

Paganism - the Cancer of the Church

by Art Katz

The sermon emphasizes the growing threat of paganism within the church, the importance of Christology, and the need for a resuscitated Christology to restore the heart and core of the matter.

Duration: 56:23

Scripture: John 1:1

Topics: "Paganism"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker begins by praying for God's guidance and the ability to understand and apply His word. He shares a personal experience of losing a property due to a choice made for the sake of righteousness and justice. The speaker emphasizes the importance of disciplining children with love and understanding, rather than harshness. He also discusses the challenges faced by Christian nations in evangelizing their own people, who are influenced by paganism and need to be reminded of the purity and authenticity of the Christian faith.

Transcript

My God in your heart and significant let it become that for us because of the power of your spirit and give us my God the ability to follow you to retain what you're speaking to assimilate to take it in to affect my God our conduct our walk our service we thank and give you praise for all of these days in this concluding day in Jesus holy name amen well I was up to close midnight reading a number of things last night in reviewing and considering possibilities and then this morning my eyes fell on the book by my chair and came a bit alive for me I want to begin with that it's the issue of paganism not in other lands but our own and paganism not in other religions but our own that is to say the growing threat of paganism in contemporary Western Christendom more in the liberal or mainline

denominations than perhaps in the wave that we represent but if it's not presently with us it will be knocking on our door also not announcing itself as paganism but containing its essential elements that would contradict and bring the true faith down and lessen the reality of the church so I just want to read a book that contains met of papers that were brought to the conference on this subject of church concern edited by called Broughton b-r-a-a-t-a-t-e-n who's a very well known Lutheran theologian and in his introduction he writes the so-called Christian nations of the West are in fact the new mission fields which the churches cannot evangelize because they have not faced the renewed paganism that is the actual religion of those to whom the gospel must there be spoken but to whom the

gospel has already been spoken or some form of the gospel has already been spoken are the people who at least suspect that they are the candidates for paganism or that paganism is already insinuating itself and moving through traditional Christianity and threatening it so it is a mission field right here about the purity of the faith or the authentic apostolic character of the faith he talks about a conference of women in Minneapolis actually of witches who prayed on this at their Sunday morning service to our maker Sophia we are women in your image with the hot blood of our wombs we give form to a new life and it is very sensual so the element of sensuality sex is a predominant strand and theme in pagan things and perhaps answers the question in part why would people forsake or be

indifferent or reject authentic faith in God to embrace something counterfeit because it panders to the gratification of their more base lusts which the true faith calls to be renounced or crucified those that have crucified the affections how does it say and the lusts help me with this goodbye the flesh and the flesh with the lust thereof those are the Lords so the true faith calls for the crucifixion the false faiths provide gratification but they provide it in a way that's ostensibly seems religious and God's celebrating and so that you have the best of all worlds you have a seeming spirituality while at the same time a justification for your lust and Broughton says whatever else is to be said of such quote worship unquote it is of course the opposite of biblical faith and amateurish

but more explicit reinvention of the fertility worship of Ashtoreth and Baal against which the faith of Israel defined itself so it sounds like it's an ages-old battle and it's not over it's not just the curiosity of antiquity and Canaanite religion that we can look on with a kind of disinterested interest it's a vital contemporary concern now and to the end of the age is the same vying for truth about God before men and the issue is life and death and the issues eternal salvation or eternal hell and time has not lessened the issue but in fact the end of the age will make it yet even more fierce and more difficult because yet now more subtle the ancient idolatries could be easily identified by the visible images of actual idols the contemporary paganism is more subtle it doesn't have

visible objects I say it doesn't it may have and it has been released even among Christians when they have taken mementos or souvenirs off their walls masks that have come from Africa or other exotic looking objects that they think are quaint and experience an actual relief something lifts off and out when those things are taken away or destroyed because they contain the spirit valence of demonic powers culture is not neutral there's a culture that has its origin from below and there's a divine culture and we need to be fearful and sensitive to the one and willing and open for the other that's why Abraham had to come out of nation kindred and father's house lest he bring with him into the land of promise with the Lord would leave him any of the valences and spirit dimensions of the

Babylonian thing from which he came up in order to call these required a radical and surgical separation get the out you can't find the word as less uncompromising than the word out get the out of what those things that have the greatest pull and soul bondedness that are familiar look what we're praying about with the with the Hutterites these are things that are familiar and dear and hallowed by time and to let go of that what did my mother say to virtually the day of her conversion I was born a Jew was more important for her to retain the idolatry of Jewishness than to know God in truth that's how powerful these forces are because less you missed the point or think that Abraham was made of better stuff than ourselves he never did get out right away when when Genesis 12 says so

Abraham departed as the Lord had spoken you might think that God spoke Abraham acted but what happened between the initial speaking and Abraham acting is a long season of delay where he leaves

with his father he leaves with his mishpochah with his relative Lot and his family and instead of crossing the river goes alongside the river a little further south to another place called Haran and there he remains and Haran means delay and there he accumulated servants and possessions and evidently it was a delay of quite a lengthy time and what finally released him his father died so when his father died he was released maybe it is something of a companion piece to Isaiah 6 in the year that King died I saw also the Lord high and lifted up something had to go in order for that revelation something

had to die of soul bondedness and attachment to release the Prophet to it the more erstwhile and complete and total dedication for the purposes of God so the question for us is is there something waiting to die we wait just for longevity to take its toll or can we bring something to a death that hinders a complete separation because we have not yet come out so the church would need needless to say is in a mixed bag condition he writes it was it was and this foolishness to the Greeks to believe that God would choose to embody himself in one individual human being it was and is an insult to human dignity and pride to teach that the word of salvation must come charismatically from the outside the proclamation of the body of truths that constitute salvation so salvation is predicated on a

statement of God rooted in history and event the birth of a single individual in an unusual way through divine conception and called to be King and his very name means salvation is from God it wasn't and is an insult to human dignity part to teach that the word of salvation must come to us from the outside through a message that message the foolishness of the gospel and that the objective saving history of God in Jesus Christ becomes gospel only through the apostolic proclamation the curriculum this particularity this insistence this message this man this name this birth this salvation is offensive to many like to believe many paths to truth of course they never arrived there but it gives a certain aura of spiritual concern and dignity but saves them from the actual discovery and

communion with the God who is God and brings them into a relationship of requirement according to his word this is the way walking in it so that's that's the way the faithful always be at issue and why it's in contention still with paganism and other alternatives so the issue of the faith is the issue of Christ the issue of Christ is called Christology any ology is the study of what the prefix is biology is the study of life and you can think of other ologies theology is the study of God Christology is the study of the examination of Christ the centrality of Christ his person his offices history his proclamation his acts the rejection of Christology is characteristic of the whole of present-day American theology what a statement what a sweeping statement Christianity basically amounts to

religion and ethics in American theology this is he's quoting Dietrich Bonhoeffer who lived in America for a season of time studied or attended the Union Theological Seminary in New York and this is the observation of this keen German theologian about American Christianity the question is to what degree is it still true even 50 years or more after that observation that American Christianity is not insistent upon its dogma upon Christianity upon Christology upon its truths it's more easy come easy go wishy-washy using right words and phrases but not as insistent upon the dogmatic the content of the faith which is the dogma d-o-g-m-a what how it what's a definition for that because the insult that springs from that word is dogmatic to be dogmatic well you're narrow-minded you're dogmatic

you're insisting on one statement there are many ways of perceiving this our faith is dogmatic and when we lose that connection we lose the faith even while we retain the words that pertain to it we have lost its core and its reality and I before we leave this morning I'm going to just read a few things of that description in Germany the German faith was effectually lost and it and the first instances of that loss take place in the

realm of theology and what takes place in the ivory tower and among men who are at that level but it's not long before it filters down to the grassroots and affects the church itself so there's a flight away the search for the historical Christ what are the the new quest and the higher criticism where they were going to bring now to the and a thorough

examination and not just by faith receive everything that said there incredulously but see whether it passes the test of severe scholarship and rigid examination of the kind that we would bring to other disciplines why not bring it to this what is this so sacrosanct that it can't bear examination who says that it's all correct it might be scribal errors or worse and there were contradictions in scripture it said it began a whole wave of things that led to the breakdown of the detriment of the most holy faith one rabbi said there are things that are not for us to examine it's holy holy holy it's like man touching the ark to come to the things of God with the same irreverence by which he would come to Shakespeare or to theory of evolution you can't bring that kind of mentality to God he's

not first of all he's not going to honor an investigation of himself in that spirit and he'll allow you to come to a place of confusion and even of loss of faith and my thesis is that Nazism and the destruction of Western civilization think of if the Germans had won the war what what this world would be today even in their loss think of what was devastated and destroyed not to speak of course of the six million Jews the whole eradication of European Jewry because of the failure for Germany to maintain a viable Christian faith it had lost its apostolic if ever it knew it certainly by the time of the 20th century it was so weak and so enfeebled it had lost its dogmatic character and the question is why because the issue of Christology what is Christ what is the word anointed King Jesus came

preaching the gospel of the kingdom repent for the kingdom of God is at hand is it time now to restore the kingdom the whole issue of Christ as King goes back to the first angelic pronouncement to Mary and you should give birth to son his name shall be called Jesus and his father shall give to him the throne of David that he might rule over the house of Israel for ever you know that we have lost that connection we ourselves the church even the charismatic of the New Testament forms have lost this root of the faith that Christ means anointed King that there's a kingdom at stake not just a religious alternative or the improvement of our life or salvation from eternal hell that the fundamental issue is King and one of the great scholarly breakthroughs in modern times is a book called Christ

the victor the triumph over the powers of the air came with the crucifixion of this King who defeated death by death and that this was the great thing that was apprehended and understood by the early church that they had obtained a victory over those things that had tyrannized mankind since time immemorial the King had come and had broken into the powers of darkness in a way from which they would never recover and set in motion their ultimate defeat by the sacrifice of himself and that over his head in three languages Jesus of Nazareth King of the Jews is not just an intended insult but a more profound statement of this drama the glory of it then his malefactors knew to lose this is to lose the faith that so why why has it been lost because it's the kingdom of David because it's the

kingdom promised to Israel because it has its inception in Israel because its rule in its law goes forth out of Zion and its word out of Jerusalem and the instinctive and intrinsic deep anti-jewish anti-semitic thing that is latent in Gentiles who are only thinly Christianized and not deeply converted shuns and dislikes and wants to throw off these cords from us and have a kind of Christianity amenable to our own culture our own nationality and so on and that kind of Christianity must fail failed in Germany failed in Japan it will fail here unless we have resuscitated the heart and the core of the matter the issue of Christ as king that's

Christology king of what the promise of God made to his father David of a kingdom to come to Israel but not for its own enjoyment but so as to bless all

the families of the earth the issue of Israel's kingdom is the issue of the nations coming under the sovereignty of God who established their number in terms of the sons of Israel there can be no real Christology he writes without the eschatological prophet from Nazareth think of the stubborn specificity of God not just a Christ you know why because these filthy pagan mongers and new age characters use the word Christ will come Christ has come Christ this Christ that that everyone is Christ and the gurus the men of wisdom of the Christ but the Jesus of Nazareth this Jewish kid who was born in Bethlehem Hebrew of the Hebrews of Paul could make that claim what of Jesus this is the Messiah to lose that that that stubborn and tenacious identification is to lose the ballgame is Jesus of

Nazareth and what do we hear in white supremacist groups in America that call themselves Christians Jesus would not a Jew they cannot bring themselves to that acknowledgment they they stumble over the stumbling stone in Zion I want to frame a kind of Christianity with a Jesus who is not that you were not born in Nazareth somehow that's not the proof that did not come out of Nazareth but what Jesus in fact then do they have they use the word what Christ do they have because if it's not the Christ who is king as the Jesus born in Nazareth is no salvation because that's what his name means Yeshua Jehovah is the Savior and any other play on that name that points to another deity of our own composition and choosing though we use the name leaves us without the benefit and the power of that

salvation and when the false prophets of Baal were contending against Elijah and they made their own sacrifice and cut up their own ox they fully expected fire to fall because not only are they deceivers of men they are themselves deceived and deceived to believe that they somehow knew God they they called him Lord because the word was Baal and they danced and leaped and jumped and cut themselves and still there was no answer nor could there be an answer for there was no God that could conform to their expectation they were barking up the wrong tree it was a pagan alternative to the God who was a lone God celebrated by the lonely prophet Elijah got the idea men are going to be disappointed in the last days and then maybe they're disappointed now why doesn't God do this and how come he

doesn't do that and I prayed and doesn't hear and then disappointed look what's happening in Israel and the church is a mess what's being disappointed is the human conception of a God of their own making who was an errand boy and will placate and bring to them the kinds of things that they desired at their will as they pray but that God is not going to bring the answer because he's not God at the very first miracle at the gate beautiful was performed in the name of the child Jesus and several times it comes up in the early apostolic proclamation of the child Jesus that why are they celebrating the child he didn't die as a child but why did why do they keep making that reference maybe because the issue of child is the issue of birth as a son of David and that brings the vital linkage with

the Christ who is Christ that God honors by the his presence and his power in the miracle that's obtained so this needs to come back into our own consciousness because to lose this is to lose everything as this writer says who is not himself Jewish there can be no real Christology or no real Christianity really without the eschatological prophet from Nazareth his own relationship to the Jewish people and to their God we can't get away from the thing of the Jewishness of the faith is teaching his miracles and his attitude to others cannot be understood except in this context that these things are embedded in the culture of ancient Greece and in this system of values humanity is at the center man is the measure of all things what will we say the Christianity today with a measure of all

things is not the glory of God but the benefit that accrues to man don't miss this what would we say about Christianity today I'll even go further our best Christianity today of the most advanced and charismatic Christianity where man is the measure of all things rather than the glory of God and that the issue that underlies the whole premise of the church and its activity and function is what benefit accrues to men is that not the ultimate triumph of humanism that has come to the church is this not the deepest root of paganism that has affected the church and is its cancer and there's only one thing that is powerful enough to count the man this incessant and intrinsic putting of ourselves at the center which is the root of paganism and that is an abiding passionate jealousy for the glory

of God and what is Paul but the greatest exemplar of that glory as were the prophets before him so that when Paul ends his great statement on the mystery of Israel and the church Romans 9 through 11 and with the great blast of profuse praise all the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God who's been his counsel so forth for often through him through him are all things to whom be glory forever the greatest greatest issue for Paul was not Israel's restoration and was not the church brought to its ultimate maturity and apostolic constituency that would affect it the greatest issue for Paul exceeded both Israel and the church it was the glory of God for ever and paganism is a direct attack at that core and wanting to substitute for God's glory man's satisfaction

religious satisfaction but man's satisfaction never the less and if we make that our conscious purpose we are already opening the door to these nefarious and paganistic influences is that to say that there's no benefit my god I'm so benefit I can't contain it but we don't make the benefit the premise of the faith we don't make the benefit that accrues the first purpose we don't make the experience of what we enjoy the reason for our quest that still is has man and his gratification at the center and it's a false center and opens the doors the doors to that which brings down the faith as much as there is to love and admire in this vision of man at the center the concepts of beauty virtue truth justice humanity at ideal levels it stands in polar opposition to the Hebrew Christian vision

rooted in the revelation of Israel's God they're nice they're humane they're nice considerations and I want to give me a grace to say this why am I an enemy of sentiment why do I blanch and cringe at people expressing sentiment for ostensibly nice things as I said to my dear wife last night wanting to improve the plumbing in the house of someone in one of the villages in the West Bank is nice but there are considerations that are greater than nice but the but there are our warfare is not the evil versus the perfect but the good versus the perfect the nice things the commendable things that the world and even the church applauds and sanctions because it's shot through with human consideration and sentiment the first thought that came to me when the Lord revealed himself in the first

reading of the Gospel of John aboard the deck of that trans thing on my way to Athens was what will your mother think about this how will this affect your mother the very first issue I had to face as a candidate for the faith was sentimental loyalty or the truth of God and I shared with someone about the property here how we were gave up our interest in this camp we were the founders were the first one the Lord spoke to me the vision for this place I then subsequently invited other brothers to participate not having the means myself and then there was a falling out over the issue of sin and we had to make a decision has been Israel do we stand with the brother in loyalty and affection having a personal history with him over the years or do we stand with the issue of righteousness and

those that are bringing judgment that this brother was seeking at that time we thought to avoid we stood with what we thought was righteousness cut ourselves off from the camp gave over our interest in the

property stayed on outside of the road and lost everything in which we had invested finance money our life and our energy for another eight or ten years we have this building now and this six acres only as a grace that has come back to us from God we gave it up for righteousness sake when we had to choose between sentiment and personal human loyalty and affection as over against an issue of justice and righteousness for the church and for the kingdom so watch that watch this deadly thing that continually sucks at us and nowhere more effectively than in the realm of our own children are

you beating your children and knowing that it will not kill them that's the word says beat them with rods it will not kill them because if you hate their souls you'll you'll abstain from bringing the kind of discipline that they need that only you can perform and I'm persuaded that a lot of what we call youth rebellion and turning away from parents and their culture what they represent is an unconscious expression and a cry for the failure of parents to show ultimate expression of love which can only be shown in chastisement because the word says so but what have we done we've put the word aside for sentiment and tender feelings and humane things have taken higher priority a book came to us some years ago in community on rearing children Christianly and I gave it to a brother with a young

child an erudite skilled brother in the word the book was perfectly biblical and he gave it back to me to say it's too hard and that's how the door is open Saints to the deterioration of the faith through sentiment through deference to man and feelings not so much our children but our own feelings because we cannot bear the pain of inflicting pain and therefore we avoid it but I'm very fond of quoting Shakespeare's Hamlet where if you've not heard this is what's worth hearing and if you've not read the play I commend it one of the great masterpieces of literature where Hamlet learns that his father was murdered by his own brother and that his mother has married the murderer and it breaks upon him through revelation he cannot believe it he's astonished his father was a giant and this

brother was a coarse vile philanderer and opportunist and got into the castle by marrying the wife of the man whom he killed and so there's a scene in which Hamlet confronts his mother Gertrude and he grabs the locket from around her neck and opens it and in the locket is the picture of the deceased husband and of the present husband and he shoves it right into a face and he says something like you've chosen this bum for the one who was a giant a man of stature and it breaks upon her soul she was deceived and seduced and it comes like a stopping realization of what she has done and he says you're lying betwixt incestuous sheets and she cries out of a heart-piercing cry that I'm sure everyone watching the play would just be muffling their tears Hamlet no more I mean cool it back off I

can't take it the realization and Hamlet says this classic line sometimes one must be cruel in order to be kind this is what what Paul was with Peter when Peter was compromising and doing one thing with the Jewish believers another thing with the Gentiles and Paul would not for an hour allow that dissimulation for Barnabas was already being affected and the cancerous deception was already he had to stop it right now faith to his face not for an hour would he allow the thing to continue it's going to take that kind of jealousy and that kind of inconsistency and this kind of even though your kids are howling or your mother is howling you've got to stand for God even if it's cruel and it will be considered cruel rather than humane but the kind of humaneness that the world will celebrate and

for which even Christians will applaud you is the opening of the door to the deception and to the loss of the faith which in the end affects entire nations and therefore in their wake is corruption and death incalculable I don't have unless the Lord himself by his spirit underlines this in your heart words will have to fail to communicate what happens in the failure of the faith and the lessening of the faith is not only a

consequence to those who have allowed this erosion but what comes into the nation of which they ought to be the statement and standard of God is so horrible that well if we have not learned from Germany and Japan we have not learned so in this last session that we've talked a little bit about Japan I just want to say a few things about the collapse of the church and the

world the faith in Germany and this is a classic study by a Jewish historian at Columbia University this was his PhD dissertation at Berkeley and I picked it up at the Cass Lake library for five cents at a book sale thank you Lord for that providential day the politics of cultural despair a study in the rise of Germanic ideology in which he shows that the greatest of the ideologists those who shaped Nazi doctrine were almost invariably the disillusioned or disappointed sons of Protestant ministers or out of pious Catholic families without exception they were all the victims of a failed Christianity questing and looking for some alternative to the guy who had failed very few historians secular historians ever take this perspective they look at Nazism as the breakdown of the Weimar Republic

and the failure of liberal institutions in a time of inflation the harsh requirement of the Versailles Treaty against Germany that made the nation a pauper nation etc and all those factors are true but the sum total of them cannot give the deepest understanding of the rise of this demonic phenomenon that led to the loss of European Jewry and almost to the collapse of Western civilization itself let alone the cost and bringing that demonic thing down at least the physical expression of it because as one has wisely said those spirits that came upon Germany though that Germany was defeated in war the spirits remain and await their next opportunity so if the conditions by which they had opportunity to come in and to penetrate and to pollute German Christianity and to leave an enormous void

that even the sons of ministers were disillusioned and without hope and without a deep engagement with God and looking for some kind of alternative and that when Hitler came upon the scene they grabbed him as Messiah Führer means leader and he was celebrated with as worshipful a devotion as ever the church gave to Christ in the generations that preceded Hitler's coming so we need to gain just a few insights out of that collapse and he talks that the book is about certain of the principal ideologists who fashioned the Nazi mindset who cast their discontent into political visions which were as divorced from reality as their creators were from society and because of this longing they made the leap from cultural criticism to politics assuming that cultural evil could be dissolved by the

establishment of the right kind of faith and community it's interesting that almost invariably they were looking for a kind of corporate life there's there's a cry there's something in man that knows that to be isolated and to lack meaningful significant relationship is to become stultified and to die Germany has a much deeper sense of this than than we Americans were so individualistic because long before Hitler there were nature youth groups pioneers and fireside singing and looking back into German culture and even now closer to Hitler time into pagan origins of Germany to find something that would bind them all together in the absence of God they had to find an alternative that would be a basis for the kind of comradeship the word comrade was a fixed word in German vocabulary and even

in Russian communist vocabulary seeking the same thing outside of God the failure of the church to be community and to meet the vital and organic need of men for authentic relationship as comrades as brothers with shared destiny and significant purpose for being was not provided by German Christianity and therefore the void was filled by its demonic alternative called Nazism the question is has that void been filled today our own Christianity is so totally individualistic that again and again when I speak in Bible colleges and places like that I say you guys who have the greatest prospect for community are not

employing it you're just a bunch of individuals who of necessity are required to share the same facilities so that you can each be received your your credential for your personal

ministry but you're not related to each other's community you're just using the same facility and what is a Sunday service but they're coming together of isolated individualities for the purpose of obtaining personal benefit listening to the man who's bringing it forth or the worship team and leaving that to go back again into the privacy and isolation of their own homes we keep that up our kids are going to be looking for what is instinctively a need that God himself has created and they'll find it in ways that will more than embarrass us but bring a shame it's interesting that the two guys that blew up that school in Colorado and those kids were neo-nazis they idolized Hitler they wore trench coats they had military garb they fantasized they wanted something heroic even if it meant

their own death let alone the death of others and the parents were absolutely a star stunned that their children could be capable of this kind of bloodletting without conscience right in an American normative quote Christian poem because the question is how Christian was the Christian if it is not vital in meeting man and the deepest engagement that he has being made in God's image because God himself is a sweet company he's not a solo deity he's a father and a son and a Holy Spirit and they are in a market with remarkable relationship together one without the other is inconceivable to themselves one defers to the other they enjoy their fellowship the son was a delight to the father long before he ever made his appearance on the earth and we're called to demonstrate the mystery of the

Godhead that when we will be one as they are one the world will know that the father has sent him there's a father who sends there's a Holy Spirit who testifies the three this is not my phrase with the God I had coined that I would have himself as a sweet company so what I'm saying is only that Christianity which is apostolic that Christianity which is the dogmatic faith of a Christ born at Nazareth called to be king in a kingdom that he is already advancing by his coming that will come to Israel benefit all nations this is the faith and we don't apprehend the faith that way and lay hold of it because it has expectancy for a future there's a hope with that we have part in that kingdom we shall rule and reign with him in that kingdom this life whatever its difficulties is preparation and

discipline for that rule if we lose that we lose the incentive for this life and we have no hope for the life to come and therefore we while we were yet Christians were copping up we're fornicating with taking liberties we're reading pornography we're slipping a bottle with whatever form it takes it's the evidence that we have not been fully engaged in God we've lost the Jewish kingdom root so they sought to destroy the present in order to usher in a future right r-e-i-c-h you know this German word what does it mean third right the driven life life is a kingdom they did not know or they rejected the kingdom of God which is the kingdom of Israel because they were too damn proud to allow Jews to have such a promise for their future and so they found their own German alternative king a third

wife a kingdom but it was a kingdom of death praise God that the Lord did not allow it to succeed or I cannot even speak of the misery that would have been projected over all mankind we would be having Auschwitz is in Minneapolis we have death camps throughout America we'd be systematically annihilating American Jews as they systematically annihilated them in Europe and in fact it's this very spirit that will seek again that annihilation at the end of the age and in the time of Jacob's trouble and I think it was John what we together in Auschwitz and Birkenau as we're walking was it Simon we were walking over these vast ruins of the barracks where these skeletons were contained and it's it's breathtaking in a long way to see German what's the word efficiency and order set up as a process

of annihilation only the Germans could have killed and annihilated six million in the short period of time that they did anyone else would have made a mess of it just a logistical problem of killing and annihilating it was a self staggering and Simon said the art of you believe that the time of Jacob's trouble correct me if I'm misstating this is going to exceed the horror of the Nazi time and that it will be greater in its magnitude and there'll be more white lives lost how could that take place in the short three and a half year period that we expect it to be except that there be camps of this kind set up elsewhere in the world wherever centers of Jewish population are Wow I never thought of that yes I was expecting great attrition Jews not being knocked off here and there but that's

true if we're talking about the decimation of 10 million Jews that cannot be obtained in three and a half years except through some systematic system of annihilation and not in Germany though and they will be there again but in our nation and in other nations that have allowed the same spirit that came into Germany that come to come into us and for the same reason that we have not a formidable and apostolic reality in the church that could identify and resist it but we have a lesser kind of self-seeking experience oriented Christianity that does not fit us for the onrush of these last day evils and we will collapse before it I have never taken the time when the Lord has never called it that we should speak so as we are now in these days all has never called it that we should speak so as

we are now in these days all of the subjects what are that we that we could have had for this prophetic school what was the Lord's insistence the nation's the powers Christ the powers in the nations this is the last day's drama and the Nazi thing and the Japanese collapse was a preview that we must not miss for in it are all the lessons for ourselves somehow of this insistence on the authentic dogmas of the faith but in the spirit and the apostolic and the prophetic spirit even in the Hebraic spirit would save it from becoming a kind of an arid and offensive I know the truth and you don't kind of mentality you don't say anyone's saying there's something about a fundamentalist that is icky and offensive but the truth of fundamentalism is critical but how to hold that truth and how to

demonstrate that truth by the spirit and in community in the reality of that faith is the issue maybe the problem with the fundamentalist of Germany to house whoever they were was that they lacked a corresponding reality to their life and were satisfied only with creedal correctness and had not the accompanying existential reality well we're reading about these ideologues who were starved for a reality that was not to be made that was not available to them even through fundamentalist it would let alone through the liberals that whatever was Christian had failed so they could not realize on this earth some of the bliss that had once been promised for the hereafter there was no sense of a future or an eternal reward worth waiting for us or seeking they were artists without talents of

creative expressions prophets without a God this is a Jewish historian writing this having a Jewish religious faith that is to having discounted and thrown it over they could not fall back on the promise of divine deliverance what why do men entrust their destiny to a Führer a guy with a little mustache who's not even German but Austrian and a failed artist and just out of the punk elements of German society from the bottom that meet in beer hall basements how could a great nation of good or Schiller Fichte Hegel entrust their destiny to a questionable character like that because they were desperate and because nothing else had been provided them as alternative and as model they had nothing to fall back on in the promise of divine deliverance and therefore they had to seize a human or a

demonic alternative having abjured a given over reason they could not expect a natural human evolution toward the community they sought the goal consequently was a mystique and the means to the means the

left obscure suggested violence and coercion this you're not going to get this just hearing this the end of it is violence it's looking for something as God cannot provide it meant cannot provide it and so they take the demonic alternative but the but in the end it requires somehow the expression of the employment of violence God's way is peace but the way that seems right into a man is death and destruction was so these men who have become a complex instance of the search for salvation who has ever examined Nazism as somehow a failed search for salvation that these men could not find

salvation within the context of the nation of the Reformation has got to be one of the astounding statements of modern times that is never ever fingered in examining the phenomenon of Nazism Hitler Germany the Holocaust at the root of it is spiritual that the root of it is a failed salvation and a God that could not be experienced or a faith that would be experienced as community and that these women deeply questioning for something of this kind and therefore they found it in the place that Satan had prepared the compromise of German Christianity the loss of its apostolic character the making of it a religion that was amenable to German national purposes and imperialism or business is exactly what the Jews did with their Judaism in Germany reform Judaism's the forfeiting of the supernatural

content of the faith a domestication of Jewish faith to make it amenable to business and cultural pursuit that would make them a companion to their Christian compatriots in Germany both the German and the Jew were guilty of the actual renunciation of God and the turning of their true faith toward their own personal purposes it's a paganism even in the name of God which is the worst offense to God it's interesting that the Jewish patrons of the arts and of intellect very much encouraged these directions in German Christianity they were the first ones to recognize and to aid a German young theologian who subsequently became the father of German theology whose name is Schleiermacher he was first discovered and helped by Jewish patrons who recognized him as an innovative German thinker but

what was his innovation away from the dogmatic faith and its insistence on a Jesus and a Christ and into a faith experience obtained as experience that did not require this narrow dogmatic insistence and therefore was amenable and available to middle-class Germans who wanted some spirituality without the loss of their lifestyles it was a perfect provision for Germans who wanted to accommodate the Christian faith to their lifestyles that could not have had lifestyles like that if Christ is Christ because the true faith requires discipleship the truth faith requires sacrifice the true faith requires the putting of the interest of God before oneself but this was a people who want to succeed in business the world of commerce trade culture and imperialist expansion colonialism and that they

want a religion that would lend itself to that and not that would threaten that so isn't it ironic that the monster raised up by Jewish participation and encouragement came back in the end to bite them the Frankenstein that they created destroyed them because the Germany that grew up in the loss of its dogmatic faith and retained only the husk was able to put them through concentration camps in gas ovens without the blinking of an eyelash and without any recognition that what they were destroying were the descendants of the ancient faith of the God of Israel which was their faith you understand what I mean so they they gave rise to that which subsequently killed them the loss of an authentic German Christianity was the undoing of the Jews as it was almost the undoing of the civilized

world and Jewish participation and encouraging that Christianity away from dogmatic insistence to a more naturalistic religion that would make it more amenable and not narrow and threatening to Jews actually became the death they did not recognize that a true Christianity would have been their salvation because they had not seen the true Christianity all they had seen was a stunted kind that was for them anti-semitic

so it's a it's a deep tragedy the greatest fear is the rise of Christian fundamentalism and the insistence on the narrowness of this gospel which means that they themselves must subscribe to it to be saved well they don't want to be saved by it they want to retain Jewish life Jewish institutions Jewish religion Jewish culture they don't become Christians they don't be

threatened that this is the only alternative a model way when there are many past pluralistic ways to the truth so again we have history repeating itself they are in the forefront and they're powerful places of influence to come against the very faith that needs to be established in its dogmatic insistence that this is the way walkie in it and there's no other name given in heaven and earth whereby men may be saved and not only are they involved in the ACLU in places like that but in the places of TV movies culture books articles where without actually and expressly and explicitly stating these things the whole tenor of it is to come against fundamentalist religious conviction and to hold it in derision or bring it into question as being somehow narrow well look what's happened in our

culture the worst thing you can be called is to be called well if Jesus came full of grace and truth and if we come full of truth with right doctrine and dogma but without grace it's a painful contradiction because it is the truth all the more does it require a grace amenable and comparable and equal to that truth that means that our character and our life is as important as the body of convictions that we carry and communicate if we just have the one without the other we're either empty bags or we have a right content but not a right person so they've got to become the thing in itself that's what Jesus was in that way and that what we are called to be otherwise we're just fundamentalist with the right moniker the right categories but not the right life you shall be a witness unto me not

just the correct purveyor of the dogma that's a much greater requirement than just being correct and I'm saying we cannot obtain that and be that independent of church as community we cannot come to that fullness in reality as isolated individuals however well meaning we need the grace the grace is perfected and inculcated in our life in the dealings and requirements that come in those that are living together sincerely so my god sting the church where humanism has pervaded it where experience is more important than dogma and dogma is even an offense and the whole ecumenicism that is taking place now charismatically and institutionally is to put dogmatic doctrinal differences aside in the name of unity and agreement which a sentimental humanism pervading the church that will be its end

and because they think that what they brought that represents progress and the reconciliation of mankind at last that we who insist on our narrow dogma are more than a fly in the ointment we are a dangerous and dangerous impediment to the very progress of mankind which is now within our grasp if you would not be so stubborn in your insistence on this dogma this faith this word and we just put aside those petty distinctions and go along that we might be have unity build the tower higher than God so my god alert the church wake it up shake it up my god history is knocking at the door it's haunting us we can't sweep it under the carpet look what it has cost my god will Germany ever recover unless there are wholesale repentance of the failure of their Christianity before God which still

exists and nothing has been altered even since the Holocaust still man-serving man-pleasing so Lord restore the faith that is the faith we pray for it's the only alternative to darkness and to death whatever it costs us to be the promulgators of that faith the oracles bearing the oracular message of God and that's some light equivalent that makes us fascinating that people should run after us whatever it requires look to bring your oracular voice to the church into the nation we welcome it and we thank you for the privilege of that call may we die my god in it whether we succeed or not rather than lapsing my god into the

alternatives we thank and give you praise in Yeshua's name

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