

Redemptions and Creation

by Art Katz

God's jealousy for His glory will lead to the restoration of Israel, which will be a people with a new name, wearing a crown as a diadem in God's hand, to which the Gentiles and the nations will come to pay homage and to receive the benefit and the blessedness that issues from the life of this re-created people.

Duration: 1:11:17

Scripture: Hosea 6:1, John 11:43, Romans 11:32

Topics: "Divine Restoration", "Spiritual Renewal"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the need for a sanctified place for God's presence, acknowledging human powerlessness and the importance of kindling faith to see God's power in times of crisis. It delves into the concept of Israel's repentance and God's ultimate plan for their restoration, highlighting the depth of God's glory and the need for a radical transformation in individuals and the Church to fulfill God's purposes, especially in relation to Israel's resurrection and the millennial age.

Transcript

The door, the lintel, the post of this house, that you might have, my God, a sanctified place for your presence. And come now, my God, out of your presence, out of your power, to bring to conclusion, my God, these eventful days. We thank you for them with all of our hearts, and we acknowledge in the hearing of your saints our utter powerlessness and inability to affect anything.

Come now, my God, and kindle their faith anew that they might see the demonstration of the power of your life available to them as to me in the crisis moments of requirement that will come when we shall be beyond ourselves, beyond our ability, to find that there's a God whose power is available to us by his grace and the fulfillment of his will and the things to which we're called tonight and all the days of our life until the day of your appearing. Blessed now by that power, in Jesus' name we pray your words. Amen, amen, amen, amen.

In a precious time of fellowship with our brother Dwight today, the question came up about Israel's repentance and whether the things that I foresee that I've been sharing in these past days will affect their repentance, and my answer was no, that God's devastation of Israel will be so complete that the nation, the surviving remnant nation, will be incapable even of repenting. That's a final, what should I say, an emptiness, an inability even to repent except by the grace which is given. I don't think we understand how jealous God is for his glory and how great his repugnance is for anything that eventuates out of man.

And so I'm reading a remark by a theologian who has written on the subject of exile and restoration, a thoroughly unknown man who is probably languishing in some small college and whose book has been relatively, if not totally ignored, *A Theology of Exile* by Thomas Raitt, R-A-I-T-T, because it has to do with the unsavory subject of judgment. If he wanted to be popular and recognized and feasted and hosted, he should have chosen another subject. But I praise God for that moment that I was sitting in the lounge chair of my study that someone insisted that I buy and help half of the expense, looking out on my bookcase and my eye fell on that volume.

And so much of what I've been sharing has been inspired by this remarkable work full of rich insight that needs far more elaboration than I have been able to give it, where he talks about whether we need rightly to ask whether the initiative taken by God toward man to fit him for redemption, even independent even of the capacity for repentance. How low will God bring Israel in order to raise it to the height of its millennial destiny and glory? So low that the nation is incapable even of its own lament. Which he says is a statement about the hopelessness of natural man himself.

When it no longer matters what man does, nothing is any longer conditional upon that. God as creator changes the situation so that God the Redeemer can act fully. I think that as you'll get into the prophetic scriptures, and I hope that that's not the least of the consequences of these days, is that you'll begin to explore them afresh and with new spectacles.

You're going to see the word creator reiterated again and again, where God reminds Israel that he is the creator. And I wondered why he took the pains to keep referring to himself as the creator. And I suppose, I don't know, I'm just feeling my way through it, but unless we understand the magnitude and the majesty of God as creator, we don't understand God.

And maybe the initial act of creation now seems to us so distant and so little considered, nature being so ravaged and raped in our generation, that God needs a final act or desires a final act in which he exhibits himself in the same creative power by which he fashioned the universe to begin with, and by which Israel itself was raised as a nation, and will in the last days be re-created again. The Israel of the millennial age will bear no correspondence to anything that one presently knows of Israel today. It will be a people, thoroughly and utterly, not only restored but re-created anew by the same power that created all things in the beginning.

That the power to redeem is the power to create. It's going to be an awesome demonstration of God. Not only that Israel by that demonstration might know that I am the Lord who has done this, but all flesh shall know and all nations shall know when it shall be done openly and before the face of all nations.

So deliverance creates a transformation which produces the repentance expected of God's elect. When people are brought to that level, then re-election is possible. But God brings them to that level by himself, jealous, so jealous for his glory, that no flesh can touch it, let alone Jewish flesh.

Not even the church, out of its own well-meaning intention, can in any way touch the luster and the grandeur of God's final dealing with Israel that brings it from the dead. To be a people with a new name, the wearing of a crown as a diadem in his hand, to which the Gentiles and the nations will come to pay homage and to bow and to receive the benefit and the blessedness that issues from the life of this re-created people. The church has a vital role, the distinctive role to play in that re-creation, but not out of its own well-meaning intention or ability or love for Israel or any of the things in which we have been coaxed and encouraged till now.

When Paul says at the end of Romans 11, in the great statement on the mystery of Israel and the church, for of him and through him and to him are all things, all, totally, inclusively, to whom be glory forever. He will not share his glory with any flesh. This final masterstroke of God that exhibits him to the nations as they have never known him, and even to the church which purports to know him, is so awesome a demonstration of the sovereignty and the power of God expressed in mercy in a supernatural capacity that restores the nation totally down and out, that the same God who has inflicted the judgments to bring them to that place of destitution is the very same God who raises them up out of it through the exercise of his own power, through a people whose life is predicated entirely on that basis.

Now, just for your information, this final message, perhaps more than anything that I've spoken, is coming forth on that basis tonight. I know it, and God knows it, and you need to know it. I don't care how much it sounds like it's flowing, how much it sounds like it's been prepared.

Look, my no hands, look at the facility of that man to move from this to that. I want you to know that I came up here with a paper and a Bible and some thoughts and considerations which flutter just limply and weakly, wholly dependent and trusting for God himself, the living God, to put together and to project and to make that final and conclusive word his own. Totally, it's an uncomfortable thing for those of us who have been habituated to the world and to its methods.

That's what we go to college for. That's why nice Jewish boys go to college. So on the basis of their ability, they can excel and win and obtain distinction.

Well, this Jewish boy is not performing tonight on that basis. I don't know what the next line is. I don't know where to move from this paragraph.

I have some kind of inkling that somehow I'm to speak from John 11 about Jesus at the tomb of Lazarus, but how and when and where or if it's to be inserted, I can't tell you. Because I've prayed tonight that God would not only proclaim but demonstrate the very means by which the mystery of Israel is going to be obtained at the end of the age through a resurrection church whose life and power and enablement is totally in and through him, that of him and through him and to him are all things to whom be glory forever. For after this great saga is completed, there will not be another historic occasion before the nations and in the earth by which that demonstration will again be made.

It's a once and for all and final exhibition of God. It takes place in time and final time in history, but the result of it is his glory forever. Ever.

This will resonate through eternity of the eternities, the magnitude, the glory and the depth of what God has done with a nation so apostate, so alienated from its God that has blasphemed his name in every nation into which he has driven it, that nevertheless, independent of their qualification and their patent lack of desire even to be chosen, he will fulfill his word made to their fathers millennia ago that they will bless all the families of the earth, that the law of the Lord shall go forth out of their Zion and the word of the Lord out of their Jerusalem so effectually to all nations that they shall beat their swords into plowshares and study war no more, that nations shall come up to Jerusalem to pay homage, that that nation that will not celebrate the feast of tabernacles, that still harbors any reluctance to condescend to this restored Israel will suffer judgment of God, and Egypt is explicitly mentioned by name. They will be robbed of rain if they still have any lingering reluctance to pay homage to the people whom God has restored. What a drama.

What a saga. This is not lyrical. This is not theoretical.

This is not speculative. This is not a spiritualizing of Scripture. This is the literal statement of God's intention.

He will perform it, and it concludes the age and begins the millennial glory. It's his work. And as many times as God has given me the privilege to be the spokesman and the proclaimer of this vision, I have never twice ever spoken it the same way.

I totally have no control. It's God's, that even the proclamation must be his. How much for the fulfillment? This is a whole new realm, saints, of our, what's the word, our being.

We're totally unfit for this. This is not a kind of Christianity that we can perform. It's the ultimate thing to which we're called, and the closest words that I could find that describe it are apostolic and prophetic, that a church will have come to an ultimate condition, constituency, character, quality, and of a kind, that God gives that church participation with himself in completing the tasks that remain that complete the age.

And in so doing, we come through in so transcendent a way, because it is so utterly demanding that we are fitted by that to enter into our millennial destiny and glory, ruling and reigning with him from heavenly places. Oh, the depths of the riches, both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God. How unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out.

For who has known the mind of the Lord, who has been his counselor, who has first given to him, and it shall be recompensed to them again. For of him, not our cats, not John Raitt, of him, and through him, not our puny energy and ability and religious well-meaning intention, and to him are all things to whom be glory forever. The great prophets Ezekiel and Jeremiah, who were the oracles of judgment and of exile, became the oracles of restoration, the kind of judgment that they pronounced if there was to be a restoration, had to be a restoration of a mighty and ultimate kind, so will it be again as the end, because God has to deal, this writer shares, with the proven and enduring tendency of Israel toward waywardness.

If I had all kinds of times in all my papers here, I would develop that theme about your perpetual backsliding, and I took pains to look up the word perpetual. It means ever-ongoing. It has a long, unbroken history and a continuation, and it's a fixed disposition of the character of Israel throughout its history.

It's perpetual in its backsliding. That's why it needs to be re-created by the power of God, a truly radical restoration in what is undertaken, and the heck of it is this. We Jews will have not a cotton-picking thing to do with it.

This creative and redemptive act of God brings a new millennial obedience, not on the basis of our moral achievement, but as the result of the redemption which is our experience. Is that too fancy for you? See, I so appreciate this because I'm Jewish. I know us through and through.

I know how we like to get our fingers in, that we want just to give a little assistance to God and how much he needs us, but I want to tell you, saints, we don't understand the jealousy of God for his own glory, and you will not understand the venom, the vitriolic hatred and bitterness that was poured out against the Son of God, even Jesus the Christ, by a people who even unconsciously felt themselves in competition and rivalry in their desire to be the Son of God, their desire to be the redemptive agent for the nations. I know I'm not expressing this well. God give me health and grace, but I think an unspoken tremor that underlies the continuing and present friction, if not hatred, of Jesus is a jealousy on the part of ourselves as a nation to be that ourselves.

In fact, how else do you explain Marxism and Freudianism and every other ism which we Jews have invented except as an alternative messianic scheme? We desire to be as God more than any other people, and for that reason, we will be totally exempt from being participants in the redemptive work of God that comes to us outside of ourselves when we shall have been reduced to such a condition that we have to cry out, We are cut off. We are without hope. We are as dry bones.

I'll bet you anything you want that you can't tell me historically when that statement has ever been nationally made by Israel in its history, that even the Holocaust of the Nazi time was not sufficient to evoke that final and utter statement of total dejection and hopelessness. What it did evoke is more like never again, which is a totally different statement based on a confidence not on God but on the arm of our own flesh and our own ability to preserve and to save and to sustain ourselves. It's admirable. It's attractive.

But it cannot bless the nations of the earth because with it is chutzpah, arrogance, conceit, contempt for other peoples and lesser peoples as we're now revealing increasingly and daily against the Palestinian Arab presence even in our midst. We Jews were so conscious of race and the rights of minorities so long as we were one is all of a sudden no longer in our vocabulary in the situation in which God has placed us for the very purpose of revealing what we are as men and why it is that we shall need a total redemption that comes exclusively by the power of God and not on the basis of any achievement of our own so that to Him would be the glory forever. This writer goes on to say that even forgiveness is taken out of the sphere of things and becomes again part of the mystery of God as if we can force God to cooperate and participate on our terms.

God is merciful because He's God. He'll do what He will do because that's what He is not because of any necessity to respond or any way that we could twist His arm or force Him in a corner. And when they are restored, God will establish an everlasting covenant that will never again be broken.

Do you know how come? Because we don't have a cotton-picking thing to do with keeping it. We have shown historically our patent failure to keep covenant. And when God restores us, He's not going to go through this thing again.

We're not going to go around the mountain again. His covenant is new, not in that it radically changes the covenants of the past but gives an enablement to fulfill them which is out of the power of His own life. He will give us a new heart.

He will write His law in our inward parts. It will no longer be a matter that men will teach one another about knowing God. We shall all know Him by the very impartation and the intimacy of His life itself.

It won't be Talmudic scholarship. It won't be Jewish brilliance that is celebrated but very God investing Himself in that people that they might keep His law forever. It's a covenant that will never again be broken.

It cannot be because God cannot contradict Himself and He is able to keep what He Himself establishes. That's what makes it new. Do you know how it ends, Ezekiel 37, the Valley of Dry Bones? Some of us just stop there after the dead are raised and the flesh and sinners are put on and the Spirit is put in.

But it's interesting to read through to the end of the chapter where He says to this restored people, Neither shall they defile themselves any more, in verse 23, with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions. But I will save them out of all their dwelling places wherein they have sinned, and will cleanse them. So shall they be My people, I will be their God.

They don't have to wait to repent. I'm not waiting for it, they're not capable of it, I'm not expecting it. The lament and the breaking that will come will be because I give them that ability.

And David My servant shall be king over them, they shall have one shepherd, they shall also walk in My judgments and observe My statutes and do them. My, this is a new kind of nation. And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob My servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt, and they shall dwell therein, even they and their children, their children's children, forever.

And My servant David shall be their prince forever. Notice the reiterations of eternality. Forever, forever, forever.

This is a once and for all. It's final, it's closure. God need not repeat Himself.

There's not going to be a backslidden Israel again. This people shall go on in their millennial glory in the life and power given them by the Spirit of God as a people raised from the dead. It eclipses what the Church is today.

We're only fumbling and feeling our way through. Though we have a touch of that Spirit as a foretaste of the age to come, they will have it in full. Their sons and daughters will prophesy.

If we thought the charismatic movement was the statement of God's pouring out His Spirit on all flesh, we're a bunch of silly saps. And the vacuity of the charismatic movement and its kid stuff and frivolity and lightness is ample demonstration that it was not that pouring out of God's Spirit on all flesh which is a millennial promise for a restored Israel. Their daughters shall prophesy.

Their old men shall dream dreams. We've only had a foretaste of the power of the age to come. They shall have it in full because it will be forever.

Moreover, I will make a covenant of peace with them. It shall be an everlasting covenant. Notice again, eternality, unbroken future forever and ever.

And I will place them and multiply them and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them forevermore. I don't want to say, Lord, you're getting monotonous, but the frequency with which you mention that what you're doing is not only final but perpetual, lasting, eternal, and forever. Come on, guys, you're not that dumb.

If God is doing something once and for all that is eternal in its character, to what depth and finality must that doing be? It will never again need to be repeated. A final devastating dealing with Israel and a raising up and a filling with His Spirit that they might be a jewel in His hand, a crown. Nations will come up to see the wonder and the awesomeness of that restored people who will be given a new name.

My tabernacle also shall be with them. Yes, I will be their God and they shall be my people. And the heathen shall know that I, the Lord, do sanctify Israel when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them forevermore.

That's why the Lord goes forth out of Zion. That's why the word of the Lord goes forth out of Jerusalem. That's where He is forevermore.

The king is upon the throne of David. According to the Scriptures, the millennial reign has come and can only come when this nation is fitted to receive their king as a people sanctified, restored, and holy. Nothing hereafter can be subject to change, relapse, or backsliding.

This is not a condition to which Israel or any might ever have come by process of change or gradualism. You want to wait for present Israel to become this? You'll wait in vain. They ain't going to get better.

They're going to get worse and worse and worse until they will be beside themselves in desperate helplessness and hopelessness. What kind of a love is it that allows a nation to be so reduced? We're going to be tested in our knowledge of God and the understanding of His ways, and the only ones who will come through and not become apostate in their offense with the God who will so deal with Israel are those who will have allowed Him to devastate themselves and who know with their own experience how far God will go to bring you down before He brings you up. The fact that we did not expect that for Israel and sought for progressive amelioration and improvement of the political Zionist state, that it would become this eternal glory, is an embarrassing revelation of our own shallowness and our own failure to comprehend the absolute centrality of death and resurrection in anything that pertains to God's glory, let alone God's glory forever.

The annihilation of the national existence of Israel is the necessary preliminary to the millennial glory. But isn't that true for us? What about our annihilation? What about the cross in our life? Have we been unwilling to consider that Israel has such a severe future because we have been unwilling to welcome it for ourselves? Can you see that the way in which we have contemplated Israel and had hopes for her are so much a projection of what we hope for in ourselves? We neither know the severity of God nor the goodness of God that Paul speaks of in Romans 11 because we hope for improvement, some progressive change, which is another word for humanism. I'll tell you that we've not yet seen the desert bloom as a rose, and yet there are great multitudes of Christians in their, quote, love for Israel that would prefer to see that thing blossom by an irrigation system than by the supernatural act of God.

We're embarrassed by the miracle power of God, and we'd rather see a kind of gradualism that could be humanly understood than to see an apocalyptic demonstration of God bringing something down in apocalyptic violence and raising it up in unspeakable mercy. And all flesh shall know that I am the Lord who has done this. Hoping that even the peace treaties will work and something that can be negotiated when it's so patently clear that Israel is in a predicament of such a kind by which it cannot save itself, however clever its ability.

God is the author of its predicament. And our understanding of this mystery is critical for our participation. We need to come to a prophetic scene in understanding because we're going to be called to a prophetic participation.

Unless there's a Son of Man company that can speak to those dead bones, there'll be no raising of them from that death. And if raised, Paul says, what shall their return be but life from the dead? So I want to take a look at the episode in John chapter 11 where Jesus raised the dead. A friend whom he loved, even Lazarus, whose name means, whom God helps, who lived in the town of Bethany, whose name means house of affliction.

This, I believe, if you'll allow me my prophetic interpretation, is a symbolic foreshadowing of a resurrection yet to come of another people whom God will help out of the house of their affliction on one basis only, resurrection that comes by addressing that stinking corpse in the authority of prophetic power that will raise it up out of its tomb. And so, the sisters sent messages to Jesus in verse 3 to the effect that, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick. And when Jesus heard that, he said, okay, fellas, let's get packed up and get over there.

I love this man and I'm not going to allow him to suffer his distress a moment longer. After all, simple humanity suggests that you don't allow a friend, let alone one whom you love, to languish in sickness. That's conventional wisdom.

That's charismatic nonsense. But the apostolic and prophetic response was when he heard that this sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby. In verse 6, when he heard, therefore, that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was.

Then after that, saith to his disciples, let us go unto Judea again. That awakens the echo of a prophetic text in the book of Hosea. You needn't turn to it, but you might mark it and look at it later that begins in chapter 5 and carries on to the first few verses of chapter 6 of Hosea.

Verse 14 of 5, For I will be unto Ephraim, which is Israel, as a lion and a young lion to the house of Judah. I, even I, will tear and go away. I will take away, and none shall rescue him.

I will go and return to my place till they acknowledge their offense and seek my face in their affliction. They will seek me early. Come and let us return unto the Lord.

Begins chapter 6. It's no longer the Lord speaking now. It's the people. For he hath thorn, and he will heal us.

He hath smitten, and he will bind us up. After two days will he revive us. In the third day he will raise us up.

Listen to this language. Before the advent of the resurrection knowledge, the resurrection experience, how the Holy Ghost, who knows what is future, yet speaks in so cogent a way, in so suggestive a way, that this is not he will raise us up in a poetic lingo, but the suggestion already, a resonance of the literal resurrection of Israel in the last days, and we shall live in his sight. Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord, his going forth as prepared as the morning, and he shall come unto us as rain.

A lot of it in the former rain unto the earth. I believe that we are at the end, right at this moment, of the second day. The third day is about to break.

Two millennia of affliction of the friends of God in the house of their affliction, and the third day in which he will raise them up is about to break. But I'll tell you what, you had best wait for the third day. There was one precious sister at the rail last night, I don't know how long I was at it, anointing and praying prophetic prayers over different ones, and I was about to leave, and thought that there was not enough salt, and one brother says, psst, you forgot your sister, and she never said a word to me.

She was just waiting, and my prophetic prayer for her was about the priestliness of waiting, without complaining, without murmuring, without trying to draw attention to oneself or one's need, confident that God blesses those who wait upon him. There's no more severe challenge to our flesh that wants to get up and go, and do good things, and rescue Israel out of her distress, and ameliorate her suffering, and help her through with comforting words than this necessity to wait till the full measure of her affliction has been wrought. Jesus waited, the high priest and the apostle of our confession, two days longer where he was, sufficient for the friend whom he loved to die.

He was the son of man, as well as the son of God, and every corpuscle in his humanity was crying out to release his friend from the unnecessary suffering that could have been alleviated in the moment of his coming if he was not restrained by his love for the Father and his jealousy for that God's glory. This

sickness is not unto death, but unto the glory of God. Oh, you dear saints, are you listening? My great fear is that we're going to bolt and do something out of our well-meaning intention.

We're doing it now. We're slapping them on the back. We're encouraging them.

We're sending them this, that, and the other. We're telling them that they have peace and security. It'll all work out.

We don't have a jealousy for the glory of God that enables us to suffer the suffering of a nation without intervening and upsetting the divine process of God in things that will eventuate in his glory forever. We don't know how to wait. We want to do and be seen doing.

We want to be the little saviors ourselves and the white princesses who come and bring all of the benevolence. You know how loaded Israel is now with every self-appointed saint who has come to be Israel's deliverer and is mocking up the works? My jealousy is this, a people in the earth of a prophetic kind who have come to the maturity of sons who will not be prompted out of that place by any exigency of need, however much is the distress of one deeply loved, but will wait until the release from the Father comes to do that thing that is far more than alleviating ill, but releasing the glory of God. You guys, are you out there? Catch the control tower.

Over. I love Jesus for this. What a model, what an example, what a son.

And I'll tell you, dear saints, those two days were a suffering, not only for Lazarus, but for himself. Even humanly speaking, don't you think he has sufficient imagination to contemplate what Lazarus's condition must have been? Have you ever been sick unto death? My God, do you know what it is when you have such a fever, when you're so beside yourself, you have no control over your bowels, you're a pitiful, wet, sweating mess rolling on sweat-soaked sheets, and your brain is numb, and you can hardly think, there's only one thought you have, that your friend will come, that the door will open, that the man who gave sight to the blind and blessed the other of the dead and blessed Gentiles will certainly do as much for his dearest friend. But as your sight grows dim and your eyes are closing and you can't even prop them open, no one comes.

Not a footfall. Silence. Haven't you been told? Hope ebbs away.

There is no hope. And he languishes hopelessly without answer, without explanation. No one whispered.

No one sent him a note. Listen, here's the deal. You lay low.

You're going to die, but I'm going to raise you. God allowed Lazarus to suffer unto death without explanation for your sake. To give you a prototype, an example, a statement, a paradigm of what it will be at the end of those two days when Israel is going to be brought into such a death that unto stinking, then, when that nation is raised glory will be brought to God.

Let us go unto Judea again. Let us go to the Jews again after the second day. Verse 15, I'm glad for your sakes that I was not there to the intent that you may believe.

Nevertheless, let us go unto him. And you know what happened when he came. The two sisters, one not so spiritual as the other, if you had been here, our brother would not have died.

Isn't it interesting how crisis reveals the shallowness of our assumed spirituality? That the one who sat at Jesus' feet was not one whit more spiritual than the one who did the dishes. And by that feminine thing, if you had been here, even putting him on a guilt trip in the Jewish manner, if you had been here, when Jesus therefore saw her weeping and the Jews also weeping, which came with her, he groaned in his spirit and was troubled. Where have you laid him? They said unto him, Lord, come and see.

Jesus wept. The shortest verse in all of the scriptures, verse 35 of chapter 11 of John. Why he wept, I don't know.

Was it that people were schmaltzy and moved to a kind of teary enjoyment? You know, the way that the melodrama of a young man dying cut off prematurely before his time. Gee, if he had lived, he would have gone on to wonderful things. Isn't it a pity and tragic when to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord? What are they making such a commotion about? Where are their values? What is their understanding? What are they celebrating in their sentimentality and their profusion of tears? Some of them said, could not this man which opened the eyes of the blind have caused that even this man should not have died? Jesus, therefore, again groaning in himself, cometh to the grave.

It was a cave and a stone lay upon it. Jesus said, take away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh, for he hath been dead four days.

Count on that. That smell is already rising from the nation. Jesus saith unto her, said I not unto thee that if thou wouldst believe, thou shouldst see the glory of God? That's always his central preoccupation.

Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid, and Jesus lifted up his eyes and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I knew that thou hearest me always, but because of the people which stand by, I said it that they may believe that thou hast sent me. He was a sent one.

He was apostolic. He was a son to whom the word of the Lord is given and the spirit of God without measure. And when he had thus spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.

And he that was dead came forth bound hand and foot with grave clothes with his Marxism and Freudianism and his intellectual distinctions and his Steven Spielberg Oscar-winning films and all of the shticklach that our Jewish people have been in for since time immemorial. Grave clothes. The face was bound with a napkin.

Jesus said unto them, Loose him and let him go. I wait the day saints when the true Israel of God comes forth out of that tomb, loosed from every restraint and every conniption, every kind of thing that we have invented in our attempt to outdo God and be God and released in hands and face and feet to be for him what was our call since time immemorial, a nation of priests and a light unto the world. To bless the nations of the earth in such a givingness of ourselves without restraint and such exhibiting of the mercies of God and such wisdom and such blessedness and such love for his Gentile nations as has never been our character and our conduct.

The goyim, the word that we used to spit out, that if I misspent my allowance as a depression kid, my mother would say, You have a goyish hakat, a Gentile head. If you were really Jewish, you would have saved it. You're like the Gentiles, that contempt that has been so deeply written into our understanding, our experience, that we've taken in with our mother's milk and the air that we breathe, that I required a deliverance with other Jewish believers from the enmity against Gentiles and the hostility toward the

Church that was in our spirits that required a deliverance before we could be servants to the Church.

That's how deep this is. Our superiority, our moral superiority, our condescending attitudes toward Gentiles as being somehow something less than something other, and how you look up to us with dotting eyes and how you appreciate us and our flesh and our ability and our entebbe exploits and all those things and want secretly to be like us and make us more the model of your ambition than the Son of God or Paul. It's deep, saints.

That's why only death will take care of it and resurrection unto another character of life altogether. When a voice shall cry out, Israel, come forth. The true Israel, come forth.

And here's the punchline. If that does not come forth out of your mouth, it does not come forth at all. This is what Paul saw.

Oh, the depths of the riches spoke of the wisdom and knowledge of God. This is more than just the restoration of a nation after ages long apostasy. This is the transfiguration of the Church in its reciprocal bonding to that nation in the wisdom of God for which we would not have ever chosen each other.

That our final deliverance rests on one ultimate mercy expressed through you as sons who have come to maturity of prophetic obedience who can wait till the moment of God's choosing and command that you can speak that full-orbed resonating power of a word that creates life with your speaking. And I can tell you that I'm not just barking up the tree. I've known it, I've experienced it, I've tasted it, I've seen it.

It's true. God has given me installments in Catania, Sicily where I came as a 17-year-old high school dropout and merchant seaman looking for adventure to a town ridden with prostitution where we were met at the wharf by eight, nine, ten-year-old boys speaking fluent English taking us to their homes so that we can go to bed with their sisters with dogs hanging up in butcher shop windows in the great poverty and destitution of Italy in 1945. And to come back 40 years later as a preacher in that same town and to look out on the greatest Pentecostal congregation in Catania and the Lord says, speak to them the mystery of Israel.

I said, Lord, are you kidding? These are a bunch of mamas, you know, that can't wait to get home to make their pasta. They got their babushkas on their head. You know, their typical, you know, what are you going to hock them with? They don't have a head for these kinds of subtleties and the mystery of Israel.

What do you know? The Lord says, if they don't take hold of this mystery it will never be fulfilled. All the more because it is to them an irrelevancy. All the more because they're caught up with their pastor.

All the more P-A-S-T-A. All the more because they have never even seen a Jew. All the more because there's no sense of connectedness.

That there's a mystery that has got to be fulfilled and be demonstrated before the principalities and powers of the air that there's a people on the earth who will take to their hearts an ultimate burden of responsibility for a thing that has for them no personal relevancy or consequence but is totally other because it pertains to the glory of God. So I took a deep breath and I began to speak out the mystery of Israel in the church and by the power of God it was a resurrection word that raised the dead and slumbering Italian soul to take hold of the eternal purpose of God. I came to another Italian storefront Pentecostal church at another time in the town where the fiats are made.

What count is that? You get a D for geography. I think it begins with a T. For real. And I had nothing to say.

I was tired. I was spent. It was night and day traveling.

Is this boring to you? This is our last night together, right? I'm the guy who's going on a two-month journey from here. By the way, if you want the prayer calendar see me afterwards. So I came to this church.

I was looking to the Lord all through the day. I was tired. I was whacked out.

Nothing. Not a word, not an inspiration, not a scrap. I thought, Lord, surely by the time the meeting comes something will have been generated in my spirit.

Nothing. I came to the building. Nothing.

The place was crowded, wall to wall. Italians. Nothing.

Finally I'm hearing myself eloquently introduced. Nothing. I came up to the pulpit.

I looked up. I gave that characteristic sigh. I said, Dear Saints, I would love to bless you.

And God has given me wonderful riches. But I have to say that right now I have nothing. Nothing.

God has given me nothing. I have no inspiration. I'm totally bereft.

I'm dead in terms of producing anything. They looked at me startled like, Aren't you professional? Don't you have a briefcase? I said, I'm going to pray now. And unless the Lord gives me a word, I'm just going to sit down.

And I prayed a prayer. Wow. I think the Vatican rattled and shook.

And I prayed that prayer, and I waited, and I had nothing. And so I just took my Bible, and I started to walk away, and I was about this close to my seat. And all of a sudden I turned around, and I said something totally unpremeditated.

I said, Is there so much as one soul here who has ever had a concern for the lost sheep of the house of Israel? And something went, Boom! A door burst open, a furnace door, and words, torrents of words poured out of me. And when God finished that night, they were left hanging on the ropes. They were aghast.

They had received a mandate for Israel in Turin. There were Jews there, wealthy, prestigious, intellectual, and accomplished. And I'm talking to a bunch of Pentecostal dun-duns.

Simple as the day is long that these intellectual, prestigious Jews are your mandate. And the elders came up, and the pastor, Marty said, Pray for us. They trembled.

It was an event. By the word that came forth out of desolation and bereft nothingness, out of the power of God, because He will not allow anything to go forth that touches the sacred issue of Israel out of the ability of man, however well-meaning and intending. And that final moment when it comes, and that grave is stinking, and something is waiting on our word, it had better come forth in a power greater than well-meaning human intention.

And I want to say this, that Jesus Himself would have failed in that crisis moment if He had but picked Himself up and moved out of the will and purpose of God to alleviate the suffering and the ill one moment sooner than when the two days longer had been finished. The thing that gave that statement His creative power to raise the dead was the issue of an obedience that will wait when every human thing in you is clamoring to do something kind and compassionate and good to help them, haven't they suffered long enough? Come on! And now catch this. What do you think that other Christians are going to say when they see you silent and unmoved at the depths of Israel's ultimate distress? You're loveless.

You're anti-Semitic. Where's your love? You call that love? You're supposed to be concerned for Israel. How come you're not doing something? And unless you're dead to any kind of provocation that can animate your flesh to demonstrate something for man, you will not be able to resist these final reproaches and blandishments.

This is utter discipline only for those who have no life unto themselves. And here's the final catch. I'm not calling to virtuosos in the audience who are made of real spiritual stuff.

This is the call to all of us or none of us. This Son of Man that stands at the tomb is the corporate body of Christ in its full, ultimate, prophetic configuration and authority, or it's nothing. We're in this together.

That's why I'm pleading with you. If it was just me alone, I would have packed my bags and been gone. But it's all of us or nothing.

It's the full-orbed, corporate life of the people of God that cannot be obtained in pews and in Sunday services. Something's going to have to happen to change the configuration of our life and the reality of what we are about as believers that will lead us again to go from house to house daily, breaking bread, to turn the pews around, to see each other face to face and be brought from glory to glory, perceiving in each other's faces the glory of God. We have to be willing to suffer the humiliation of being found out, of our weaknesses being revealed, of our contradictions, which has been my experience in community.

It's not an option for the few. It is the definitive mode and requirement of God or there'll be no absoluteness of speaking that will raise Israel from the dead. Your privatistic lifestyles are antithetical to the whole fulfillment of this great drama.

You've got a man in your midst, Shelley, who's aching because he has tasted the glory and the reality of corporate life and the suffering of it. He's seen both the suffering and the glory, the reality and the power, and he's chafing. He cannot find a way to guide and bring this congregation and this people into that kind of configuration that is real when great grace again will be upon them all and with power shall the apostles give testimony to the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Charismatic won't do it. Evangelical won't do it. Being a nice Christian won't do it.

But radical integration of life, that is going to mean disillusionment, the veil of disappointment. We're inviting a family to come to us. I know what their experience is going to be.

Cats is going to be found out. The man at the pulpit and the man at the farm is not the same man. Well, he is, but your romantic illusion about him has got to go because illusion is a lie, because our God is the God of truth and His Spirit is the Spirit of truth, and we've got to speak the truth in love and come to the reality and maturity of the genius of the church, which is its corporate constituency.

When I preached about Romans 11, that by your mercy they might obtain mercy, a woman cried out right out of the congregation. She said, Art, how can we have mercy for the Jews? We don't have it for each other. Saints, these are the last days, the last days, and God is going to finger and require a lifestyle, our privatistic modes of being, the sacred keeping of our own privacy and being Christians too.

There's got to be one voice spoken out of one heart, one mind, one will in the moment of God's choosing when the two full days are over and Israel is stinking and rotting in its grave waiting for the one thing alone that can bring it forth out of death, a voice vibrant with the tremor of God, so God-infused that its word is God's word, the creative act that raises the dead out of your corporate mouth. That's the mystery. Oh, the depths of the riches, both of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God who has been his counselor.

He's jealous for Israel's restoration, but he's jealous for your transfiguration, and you'll never come to it independent of this ultimate requirement. That's the long and the short of it. Well, let's pray.

You may be sorry you came because we have come to an hour where we're going to hear words from God now that are not sermonizings but requirement, transaction, call. Where is there a church on the earth who has pulled out all the stops? Where is the great grace of God that is reserved for all? He'll not give it to us until we come to the condition upon which the great grace can be bestowed in the end as it was in the beginning, a people who have all things common. No man thinks that the thing that he has is his own.

They've moved from this private, quiet living, keeping the other at arm's length, and they're in something together. Those that believe, we're together. If God has done anything for me these days is to appreciate those with whom I'm together, what it means for me, how to keep me and encourage me and pray with me and sustain me in the battles and the onslaughts that I have to face being the lonely bearer of this kind of word.

The world is opposed to the whole spirit of the genius of the Church. And we'll let you play Patsy and give you tax deductions so long as you're content to remain with you and have a, whatchamacallit, a system of services and midweek and this and that and no sweat. But start getting apostolically earnest and you'll be a marked man before the principalities and the powers of the air.

Cross this threshold and signify to them that there's an intent of your heart for an ultimacy and utterness toward God that will result in Israel's resurrection from the dead and the coming of his kingdom and you'll find yourself being opposed in a new way that will require of you yet greater depths of courage, fortitude, character, and dependence of relationship in the body. Lord Jesus, my God, let these children hear your voice. Let it be a come forth that is historically on time to those who are in their tombs of inactivity, of second-rate Christendom, of puttering around, of getting by, of being allowed their own indulgence and selfishness and enjoyment and a little activity once in a while that is throwing a bone to God.

Let this word, my God, be a come forth out of that tomb into the purposes of God together once and for all. A coming forth to the discipline of God that will teach us to wait as sons, that will deal with our carnal hearts, that we don't need the approval of men and we cannot be provoked by them to come out of the place of waiting by, shouldn't you be doing something? Don't you love Israel? We have a greater love. It's the ultimate love.

It's the love of God that is jealous for his glory forever above every other consideration, even that of sick, ailing, and dying Lazarus himself. Who is there in the hearing of this word tonight who will stand before God or kneel before God and by so doing say, Whatever it takes to bring me to that obedience as a son, to

that prophetic authority, together with others of like heart and mind that we might be one and speak out of an agreement of one voice to raise the dead, I invite you from this night to perform it. Touch whatever you will.

I invite your dealing and the depth of your sanctifying work that I might have part in this ultimate glory of the restoration of Israel in the last days as a raising from the dead. Where are you, lovers of Israel, now? Who will stand for that? Hallelujah. Thank you, Jesus.

Lord, precious God, observe, note, and seal every saint that has stood out of their integrity whose standing means, Yes, Lord, whatever it takes. I'm sentimental. I have my own opinions.

I like this, I like that. I would love to see Israel succeed in her present condition, if only, but I'm willing to be divested of anything which is not your thought and your way. Bring me out of selfish modes of living into an apostolic lifestyle.

Come and graft me in and together with others that there might be a church that can call Lazarus forth. Seal these children, Lord, and let them not be surprised when the redemptive, sanctifying work comes at the barber shop or wheresoever it pleases you to cut, scissor, trim, scalp, and do your precious work. That the day will come, that third day, when a voice shall resonate with the very authority of God to an inert, helpless nation unable to save itself.

Israel, come forth! And out it shall come, the grave clothes, historic grave clothes taken away, the napkin from the face, the things that bind the hands, the feet, and the nation loose, to bless all the families of the earth for what shall their return be, what shall their restoration be, but life from the dead. Thank you, Lord. Precious God, work your work.

Thank you, my God. Release all that's pent up and stocked up. Put a seal on this.

Let it be a historic, pivotal moment, my God. Let the tapes that go forth of this bring the same requirement of those who shall see and hear it. Thank you for the privilege of the mystery of Israel and the church to which we are called in these last days through our eternal joy, in Jesus' name.

And God's people said, Amen, Amen, and Amen. Free forever. Let that burn in your spirit, the glory of God forever.

That's the issue. Amen.

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