made? You search the scriptures but you do not simply.

They are those which testify of me. And they are those which testify of me, that's it. Right.

I know one form of Judaistic mysticism is the use of the scriptures in its numerical power that every Hebrew letter has a numerical equivalent. Aleph stands for one and beth for two. Did you know that? Yeah well they seek for a significance in the numbers and that's so the hidden wisdom is through a study of the letter values.

So you study the letters and you miss the content. So if you miss the evident truth of God in his word because you don't come to that word with the humility that would make it revelation then you strain to find in it hidden meanings through numbers and other forms of religious practice that do not convey the knowledge of God but his adversary. Remarkable the misuse of the scripture will bring you into a place of darkness and you'll call that darkness light.

So that brings me to call that but I before we get I'd love to just sum up one of the first words Charlie that you said was the demand. The knowledge of God brings demand and this is what I wanted to underline. To know God in truth is to know the requirement of God in truth that is not convenient for man and that's a profound reason why it is that that God is circumvented and we like a God of our own choosing who does not make demand.

The revelation of God is also the revelation of man and we don't want to see that revelation. Isaiah 6 would be a beautiful illustration of that. Woe is me I am undone.

I'm a man of unclean lips. I live in the midst of a people of unclean lips because I have seen the Lord high and lifted up. To see God as he is necessarily requires the seeing of ourselves as we are and that seeing is so painful that we shrink from it.

The knowledge of God is not at man's disposal. It's not waiting for man's initiative and that in fact God hides himself and does not make himself available on man's terms but only God's terms. You'll get a good sense of why Carl Barth was an explosion in the early part of this century 1918 the publication of the book the epistle to the Romans his commentary on Romans that he himself was profoundly dissatisfied with traditional Christianity either from the romantic and idealistic kind derived from a German theologian who was at that time the idol of of German theology called Schleiermacher whose career was facilitated and helped and encouraged by Jewish avant-garde intellectuals in the early enlightenment when they came out of their ghettos after the French Revolution.

He was a particular darling of the Mendelssohn family and who encouraged him as a young student and teacher to go on in his career and he became the father of German theology and his emphasis fell on feeling sensation subjective experience rather than on the word of God and that colored and influenced German thinking right up to the time of Carl Barth. The other school that had come up in his generation was the school of higher criticism bringing to the bible the same kind of analytical academic skills that were brought to other disciplines that the bible is not sacrosanct it's just another literature and we need to understand its history its language its usage and find contradictions and kinds of things that would bring into question divine authorship and show in fact that it's like anything else a human document it's instructive it's a it's historical value but you can't build your premises of God upon it and that's what sparked the search for the historical Jesus because the Jesus of the gospels was a literature and faulty and contradictory and so we can't know him that way it's into this religious environment of liberalism and romanticism and idealism or this new scientific critical examination of the word that Carl Barth made his entry you know what the turning point for him was as a village pastor in Switzerland was the advent of World War I.

Some precious friends that we have in South Carolina sent me the biography of Carl Barth through his letters and it is precious to watch the growth of the man and how the tragedy of World War I that fell upon a naive and unsuspecting Europe that looked upon the 20th century as the advent of the age of progress so broke upon his consciousness that he could no longer be content with the conventional forms and had to seek God earnestly and did it through the same book I believe that God employed for Luther's breaking out of his system into the kinds of things that sparked the reformation the book of Romans and in his later life he wrote these church dogmatics volumes of seven eight and nine hundred pages but very rich so just let me give you a little taste of Carl Barth on the subject of the

knowledge of God he talks about a readiness that only God provides there's got to be a readiness that comes from man and there's a readiness in God and God is the author of both this cannot be an independent readiness it cannot have its final basis in itself that is in the nature and activity of man it cannot in any sense delimit the readiness of God Barth's breaking into theology is called neo-orthodoxy or a return to the word a celebration again of the word and of the sovereignty of God as against man he was deaf on religion and that's why there was such a hue and cry against him everything rests on God's sovereignty and God's will it cannot in any sense delimit the readiness of God man cannot prompt God you cannot presume upon God you're helpless and locked into your unaided humanity

until he himself takes the initiative there does not exist a relationship of mutual conditionness between it and the readiness of God God is noble noble means God can be known but known on God's terms man's readiness to know God is encompassed and established delimited and determined by the readiness of God man is always subject to God's check God's limitation God's condition everything that God is judging in the holocaust is man's presumption man's pride man's uh effrontery to think that if they have

established certain forms that God necessarily applauds and confirms them but that's not unlike the way a lot of Christians operate we do and choose and make our decisions and hope that God is going to come behind and validate it or confirm it so this readiness comes from God and is not

independent but mediated maybe that's why a character like me has got to wait for his 34th year seeker after truth from my earliest adolescence on but what has that to do with anything until God chooses and that phrase that came up in the first chapter of Ephesians and the fullness of time I can't get away from it God's time and uh and for God's purpose and God's will you cannot accelerate it you cannot facilitate it you cannot in any way alter God is God because this revelation of God is called out of nothingness into being and out of death into life it's utterly dependent of and by itself upon the knowability of God in this complete dependence in the way in which creation generally can only be in its relationship to the creator God is known only by God we do not know him then in virtue

of the views and concepts with which in faith we attempt to respond to his revelation I would go beyond that Judaism is itself concept and even monotheism is a concept that Judaism celebrates as being its gift to mankind that the concept of monotheism a higher form of the knowledge of God from paganism and its multitudinous pagan gods is our contribution to mankind it's our concept what's wrong with that as if man out of his mind has a view of God that in fact is God and that mankind waits on that the very word concept has got to come under suspicion there's another place where God condemns Israel and says and the knowledge of me is taught by the precepts of men what's wrong with that because it's a false knowledge because man is the propagator and it presumes that that's a way in which

the knowledge of God can be obtained through the precepts of men imagine falling from the great heights of revelation to where you have to depend upon what is promulgated by men as precept and call that the knowledge of God and celebrate that as being authentic and wonder how it is that you're smitten with judgments when you were religious so he talks about God is hidden and the truth of God is hidden by God himself in grace the fact that in the knowledge of God we have to do in divine certainty with God himself by God himself is one which we must now investigate more closely we are speaking of the knowledge of God whose subject is God the father and God the son through the Holy Spirit so it's not some abstract knowledge of God but the knowledge of God in his triunity which can only come

by revelation the knowledge of God as he in fact is and not as men would choose him to be because of the mystery of the divine trinity our own viewing and conceiving we have no capacity for fellowship with God between God and us there stands the hiddenness of God in which he is far from us and foreign to us except as he of himself ordained and created fellowship between himself and us and this does not happen in the actualizing of our capacity but in the miracle of his good pleasure you see the genius of Calvert everything resides with God unless God in the beginning God in the revelation God in fellowship with God God not man these are the two antibodies God and man I refuse to consider that speaks from the man orbit Barth speaks from the God orbit so this strikes at the very heart of

Judaism whether it's Jewish or Gentile so long as it's a system of religion that rests upon man obtaining or what's the word resting some knowledge or creating a system that may employ even scripture and yet rests in man and his initiative which God will always denounce and remain hidden he will never give himself to that which has its source and man and the end thereof is death and hell whatever we have devised I'm paraphrasing and coming in and out here is as such not God but a reality distinct from God God is known only by God and God can be known only by God at this very point in faith itself we know God in utter dependence in pure discipleship and gratitude at this very point we are finally dissuaded from

trusting and confiding in our own capacity and strength at this very point we

can see that our attempt to answer God's revelation with our views and concepts is an attempt undertaken with insufficient means the work of unprofitable servants the capacity of our views and our concepts in faith itself we are forced to say that our knowledge of God begins in all seriousness with the knowledge of the hiddenness of God now there's a statement the knowledge of God begins and must begin with the knowledge of the hiddenness of God can you put that in your own words this is as instructive for Christians as it is for Jews the true knowledge of God begins with the knowledge of God's hiddenness what's another way of saying that that he's not amenable to our terms that he's not waiting for our thought that he's hidden and that he reveals himself only on his own terms at his own

will in a readiness that he himself provides and that God is God and unless you understand that and subscribe to that there's no beginning for the revelation of God but this is no small thing that very one thing is everything to understand God as hidden and that everything is dependent upon him and that we have nothing in ourselves to commend or to do is more than just the issue of the knowledge of God it's the issue of all issues it's the issue of life it's the issue of reality it just shows who's who and what's what that God is God and man is man and never the shall meet it's a fundamental and foundational premise of reality itself but it means the most humbling and painful disorienting disjuncture from men who have celebrated themselves as being the foundation and their ability as the

basis for knowledge for life for understanding anything so this knowledge of God strikes at the foundations of reality itself and the whole issue of what is the premise by which men live their life it just puts man in his place you know and I can understand why there's an abhorrence an instinctive revulsion to embrace anything like this because it's death it's a total judgment on the presumption that man can do anything of himself let alone the knowledge of God it just strikes at the root of the of the human error the whole misconception about reality itself which if you continue to function in it though it may have some seeming response the end thereof is Auschwitz can you see that I know it I don't know how well I'm expressing it the end of that error that fatal misconception

about reality itself however much it may have served you in your own lifetime and even for centuries the end thereof is death there's a way that seemeth right unto a man but the end thereof is death so this knowledge of God is not a knowledge independent from the knowledge of life or the knowledge of truth it is foundational and fundamental to reality itself because it makes clear God is God and anything other than that is presumption pride and arrogance and the continuing that is to suffer the judgments that issue from that error this is more than Christian versus Jewish understanding or one theology versus another it's an issue of underlying reality itself and that's why the holocaust it holds the key to the question of human existence the whole issue of life somehow I instinctively

felt as it even as an atheist has to do with the understanding of the human condition itself and it's true we are forced to say that knowledge of God begins in all seriousness with the knowledge of the hiddenness of God it is in faith and therefore in the fulfillment of the knowledge of God in the real viewing and real conceiving of God that we can understand the fact that we know view and conceive God not as a work of our nature not as a performance on the basis of our own capacity but only as a miraculous work of the divine good pleasure so that knowing God we necessarily know his hiddenness remember the um in first the first chapter of Ephesians there were not only references to the will of God or the mystery of his will but of his good pleasure we cannot conceive God because we cannot

even contemplate him we cannot be the object of one of those perceptions to which our concepts our thought forms and our words and sentences are related the assertion of God's hiddenness which includes his invisibility in incomprehensibility and ineffability that means can't even speak about it tells us that God does not belong to the objects which we can always subjugate to the process of our God is famous for talking about God as being other he's not another subject that we can classify and put into our categories he's other beyond and unless you come to that everything that you put into your categories is necessarily warped and in error God does not belong to the objects which we can always subjugate to the process of our viewing conceiving and expressing and therefore our spiritual

oversight and control i refuse to consider that because to consider that is to unravel a whole philosophical and ideological and religious foundation that i have constructed in which i see myself as being honorific and the right deserver of a nobel prize and being celebrated by the jewish community and a humane man and altruistic and philanthropic and the whole thing by which i view myself in reality and to consider that means the beginning of the end of this therefore i refuse i cannot afford it what kind of a mindset would you commend for saints who want to walk with God in a right way you know how a day began today when i got out of the house to get the car right at the base of the garage were six dead newly born chicks of birds the nest that had been over there from last year which

the birds this year sought to re-employ could not hold the weight of the new life and it came crashing to the ground and they were destroyed what a striking thing to come out of the house and see that and come to the prayer time your structures that you thought held last year's weight are incapable of holding this year's life and need again to be reformed kept i don't use the word plastic because that sounds synesthetic but alive viable malleable formed by God that we mustn't let anything harden let alone become for a system let alone a religious system let alone one that we think that God is blessing and employing and without which the world it would be at odds and is indispensable that is the beginning of the end and that's the very thing that when we touch those systems and that kind

of conceit there's a backlash of a fiendish kind and in fact what had happened to the biblical faith given by God by the time Jesus came to his people as their deliverer it had become this hardened a system interpreted in such a way as to make them to be sweet smelling roses and his very presence threatened that whole thing and that's why the high priest said don't you know that it's necessary that one man die for the nation or for our place in the nation the word nation really covers a multitude for the system that has been developed rather than he should live and threaten it if that system is to continue he must necessarily perish so so great when these things calcify are they defended with a vehemence yes that i said when anything comes to a place where it begins to take on that kind

of form it's the time then to disavow it and bring it down and to and bring it to naught just at the point where your religious success is getting to harden that's the time to put it away bring it into death and maybe what we can say about the present charismatic movement or the full gospel or any is the unwillingness to do that but to keep it alive and to perpetuate it and look for some new fad or vogue or something that will give it some semblance of life rather than allow it to come into the death that god for which god is calling interesting i don't know if you know about the the depth of the controversy going on the full gospel businessmen now the vying for power the factions that have risen up i mean vehement bitterness over who's in charge and control and and dima shakarian died

his son has become the successor and some support him and others supporting a organization a headquarters multi-millions of dollars in investment and plus reputation and the whole network of chapters

around the world has become something for which men vie and how then is god going to bless and breathe his spirit and anointing on anything that comes out of that context these are remarkable lessons in fact i would say that bart himself had to die through his own construction and forms of understanding that in which he had been schooled as he went through his theological training being fitted to be a perpetuator of a system um but because he was earnest and saw that it was not bringing life and was struggled to communicate to his parishioners and then world war came and the ravages of world

war one to a generation that thought this was the advent of progress in brotherhood everything came into death he went through enormous depressions and struggle that's why i appreciated your testimony so much last night charlie the struggle the deaths to which god will bring men the circumstances that he will use to break us up and out of our categories and to keep us into a place where we know that god is god in contrast to that of all other subjects his nature is not one which in this sense lies in the sphere of our power god is inapprehensible interesting that a new title for the uh a new edition of the book ben israel is apprehended by god god is inapprehensible man cannot command him the lines which we draw to describe the formally and conceptually what we mean when we say god

cannot be extended they break apart they cannot be defined in relation to god the means of definition at our disposal are not sufficient to reassure us when we have applied them to him you can't use your language in your categories for secular things and bring god into those categories the being apprehended by us in thoughts and words is always either not yet or else no longer the being of god if it's your words your categories your thoughts it's not yet god or it no longer is god it may have begun but when it becomes increasingly yours it's less himself we thus understand the assertion of the hiddenness of god the truth and the effectiveness of the sentence of judgment which in the revelation of god in jesus christ is pronounced upon man coming of jesus is god's judgment not only upon

man's sin but man's presumptions about god that that was god's saying no to the forms that israel had come to by which they celebrated god and came in a way so opposed and so antithetical that he had to be born in a stable through a virgin of no repute grow up in the city of nazareth out of which no good thing could ever come which was a byword and a proverb in the israel of that generation live a life of complete hiddenness and obscurity for 30 years die as a criminal in the cruelest form of execution that is the most degrading to a jew to be hung on a tree in the scrap heap and in the in the compost place of garbage and refuse outside the city gates and that's our god this is if god calculated to defy every concept of man of what they think god is in loftiness nobility um spirituality

ethical violated it and pushed this into the face of this and said this is your god and in the refusal of that revelation and the insistence on going on with our own shopworn faded and inadequate views we were pronouncing our own future judgments we had not a god in fact to whom we could turn because we had not god and rejected god in the form in which he would have revealed himself in a word we refused to interpret the holocaust rightly which is the holocaust of the crucifixion of jesus and by that refusal we made the next holocaust inevitable which is our own and in refusing to interpret that holocaust rightly we're making ourselves subject to the next thing is either like a tragic continuation until the very end so this revelation that god gave in christ himself was a sentence of

judgment this possessing man of his own possibility of realizing the knowledge of god who encounters him leaving him only the knowledge of faith granted to him and demanded of him by the grace of god interesting only faith is the mode of the means by which the revelation can be received and and yet it's demanded by the grace of god given and demanded by the grace of god where we confess god's

judgment we also confess god's grace so the grace to understand and to will receive the revelation by faith rests upon the recognition of judgment and that's why so much of the the deep faith of true believers comes out of their suffering out of their judgments out of the consequences of of their lives in the error and the employment of it by god to receive that is the key to opening up the

perspective of god so it's hard to imagine a believer with a true apprehension of god that has not come to him out of suffering or out of judgment and out of the grace of god to receive it bard is so death on man he sees nothing in man we ourselves have no capacity for fellowship with god and therefore no capacity to view and conceive god and be in relationship to him there's not even a possibility that god must or can be present as the object of our viewing and conceiving god is all in all can you imagine a view like this promulgated from the platform of a synagogue or even of a church that makes god so primal so much the source and the ultimate end of being of all god is god nothing outside of him but by him making man wholly dependent he could have no confidence in anything that rises

even out of his best intentions and most noble intention is equally as desperate of any success as anything that would be vile that would emanate from man the fact that it's well meaning and well intending does not change it it still puts the premium on man but puts the premium on god entirely totally and radically can you imagine the shriek that came against him from the religious men of his own generation whose whole systems of growth and advancement and careers were predicated on man so i just i love him for that reason god is the one capital o who is to and by and in himself that's that's an echo of paul in romans 11 30 of him through him and to him are all things to him be glory and when the lord finishes with israel that will be the final statement the truth of the revelation of god

consists first and decisively in the fact that it is his god's revelation it is not someone or something else which reveals god but god reveals himself god's revelation is authentic information about god because it is firsthand information because in it god is his own witness and teacher and i see that as the supreme revelation given at the cross where bart says the god that we're talking about is the god of father son and holy spirit because in it all three aspects of the godhead or persons were expressed the son on the earth in his suffering giving himself by the holy spirit without spot with uh to god as sacrifice by the eternal spirit and calling on the father my god my god why hast thou forsaken me so if there ever was a supreme moment where all three aspects of the godhead were

vividly in operation in an in an historic moment set before the face of the nation it was in the crucifixion of jesus which is to say the judgment of god on sin in man born by himself it was the burning bush and israel refused to turn aside to see it and suffered the consequence of that refusal and here's a man who is a survivor of the judgment that has come because of it being now called to attention by it and saying i refuse to consider that and i'm saying that his refusal all the more because he is a survivor of the judgment and the most adept uh spokesman and writer about it signifies that our sin as jews remains he stands as a statement for the nation when the finest expression of the nation which says i refuse to consider that he's speaking not only for himself but for the nation

whose mentality he shares and which he more ably expresses i don't have a word to describe how tragic that is um maybe one take just a look at tell me when you want to take a break

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