

K-534 Israel and the Apocalypse (3 of 3)

by Art Katz

Art Katz discusses the scriptural basis for Israel's future suffering and restoration in the context of God's judgment and mercy.

Duration: 48:41

Scripture: Exodus 3:14, Isaiah 51:17, Isaiah 52:1, Isaiah 52:7, Romans 10:15

Topics: "Apocalypse"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the consequences of sin and disobedience to God. He emphasizes that the people have sold themselves for nothing and will be redeemed without money. The preacher believes that this is not just a metaphor, but a literal prophecy of the people becoming captives and being sold into slavery. He references the book of Joel and other prophets to support this idea. The sermon also mentions the eventual coming of God's kingdom and the participants' role in it.

Transcript

I want to review a paper that's called Is there any scriptural support for the possibility of a defeat and expulsion again of Israel into the nations? Is there a scriptural support for a possible defeat and expulsion of Israel into the nations? And the origin of this is that my publisher circulated an Ezekiel 37 tape as the tape of the month and called me one day and told me how much he was moved by it. He said, but there's one flaw, he said. You make a passing reference to the possibility that Israel might have to experience a defeat and an expulsion from the nation.

He said, I can't see that. I don't see that in script. He said, that's a flaw that might turn people off from an otherwise good message.

He said, now if you see it, please let me know, but I don't see it. So I just put aside his letter. We didn't have time then to take it up.

Three days later, three o'clock in the morning, boom, I woke up my eyes up and I went right to the word processor and I typed in the title that I've just read to you. And by faith, I rolled up my sleeves and opened the scriptures to put up or shut up on this issue. The time had come when I could no longer just intimate a possibility.

Either there was a scriptural basis for it, or I should not make reference to it. Because I had been saying that whatever it takes to effect a death, that God will do in order to obtain a resurrection. Even if the mourning and sighing is the loss of the nation itself.

So now we're exploring that. And now after we've had the first part of the morning that we have, I think you'll now be able to follow me as I read through this. So first I want to reiterate a series of principles or statements that you're going to find reiterated again and again in the prophets on the pattern of Israel's last days experience that eventuates in entering into the millennial blessing.

The last days restoration of Israel to the land and to her God is set forth almost invariably in the prophetic scriptures in an apocalyptic context of an evidently recently experienced calamity and devastation. Not past calamity, but a recently experienced calamity right up to the point of restoration and establishment as the millennial nation. The magnitude both of the judgment and the restoration is of such a kind that not only Israel, but the nations are obliged to recognize God as its author.

The magnitude of what shall come is of such a kind that no one will dismiss it to say, well, this is just a political squabble. It's clearly the work of God and it's the work of God as judgment. The judgment as an exile out of the land is at the point of violence and is an exact proportion to the iniquity of the nation.

This is a very important point. Otherwise, the implication is that God is capricious and unjust and that he brings the devastation just for the point of bringing it. It affects many purposes, but it is in proportion to Israel's own iniquity and sin.

And there are many scriptures that show that where God himself says it. So much as to say, you have brought this on yourself and this is an exact proportion to your sin. And if you receive publications from Israel, you can see that that sin is mounting morally and in every way.

In fact, I'm learning from believers that they're taking their kids out of Israeli schools as no longer being tenable, that the schools are such an incitement to sin and to rebellion and scandalous behavior that some of them even have had to leave the nation to have their children educated elsewhere. We Jews have always been the avant-garde, you know, the advanced, when it comes to modernity and the latest teaching and innovation, that's where we are. And Israel is evidently rife with that spirit, even in its schools.

The judgment as an exile, so is an exact proportion to the iniquity of the nation. The nations that perform it also make captive at great humiliation and suffering its victims and later receive at God's hand an exact retribution in devastation to themselves. So how can we know that what we're reading prophetically is a statement of Israel's past or yet a future devastation to come? One of the ways we can know it is that the nations that are employed to bring that devastation bring upon themselves their own devastation because they go beyond God's chastening to exact the humiliation and the suffering from its victims.

So the emphasis upon dwelling securely and none making them afraid of sighing and mourning fleeing away indicates both the extremity through which this remnant of survivors has passed and the recentness of the experience still fresh in their memory. Why does God say, I'll wipe away every tear or you will dwell securely in the land or none shall make you afraid? Because evidently, right till the time of their deliverance, that's what they're experiencing. They're being made afraid.

They're insecure. They are fleeing. The near annihilation from which they have been saved, the utter hopelessness of their condition as captives in the hands of vengeful peoples who relish their advantage

over them makes clear the supernaturalness of their deliverance and return at the hand only of their God.

Their condition is so utterly hopeless. They've not only suffered defeat, but they're suffering humiliation. We can look for a moment at Isaiah 51 and 52.

It's remarkable, you know, to read this about verse 17 of 51. Awake, awake, stand up, O Jerusalem, which has drunk of the hand of the Lord the cup of his fury. Thou hast drunken the dregs of the cup of trembling and wrung them out.

There is none to guide her among all the sons whom she hath brought forth. Neither is there any that taketh her by the hand of all the sons she has brought up. These two things are come upon thee, and who shall be sorry for thee? Desolation and destruction and the famine and the sword.

By whom shall I comfort thee? Thy sons have fainted. They lie at the head of all the streets as a wild bull in a net. They are full of the fury of the Lord and the rebuke of thy God.

Therefore, hear now this, thou afflicted and drunken, but not with wine. Thus saith the Lord and thy God that pleads the cause of his people. Behold, I have taken out of thy hands the cup of trembling, even the dregs of the cup of my fury.

Thou shalt no more drink it again, but I will put it into the hand of them that afflict thee, which have said to thy soul, bow down, that we may go over. And thou hast laid thy body as the ground and as the street to them that went over. You know what you can say about prophetic scriptures? They come into their fullest clarity when the historical moment has arrived in which they are about to be fulfilled or are being fulfilled.

In other words, until the rise of the Intifada and the Arab-Palestinian uprising against Israel and the growing vexation and hatred among Arab nations of Jews, this would not have been explicable. This is more than just defeat. This is putting the salt into the wounds.

This is rubbing the vanquished, their face into the dirt. This is taking relish in their defeat and saying, lie down and we will walk over you. And they do lie down because they're defenseless at the hands of those who have inflicted this.

And it's the cup of God's fury. Notice that. This is not some kind of thing that happens of itself politically.

It rises out of political conditions, but God himself is the one who is implementing this as a judgment and as the rebuke of thy God in verse 20. But now I'm taking this cup out of your hand. You'll not drink it again.

And I'll make them drink it who have inflicted this upon you. So are we reading about something historical, something out of Israel's past, or something out of Israel's future? And I have to say in my own prophetic spirit and heart, I believe it's future. And we know that these chapter designations were not in the original scriptures, but are given for the convenience of the reader.

So it brings a kind of an artificial cessation or break that God never intended. So we just read right on into 52. Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O Zion.

Put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city. For henceforth there shall no more come unto thee the uncircumcised and the clean. Hereafter, now that you've suffered this, that will be a last suffering, and no more will you have to bear that.

God's already calling them the holy city. Put on your garments. You've drunk the cup of your judgment.

Now is going to come my mercy and my grace. Shake thyself from the dust. Arise and sit down, O Jerusalem.

Loose thyself from the bands of thy neck. Awake, awake, O captive daughter of Zion. And I have to say that I believe that this is not a metaphor, a suggestive word, but an actual and a literal word, that this will become a captive people.

And in the book of Joel and other of the prophets, as I'll mention in my paper, it talks about being sold into slavery where a boy is sold for wine and a girl for other things. Can you imagine the humiliation of Israel? Not only its defeat, but being cast out into the nations and sold as slaves, an actual captive people. For thus, saith the Lord, you have sold yourselves for naught, and you shall be redeemed without money.

This is the consequence of your own sin. For thus, saith the Lord God, my people went down a fortune into Egypt, the Surgeon there, the Assyrian oppressed them without cause. Now, therefore, what have I here, saith the Lord? My people is taken away for naught.

They that rule over them make them to howl, saith the Lord, and my name continually every day is blasphemed. Therefore, my people shall know my name. Therefore, they shall know in that day that I am he that doth speak.

Behold, it is I. How do we know that this is not a reference to past sufferings? This one single verse alone confirms it. In that day, they shall know that I am the I am that I am that doth speak. Behold, it is I. That's never been acknowledged.

Therefore, these sufferings are yet future. And that they are inflicted with a vehemence and a bitterness and a relish, a delight to rub Israel's face in the dirt is perfectly fitting historically with the context of nations, of Arab nations that are vengeful and feel that they have rightly so to a great extent been victims at Israeli hands. How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that brings good tidings, that publishes peace, that brings good tidings of good, that publishes salvation, that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth.

This is a reference now neither to Israel that is vanquished nor to those that have vanquished Israel, but another people who bring good tidings and say that Thy God reigns. That's us, folks. And our saying of it is not mere suggestion.

When we say it, it shall be the creative prophetic word of God that establishes peace like peace be unto you. When we shall say to Israel, that is, have you ever seen these boxers after 15 rounds that have been knocked down numerous times and they're hanging on the ropes and they're finished, and to say, Thy God reigns. You're without hope.

You're devastated. You've been made captive. You've been humiliated.

But your God reigns, and he will set you again in a place of glory and honor as beyond anything you've ever known, even exceeding the days of Solomon and of David. And nations that have tread upon you will bow down before you and bring their wealth. And your sons and daughters that have been carried away captive shall be on their shoulders returned.

And your word is not just suggestion. Your word is event. Your word is a saving word and a restorative word.

It's a word of hope because you know God and because your word is God's word. And so here's another veiled reference to the fact that there's another entity in the world at that time to which, in my opinion, is the church of the last days able to speak such creative words and not conveniently taken up to escape a time of tribulation. Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice.

With the voice together shall they sing. Notice one voice. That voice shows the condition of God's people and their true unity, not some ecumenical counterfeit.

For they shall see eye to eye when the Lord shall bring again Zion. Break forth into joy. Sing together.

You waste places of Jerusalem. You're going to see this in the prophets. Waste, desolation, ruin are repeated again and again and again.

Ezekiel, I think, 35, 36, talks about the waste places being restored. It's clearly a statement of a brutal devastation that has come within the land itself, the waste places of Jerusalem. For the Lord hath comforted his people.

He hath redeemed Jerusalem. The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God. How accountable will those nations be that have seen the mighty God restoring the people out of a place of complete devastation and ruin? And the rebuilding that will come is not going to be your conventional housing project.

It's not going to be some kind of slapdash Jim Crackery. It's going to be an eternal masterpiece of God. I just saw the two trade towers that have gone up in Tel Aviv for the diamond merchants of which Israel is so proud and I think to myself with a certain wistfulness, that will not stand.

You think that because you put up a skyscraper that you're pronouncing something that's going to endure? God will level everything made by man and when he restores, when he rebuilds, as unto the Lord, it will be a glory. Okay. So much for the reference to captives whose deliverance is clearly at the hands and by the power of a supernatural God whom they shall know as the I Am.

The task of rebuilding the waste and desolate places and ruined cities at their return indicates the extent of the disaster which has befallen them and which has taken place necessarily in the land. Jerusalem is in the land. And if Jerusalem is destroyed, what can we hope for Tel Aviv or Haifa or Tiberias or any other present place? This suggests a previous presence in the land to which they return as survivors.

Now, in other words, there needs be a Haifa, Tel Aviv, and Jerusalem that be destroyed. And that explains the existence of Israel from 1948 to the present hour. Something had to go up that it might come down.

God takes away the first that he might bring the second. First the earthly, then the heavenly. First the natural, then the spiritual.

The mistake of the evangelical charismatic church was to have celebrated the first thing as the permanent and the abiding and the eternal thing, not knowing that God gives the first to take it away that he might bring the second. How many of us have experienced that truth in our own lives? Jesus took away the first, then Israel, to give a second. He raised it up in order to remove it.

He gave a ministry, takes it away. He brings you up to bring you down, then to bring you up in an enduring and abiding eternal way. Our failure to recognize God's dealings with Israel is an embarrassing revelation of our ignorance of God because we have not perceived his dealings in us and have not understood that except something comes out of death as resurrection, it cannot be down to the glory of God.

Only that which is resurrected out of death pertains to God's glory. Everything else that precedes that makes that death inevitable and necessary, or it's not a death. The unhappy thing with the evangelicals today is they're not willing to relinquish and to let go unto death but want to see the present thing preserved and improved in the hope that it will become the everlasting glory.

In a word, they're refusing an apocalyptic view which requires unnecessary judgment and devastation before there's a glory. And they are the same kind of Christians, I'm afraid, who find that they cannot quite receive that there's a suffering that precedes a glory itself for the Church. In the last analysis, I'm finding what I've all along always understood that every issue is always ultimately the issue of the cross.

And that believer who has not made his peace with the cross and understand that there's a suffering that precedes a glory necessarily will not allow that for Israel either. So there's a previous presence in the land to which they return as survivors for the redeemed of the Lord shall return unto Zion might imply that they actually were cast out of it and in the process from the point of being cast out until the time of the return in the sifting through the nations they come back as the redeemed of the Lord. But they did not leave it as redeemed.

That they receive a new heart and spirit thereafter is a final and conclusive proof that this devastation is yet future in Israel's experience and constitutes a final dealing of God before the commencement of the millennial blessedness. There has been no bestowing of the Spirit of God in present Israel. And there'll not be a bestowing of the Spirit until a nation is restored for the Spirit is given for its millennial service.

It's the enablement to be the messengers and the ambassadors of a newly established kingdom and to bring that message to the very nations where up till now they had been heretofore hated, resented, or feared. It's their sons and daughters that shall prophesy. See, we have, what shall we say? We're premature in everything or we have usurped everything and have thought that the Holy Spirit and the charismatic movement was the fulfillment when it's only if it is this at all a presentiment and a suggestion of the greater glory which has not yet come.

We ain't seen anything yet. The Holy Spirit has not yet been poured out on all Jewish flesh. It is their prophecy.

We've only gotten the little residue and the aura of it. It is for them for whom it is intended as the bearers of the millennial kingdom in that power and that spirit. And so also this statement, quote, will know that I am the Lord, dear God, from that day onward indicates that it is not yet a day that has come.

Ezekiel 39.22 That this knowledge had to come in so costly and painful a way is unspeakably tragic. It is the final outworking, the logic and counterpoint of the lament of God in Isaiah chapter 1 of a nation that, quote, does not know, does not consider. They refuse to know me, saith the Lord.

Jeremiah 9.6 And evidently, therefore, could only come out of an unparalleled calamity seeing that previous national disasters, including the Holocaust, did not occasion these ends. How do we know that this is yet a future day? Because it's a day that eventuates in the knowledge of the Lord which every

previous disaster did not provide. The same brother that I have described to you with whom I had this intensive discussion, usually there's a one-way conversation, I could not say much, also believes that the time of Jacob's trouble is past and that it was the Holocaust and that Israel need not fear any further retribution or dealing.

Well, how can it be that if that Holocaust and that time of trouble did not result in the knowledge of the Lord? Therefore, there's a suffering yet future that will. So let's consider a text in which these elements that are to be found in the whole prophetic testimony is summed up. And I think that the text that I'm choosing is Isaiah, Ezekiel 39, verses 21 through 29.

You can open to it now or look at it at a future time. I'm quoting from it here. And it begins, And I shall set my glory among the nations.

Ezekiel 39, verses 21 through 29. And I shall set my glory among the nations. So right away, smack dab is the whole statement of God's thrust.

That the issue is the issue of God's glory in the nations, but of necessity it must begin with this nation. And all the nations will see my judgment, which I have executed, and my hand which I have laid on them. Isn't it interesting that God equates his glory with his judgment? How many people know the verse that when my judgments are in the earth, the nations will learn righteousness? We've got to not just make our unwilling, reluctant peace with the judgments of God, but embrace the judgment of God, even when it comes to us as being precious.

And when a saint will, he's come to sainthood. He's come to the knowledge of God, and he's come to the love of God. To balk at God's judgments or to reluctantly have to bear them is a statement that you've not yet come to the place in God that is yet wanting.

Because his glory is his judgment, and it's his righteousness, which I have executed, and my hand which I have laid on them. And I've done it in such a way, in other words, that the nations themselves are required to and obliged to see it. There's no question about it.

Who's doing this? This devastation is of such a magnitude that it cannot be dismissed as a mere controversy between nations. It's clear that the humiliation of Israel and its defeat and the extent of its devastation is the judgment that comes from God. And the house of Israel will know that I am the Lord their God from that day onward.

That Israel today does not yet know that God shows that that day has not yet come. But that it will come is clear, or we have no confidence in the prophetic scripture. And the nations will know that the house of Israel went into exile for their iniquity.

Let not any man say that God has allowed some capricious devastation to come to Israel because he's severe. It's an exact proportion to their sin. The fact that it's devastating shows the magnitude of their sins and that it's the sin of Israel.

The covenant people, we suffer a double penalty. There's something that affects us more grievously and maybe that will help us to understand not only the judgment that is future but the judgments that are past, as for example the Holocaust, which is yet a conundrum not only to the Jewish community but to the Christian community. Where was God? Because we do not understand iniquity.

We do not understand sin. We don't understand our evil. We therefore don't understand our judgment.

The magnitude of our sin is revealed in the magnitude of our suffering as is required in the magnitude of our judgments. That's not easy to consider but except that we consider it we'll not be reconciled to God. Because it's only the repentance that comes out of our judgments that the issue of restoration is established.

I don't know if we'll get into it this week. I've got notes, I've got materials what I have prepared on this message for Germany what God has shown me about Israel's long tenure in Germany. There's so much I can say.

But to this day, the Jewish community per se has consistently refused to acknowledge the truth of original sin and the fallenness of man in the garden as being a statement of the condition of man before God as inherently sinful and needing redemption. They reject that Christian theological doctrine and perspective. We do not believe that man is innately evil.

Where do you think the view that man is innately good has come from? And that there'll be progressive improvement? The views that came into the Enlightenment and from the Renaissance were greatly and largely from Jewish sources. We are the inveterate humanists. We have celebrated man.

And therefore, we celebrated German civilization as the epitome of man's achievement and therefore it was at the hands of the Germans that we needed not only to be destroyed but to be destroyed bestially. That which we celebrated as being the most humane was the most inhumane. And was that an accident? Or is that the ironic statement of God to instruct us that the idol that we had so much celebrated and that we ourselves had contributed to and constructed, that we had aided and abetted that German civilization that rejected its own Protestant faith and turned it into a false piety or into a liberalism in which God was dead became the nation and the nexus out of which came our execution and death in the most vile and criminal way without pity and without compassion.

Because we did not believe that man could be capable of such horror because we projected upon Germans what we thought ourselves to be namely without sin and had to be rudely awakened or have we been awakened even to this day to understand. And that's why there's still a bitterness against Germany as if there's something intrinsically rotten about Germans that we Jews could never have performed only circumstances are being provided by which increasingly we're performing against the Arabs what the Germans once performed against us until we will finally surrender to the truth of what God's word has always said there's no man good no not one and if God were to mark iniquity who can stand. And this is why Paul was kicking against the bricks because he wanted to establish his own righteousness and it'll make a murderer out of a man to learn that he can't do that and in becoming the murderer he learns the truth that he's not righteous and that's exactly the course upon which Israel is now bound.

I think somewhere in that text or Leviticus 26 which is a companion text in the last days you will consider this some of you may know my encounter with Elie Wiesel the greatest Holocaust Jewish writer himself a survivor, the only survivor from Auschwitz whom I heard speak publicly in New Jersey one day at a Jewish gathering in which he said that he was studying the scriptures twice a week with a rabbi and something went bing in me but I didn't ask it publicly but afterwards I got him aside privately and I said in the fact that you're studying the scriptures now twice weekly to what degree would you be willing to acknowledge that all of our Jewish suffering and calamity are the judgments spoken to us, the fulfillment of judgments spoken in the concluding chapters of Deuteronomy and Leviticus including the Holocaust.

He just jerked and he said I refuse to consider that and turned away what does it mean when you refuse to consider what God says because the implications are unthinkable for your humanistic categories and because you have subscribed to a view of inherent Jewish virtue that could not be capable of sin to a degree that would justify such a magnitude of judgment you know what I would say that what is summed up in the statement I refuse to consider that is the very sin that precipitates the judgment because it exalts man above the word of God I will determine what I will consider and I will determine what I will reject that is the heart of what sin is in the celebration of man over God and when Israel is guilty of that presumption against their God they invite the worst kind of reprimand what

will bring them to that desperate acknowledgement of complete fertility and hopelessness when their hope has been the nation itself but the very things that we are now describing now this is critically important because if we don't understand God's dealing and why Israel must necessarily come to an end of itself we'll either take up a false position of defending her when she's indefensible or condemning her for doing the very thing that God inevitably is requiring so this understanding that the Lord has given me saves us either from false defense and false celebration of what is indefensible which would make us liars or condemning Israel together with other nations that condemn her and what realistically perceives Israel's plight in the context of the prophetic scriptures that are

calculated to bring a nation to the end of itself that it might thereafter become the millennial blessed nation that will bless all the families of the earth if we had not this calling God might not have had to deal with us as severely that's why I said except you understand the eternal millennial context, you'll be offended by the lengths to which God will go but when you understand it then you can more graciously receive his dealings which is true not only about Israel but yourself you'll understand why God will not let you go and while he'll jealously take you like a dog takes a rag darling and shakes it in its teeth until all its stuffing breaks loose how many people have come to me and I've got a word for you from all year God has called you to be a winnowing machine and you're going

to make the hills into chaff and winnow and sift I think that's true but what you need to know is before I'll be winnowing others there's a God who will be winnowing me so our naivety about Israel and our reluctance to understand the severity God taught her is an embarrassing statement of our real failure to understand God for ourselves and to project upon Israel what we hope for in ourselves namely a much easier success you know like isn't it good enough isn't charismatic good enough isn't present Israel good enough you sap, you do err because you know not God nor the power of God nor the glory of God what satisfies you does not eventuate in his glory you might have nice meetings but what is that unto him be glory in the church not success and for that God will go much further so I gave

them over into the hand of their adversaries and all of them fell by the sword according to their transgressions here again for their iniquity according to their transgressions I dealt with them and I hid my face from them one of the great questions that the holocaust raises is where was God I remember that I stopped in at a conference on on revisionism sponsored by the Hillel at the University of North Carolina I happen to be in that neighborhood I came on the last days and they were talking about this whole school that denies that the holocaust ever took place and that it's a Jewish hoax in order to engineer the obtaining of Israel though there's nothing more historically better documented than the holocaust itself and so finally the question and answer time I said something like

there's only one thing worse than denying the historicity of the holocaust it's the failure to seek its meaning I said you have only been dabbling in the statistics but you have never asked the ultimate and the true

questions and the greatest of which is where was God you attribute everything to man and make no acknowledgement of God which may be the very reason for which you have suffered the holocaust that was spoken to Jewish people and so where was God?

He hid his face from them which is to say he did not intervene to spare them from the consequences of their own sin and when you read about the Jewish influence in German Christianity and German culture bringing a humanistic dimension and turning it from real biblical orthodoxy meant that a country was going to come to a place where it had no spiritual foundation but the shallowest kind of Catholic and Lutheran Sunday phenomenon that it was such a vacuum that made it the evil of Nazism and inevitability when you begin to study this you learn that the greatest Nazi leaders the ideologues of Nazism those who were so to speak the theologians because it was a religious phenomenon were the disappointed sons of Lutheran ministers or expatriates from Catholicism who were in a certain sense

deeply spiritual men who could not find any answer to their spiritual craving in conventional Christendom as it existed in Germany and found it in occultism and finally in Nazism and set in motion the things that eventuated in Israel's annihilation which Israel itself was participant in creating so you can believe God's judgments are just I happen to know what I'm saying but whether we know it or not his judgments are perfect but the thing is if we do not recognize and receive the value of that judgment we are fated again to experience it you'll see how I end this paper I sent this paper to some of my most serious detractors in Israel and I concluded maybe I'll read it now in the light of these scriptures to prematurely encourage Israel and the church to believe now for millennial

blessing and security in the land is tantamount to false comfort isn't it interesting that we're coming to a time of the true prophets and the false prophets those that say peace peace and those that are saying calamity is at hand repent such calamities if they come and these texts give us at least a reasonable basis for that possibility will leave the naive and the unsuspecting devastated somebody brought up that point in our break time well Art if what you're suggesting is true when this happens and people are unprepared for it they're going to collapse in their faith they'll say well where is God and how can we trust the scriptures we thought this was the fulfillment and now look he's allowed this nation I can't believe and when I went to Israel to speak that Ezekiel 37 message two to

three years ago this was the underlying sense that for reason for which I was being sent to save people from falling away to begin to introduce and to sound the note that would save them from the consequence of their naivety that when the calamities come they would be better prepared to understand them and not condemn God for his failure to preserve Israel when of necessity they were biblically and prophetically set up for just such things do we not have a prophetic responsibility therefore to sound a warning of such possibility if there's only a possibility if there's just enough scripture to suggest that this might be a possibility should we not at least express that?

Do we not have a prophetic obligation to sound a warning and say will you at least consider this? If this is true, what ought you to be doing as a nation in acknowledging a God who threatens such disaster seeing that there is virtually no expectation for such a scenario is this not the church's prophetic task? The expression however misunderstood and resisted of an ultimate love? I told you that when I spoke Ezekiel 37 at Christ Church in Jerusalem I think someone shouted right out of the audience cats you're as loveless as ever, you've never changed you're the same and I'm saying here what is love?

Is an ultimate love to sound the warning rather than to give people a false assurance in something that is going to eventuate in their doom? Will such a view not profoundly alter our present posture toward Israel by inspiring the very gospel witness we have been loath to make? It's interesting that the Christian embassy position is not to promulgate the gospel to the Jew, but only to win their friendship and to establish the relationship and I'm saying something quite opposite.

I'm saying if this threat is imminent, what we not to do exactly opposite shouldn't we be promoting the gospel? Shouldn't we be bringing Israelis to the knowledge of the Lord and save them out of the death and the calamity that is future? Is not this the very show of mercy that moves to jealousy for the love that makes it, even as it incurs their momentary wrath and displeasure? Even if they misunderstand it, even if they get angry, isn't this showing them mercy that we're called to do, that by our mercy they might receive mercy?

Have we not ample reason solemnly to ponder the warning of Ezekiel 33, 1-17, where it says that if you do not sound the warning, their blood will be on your hands? In conjunction with world juries and Israel's deepening and insoluble crisis? You know what the response to my sending this has been? Zero.

No response. And not one brother has taken me aside to show me my error, but I have been categorically cut off, rejected, and so on. I'm not saying that to win your sympathy, but just to say this is the school of the prophets.

You want to know what prophetic obedience means? Rejection, misunderstanding, being cut off. You may have a 15-20 year history of having brought the word of the Lord as they have acknowledged by me to Israel year after year, and you bring one word that crosses the grain of their expectation, and you are summarily dismissed as if you had never existed. So, you can pray for those that have this paper that the word will quicken it.

It's interesting that in my hopeful dialogue with the brother that I mentioned from the Christian Embassy who ran into a rage when I started, there was a young man in the room with us who was in charge of their Russian work and a Jewish-American lawyer now working for the Christian Embassy. And when I was finished, and I had hardly said two words, he came to me and said, Artie said, I'd like to really hear what you would have liked to have said. I said, well, you want to come to my hotel room? And he did.

And I gave him this paper and I reviewed a little bit of it with him. So, there's somewhere there in the Embassy a little deposit that we can hope that the Lord will breathe upon. But you know what this means? This is not only devastation for Israel, this is devastation for the Christian Embassy.

This is devastation to a shallow, evangelical, and charismatic view that is well meaning but is so removed from the actualities and the truth of what God is about to do and must do, seeing Israel's millennial destiny and its present apostasy. So, there's going to be a devastation that comes to the Church, hopefully before it comes to Israel, or at least will come with Israel's devastation. And the question is, will it be one that many will survive? Or will this be the thing of which Paul spoke, that the Lord will not come till there be first a great falling away? So, therefore, thus says the Lord God, now I shall restore the fortunes of Jacob and have mercy on the whole house of Israel, and I shall be jealous for my holy name, and they shall forget their disgrace and all their treachery which they perpetrated against me when they live securely on their own land with no one to make them afraid.

When I bring them back from the peoples and gather them from the land of their enemies, then I shall be sanctified through them in the sight of many nations. How do we know that this is future? Because God has not been sanctified through them in the face of many nations. And they themselves have not yet recognized their disgrace, let alone been reconciled to God by it.

Nor are they securely in their own land. It seems so evident. You don't have to be a theologian.

This does not take great exacting, exegetical skill to draw the truth out. It is clear, statement after statement that shows that this cannot be a statement of Israel's past, must be a statement of Israel's future, and therefore it's full of warnings of an upcoming calamity, but that a remnant will survive it and will be restored. Then I shall be sanctified through them in the sight of many nations.

So no previous or present return fits this description. This has not happened since 1948. Then they will know that I am the Lord, their God, because I made them go into exile among the nations, and then gather them again to their own land.

And I will leave none of them there any longer. How do we know this is future? Because there's only three to four million Jews in Israel, and most of us are still in California, and Oshkosh, and Timbuktu, and New York City, and throughout the nations. We're yet in the place of exile.

He says, and I will then not leave any of them any longer. Evidently yet future, seeing that the preponderance of world Jewry, approximately 12 million, are still in diaspora. And I will not hide my face from them any longer, for I shall have poured out my spirit on the house of Israel, declares the Lord God.

That's only one text, and if we had time, I could show you text after text after text, that says essentially the same thing through prophets of different generations and times. It is the whole thrust of God. It is the prophetic counsel of God of the theme of Israel's restoration in the last days.

For which reason, Jesus is yet pent up in heaven, waiting the restoration spoken by the prophets, all the prophets, the holy prophets, since the world began. It's the fulfillment of this that releases the Lord, as King, brings his kingdom and his millennial rule and his glory. And we are not only the observers, but the participants of this awesome, final, dramatic, apocalyptic event in history, in these last days.

And this school is a preparation for that eventuality. Well, I still have got two or more pages to go over with you. I don't want to rush it, so we'll probably pick it up on Monday.

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