

Messianic Conference Report: The Morning After

by Art Katz

Art Katz's sermon calls for a revolutionary return to the roots of faith through Jewish apostles and prophets, critiquing modern Christianity's focus on comfort over spiritual depth.

Scripture: Romans 11:11

Topics: "Authentic Worship", "Spiritual Revolution"

Description

Art Katz reflects on the Messianic Conference, expressing his discomfort amidst the exuberant worship and theatrical performances that seemed to overshadow genuine spirituality. He critiques the shift towards a 'religion' that caters to human comfort rather than a radical return to the roots of faith through Jewish apostles and prophets. Katz emphasizes the need for a transformative movement within Christianity, urging believers to embrace a deeper, more authentic relationship with God, free from the distractions of entertainment and superficiality. He warns against the allure of a Judaistic return that lacks true spiritual depth, advocating instead for a priestly life that prioritizes inner communion with God. Ultimately, Katz calls for a revolution in the Church, igniting a passion for signs, wonders, and a genuine pursuit of the Kingdom of God.

Transcript

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Again, I had the strange sense of being entirely "out of it" in the midst of a whole congregation, mostly women, greatly moved to dance in the aisles and on the platform. They were playing loud, recorded Israeli-type music whose lyrics were shown overhead. Meanwhile the kippur and tallis-wearing 'rabbi' intones appropriate solemnities and incitements to prayer, whilst striding back and forth with hand-held microphone. The capstone was the bringing down by the rabbi the Torah scroll from the platform in the manner of the synagogue and through the aisles for the touching or kissing of it by others wearing yarmulke and tallithim [I refrained, remaining seated and unmoved, constrained somehow to resist the otherwise compelling moment]. We were 'treated' to a dance-theatrical troupe, all adorned with the Star of

David on their costumes and banners which held aloft these stars toward heaven as if themselves the object of worship in an elaborately rehearsed performance to the excitement of the entire crowd.

Finally, the speaker for the evening explodes impressively from the beginning in an indictment of a 'religion' (Christianity) devised for the benefit of men in contrast to the new thing God is doing, namely, a return to the roots through apostles and prophets who are Jewish--to the excited response and acclaim of the audience! In this alternative to emaciated 'Christianity,' we were told that one can afford to make mistakes and liberally allow others to make them also, that we might together grow up into maturity unto the Kingdom of God. The last, though oft-repeated, is never defined, but constitutes a vague and ambiguous high-sounding reality which is the goal of our faith, and which we will constitute in ourselves in the 'revolution' coming to the Body of Christ! "God is looking for revolutionaries. If you breathe you qualify...a river of fire is flowing."

From what I remember of the sermon, the substance of it was: "God told me that there is more that He wants in a people He can ignite by fire...it's not about your comfort. THOSE DAYS ARE OVER...He is returning the Church to Jewish apostles and prophets [the speaker is one of the latter as his own newsletter testifies]...The Lord gave me a prophetic word, "you're [i.e., this new move] going where no man has gone before...God is going to transform the Christian religion...Stop playing church...God wants to give the whole thing away...You get the whole Kingdom...signs, wonders and miracles...to move the Jews to jealousy...you cannot argue with a miracle."

And so, in shouts, chuckles and belly laughs at the theatrical and entertaining performance, the final invitation comes with swelling music. The altar is swamped with those who will go 'under' when the anointing oil is [literally] poured upon their heads in a climax to an 'evening of evenings'!

In the lobby, I wait for the yarmulke, tallis-wearing brother who has offered me hospitality, but is now employed as a catcher for those 'going under.' The tables are LOADED with Messianic merchandise of T-shirts, books, banners, tape albums [the speaker had 20 or more of his own plus a number of his own books]. Finally, I decide to quit and come home, forfeiting the next day's program so as to 'digest' this much before returning for the third and final concluding day.

The next morning's selection from Charles Spurgeon's devotional, Morning and Evening is both purgative and blessing from the aftertaste of the previous night:

The boundless realms of His Father's universe are Christ's by prescriptive right. As 'heir of all things,' He is the sole proprietor of the vast creation of God, and has admitted us to claim the whole as ours, by virtue of that deed of joint-heirship which the Lord hath ratified with His chosen people...the unutterable glory, is, by our blessed Lord, made over to us for our everlasting possession...the crown royal He has placed upon the head of His church, appointing her a Kingdom, and calling her sons a royal priest-hood, a generation of priests and kings...

I wish this was better known to most Christians. But who could exposit it better than a Spurgeon? For the lack of it, we are susceptible to every cheap and glitzy counterfeit-even to that of a Judaistic kind, described as a 'return to the roots' in a repudiation of a [holy] 'Christianity' of which the tar-brushing speaker knows little! The breadth and depth of Spurgeon's vast apprehension saves us from the need of any other purported 'cause' or ideal-even the ambiguous use of the word 'kingdom' which was somehow never defined.

Consider the significance of Spurgeon's reference to priests and priesthood. How different it is to the priesthood usurped and superceded by the sages of a post-Temple rabbinical elite in the Judaism so admired and theatrically emulated in the Messianic Conference described above. It is for the lack of a true spiritual priestliness that the faith has lapsed into the pathetic theatrics of entertainment-put forth now as the 'answer' to an inept 'Christianity,' and whose proponents are not one whit embarrassed to employ the sacred words, apostolic and prophetic! Unbeknownst to these men is the fulfillment they themselves constitute: "Your foes have roared within your Holy place: they set up their emblems [Mogen David-the Star of David] there" (Psalm 74: 4).

Religious ambition [requiring that one's ministry be understood as 'international'] will not give to the consideration of one's own soul the daily diligence required for priestly service. Indeed, the rich insight of today's exhortation in Chamber's My Utmost for His Highest would be incomprehensible and not at all likely read. In it, he speaks of keeping the conscience sensitive by "the continual habit of being open to God on the inside, and that it is at our peril that we allow any one thing to obscure [our] inner communion with God [May 13, my emphases]. This is the sine qua non [non-negotiable fact] of any apostolicity or propheticness, not one's ethnic or supposed Jewishness! This is the root to which we need return-a mode of life and reality which the ambitious, the strident and the competitive cannot recognize, or they would not so easily trample it.

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