

The Mystery of Israel (A 1999 Convocation Tape)

by Art Katz

Art Katz's sermon delves into the profound mystery of Israel's role in God's redemptive plan and the significance of the Gentiles in this process.

Duration: 1:24:32

Topics: "Israel"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the state of the church and its need for transformation. He criticizes the church's focus on revival and subjective pleasure-seeking, calling it 'phony baloney.' The speaker shares his personal experience of attending a conference where he felt disconnected from the emotional response of others, emphasizing the importance of a genuine spiritual experience. He also highlights the need for the church to acknowledge its sin and lack of knowledge of God, and calls for a deeper understanding and commitment to serving others.

Transcript

Son of heaven, your anointing, my God, is everything. It can compel us, it can bring us to such an attentiveness that we not only hear your word, my God, we hear in between the lines. We intuit your spirit, we sense the disposition of your heart.

Even the kids are arrested by it, though they're not of an age even to understand all that's said. Let them understand that you're present, that you're speaking, that something goes into their spirit. Whether or not they can understand the totality of the words, that may be true for the adults as well.

So, Lord, precious God, pour out from the thorn of heaven the precious, holy, anointing oil. Precious unction, commensurate, my God, with the task, commensurate with the topic, commensurate with your great purpose. We bless you for such provision, Lord, or else everything is vain.

To be correct is not correct enough. We need the enablement of the Most High. Come, my God, and register that upon our souls, we pray.

Thank you that you anoint what you appoint. And may you govern, my God, every word that proceeds out of my mouth, every illustration, even the tone of the speaking, the mood of it, Lord, be yours. We bless

you.

Grant us your living word, my God. And we give you the praise for the privilege of it. The responsibility of it.

Thank you, Lord. Speak, Lord, your servants are hearing. In Jesus' holy name, amen.

Well, I'm going to take you into different places in Scripture. I like to start in Romans 11. Everything is familiar.

We need to come to it afresh, virginally. Just leaping into that great chapter, Romans 11, and just noting that every triumphalist voice for the church that presumes to think that the church has usurped the role of Israel always universally omits reference to Romans 11. They cannot reconcile this text with those presumptions.

This demolishes all presumptions that is not in keeping with the divine stratagem of God in the restoration of Israel at the conclusion of the age. I always have to say to people, hey, I'm not saying this because I'm Jewish. I don't have a vested interest in Israel's destiny because I'm Jewish.

I have a vested interest because it has to do with the glory of God. Had he chosen pygmies, I would be celebrating pygmies. And in fact, let's face it, that's why he's chosen Israel, spiritually speaking, historically speaking.

We've been a non-people. We've been a terrible cop-out. Our track record is atrocious.

He didn't choose us for our distinctiveness. He chose us because we were the least of peoples, that he might have the greater opportunity to be glorified. So Paul, oh God bless him, what makes an apostle an apostle? It's the apprehension of the mysteries of God.

He has a stewardship over the mysteries of God. What's a mystery? A mystery is something concealed, withheld by God, until an appointed time has come, and then it's revealed by his spirit. Not to give us dilettantes a little something to talk about over the coffee table, but to find a fulfillment and an enactment.

So of all of the mysteries of which Paul speaks, there's only one that he refers to a penalty if we fail to understand it. And that's the one that I'm going to quote now in chapter 11, verse 25. So that you may not claim to be wiser than you are, brothers and sisters, I want you to understand this mystery.

A hardening has come upon Israel, upon part of Israel, until the full number of the Gentiles has come in, and so all Israel will be saved as it is written, out of Zion will come the deliverer. He will banish ungodliness from Jacob, for this is my covenant with them when I take away their sins. My Lord, what a blockbuster of a statement.

What a mystery, it's a perplexity. That Israel that has been blinded, judgment has brought that blindness, that there's going to come a historical moment when the Lord is going to lift it, that he's not finished with his people, that there's yet a destiny to be fulfilled by which you will be glorified. But what does it wait upon? Nothing from them.

They will be brought to such a place of inertness, incapability, and there's a necessity for that because Jews are notorious for the ability to pull themselves up by their own bootstraps. When it comes to self-sufficiency, we're a marvel. Well, look what we've done with Israel.

Fifty years? My God, other nations require centuries to even begin to approach nationhood, statehood, a distinctive language or culture. Fifty years? Look, my no hands. When it comes to self-sufficiency, we Jews are par excellence, and that's the very reason why we have to be reduced to a virtual nothingness, that he might be all in all.

The purpose of Israel is not to celebrate Israel, it's to celebrate God. So even in this, what is this mystery? They're hardened, they cannot see, they reject, until the full number of the Gentiles has come in. Something has got to happen with Gentiles that affects Israel.

And I don't know that that requires even a direct expression from Gentiles to Jews, but something has to happen here that releases something there, for the deliverer will come out of Zion. He's waiting for something, and he waits for it not from Israel, he waits for it from the Gentiles. You are the principal actors.

Israel is acted upon, it is inert. It will be reduced by judgment that will be capable of nothing. They will be a dry bones.

They have to be acted upon by very God himself, but he waits for something that must take place outside from them, and it has to do with the Gentiles, and this is the mystery. Only God could have conceived it, that he took a people whom we Jews would have long disregarded or looked upon with disdain or contempt, looked upon them from our spiritual or religious superiority, and they become the key to our final restoration and redemption that is carried on, not only into the millennium, but throughout all eternity. And unless it comes from you, it will not come.

So what is he waiting for? The fullness of the Gentiles. Here it says the number. Well, I'm sure that it includes a number, but there's something beyond something numeric, something quantitative.

There's also something qualitative for which God waits from the Gentiles, and it's that that I want to explicate or develop out of another text in the Old Testament, in Psalm 102. It's a remarkable psalm, and would take hours to do it any kind of justice. I won't even read the first part, but just to say that in all of Old Testament scripture, perhaps with the exception of a portion from Deuteronomy 32, there's nothing that more describes the Nazi Holocaust than Psalm 102.

It talks about skin clinging to the bones. It talks about eating your ashes. My bones burn like a furnace in verse 3. My days pass away like smoke.

This is not some language that has been plucked out of the air. It's profoundly descriptive of the worst judgment that has ever come upon Israel in modern times, and will come again in exactly this same character. I was with a brother at Auschwitz in Poland, and next to Auschwitz is the original concentration camp.

That's the German pronunciation of its Polish name, but it was originally a barrack for Polish soldiers. And the Germans, when they conquered Poland, turned it into a concentration camp, and then became a death camp. But it was inadequate.

The facility was too old. It was too limited. So three kilometers away, they developed the most modern process of elimination of a genocidal kind in the history of mankind called Birkenau.

I can't describe it to you. All that remains today are the ruins of it, the gas ovens, the place where the people undressed, where they came right off the train tracks, right into the gas rooms, into the chambers,

and into the smoke being turned into ashes. That has been destroyed.

The Germans destroyed it themselves. They wanted to destroy the evidence of the calamity of their own inhumanity. But there's enough there to shock you.

I was shocked in 1952, just putting my hand on the smokestack at Dachau, outside of Munich, where there were still bones and ashes in the oven. And I needed to make contact in a tangible way with the evidence of this horror, because it saved me from my narrow presumption of good guys and bad guys. There's something about the magnitude of what man has done to man in his depravity and the revelation of what his essential nature is, despite his impressive culture, that is shattering.

All of a sudden you realize it's not the Germans versus the Jews. We're all guilty. We're all implicated.

This horror, the magnitude of it, eclipses any kind of concept of where we can yet claim ourselves to be righteous. In fact, before I got back to where I was stationed on the train, in a compartment with a German multiple amputee with hooks and artificial limbs with blonde hair and blue eyes, a veteran of the recent war, locked into that compartment, he and I alone, in my US uniform, in my Jewish self-righteousness, in this pitiful remnant of a man, I recognized as I looked at him, that there but for the grace of God go I. It's only a fluke I'm born in Brooklyn, that I'm wearing an American uniform, that I'm Jewish. Black bodies, the dint of circumstance, I would have been putting bodies into the ovens.

And I would say that my conversion began on that day. It took the Lord ten years more to bring me all the way through. But he broke in to my humanistic assumptions of good guys and bad guys and made me aware there's only one category.

We're all bad guys. And the Holocaust is that demonstration. And it's coming again.

You can read it. This is very descriptive. Because of my loud groaning, in verse 5, my bones cling to my skin.

I'm like an owl of the wilderness, like a little owl of the waste places. I've been in a concentration camp where the one symbol over the crematoria is an owl. I love birds, I love nature, but there's one species that makes me a little icky.

It's the owl. There's something sinister about this large-eyed thing that roosts and waits to... that the Germans themselves employed as a symbol over their crematoria. Here the owl is described like the prisoners themselves, a lonely bird on the housetop.

All day long, my enemies taunt me. Those who deride me use my name for a curse. Hey, that might well be descriptive of something future.

Can you imagine if the Palestinians and the Arabs ever get the upper hand over Jews, over Israelis, and want to ventilate what has been percolating for the last 50 years of grievance, of mistreatment, of injustice, and now in their Islamic mentality, that Arab mentality that loves vendetta and vengeance, can ventilate that without limit upon Jews? This is what you're reading. And I want to say with all confidence that's exactly what's going to happen historically. We're going to be so oppressed, so defeated, so humiliated, and so taunted.

You hotshots with your Israeli economy, reduced now to rubble, and we've got you. You're our victim, and we can torment you. It's not just that we will be satisfied with defeating you.

We want to rub your defeat into your face. We want to ventilate and enjoy the last iota of our vicious fight, and now we have you, and we will do it. If that doesn't take place, call me a false prophet.

I will be. And I've said many times, with the God I were, that these predictions of utter severity and judgment for Israel is just my own imagination. I would rather be the false prophet and save Israel from having to go through that than to be the true one and to predict what must necessarily come to pass.

That's the way this psalm begins. It's an eschatological psalm. It's both historic, but it's also speaking of something yet future, a calamity of unbelievable proportions, where the victims eat ashes like bread in verse 9 and mingle tears with their drink.

But they also understand, in verse 10, because of your indignation and anger, for you have lifted me up and thrown me aside. This hasn't come because of a Hitler or some erratic and inexplicable thing in history, some aberration that can't be explained, that you just have to suffer. This terrible calamity is a judgment, and it has come from your hand.

We're suffering this because you have inflicted this upon us, but you have inflicted it lightly. We deserve it. It's in exact proportion to our sins.

How do you know that this is an eschatological psalm, Art? Because it's future. Because nothing in the history of Israel's past calamities has ever brought the nation to recognize its calamity as coming from the hand of God, as will be true in the last days. And that's the least reason for their understanding that, is that we will tell them.

You didn't know. So a woman said to me, Israel has always suffered judgment. The judgment has always been an expulsion from the land, always been an exile, and then a subsequent return.

Well, what makes you think that this one that you're speaking of, that is yet future, will result in anything other than another repeat performance, another return, another falling into sin, another expulsion? Why will this be different from all previous judgments, exiles, and expulsions? I said, well, that's a great question. Then the thought came to me, one difference that's profound is that they will now be brought not only into communities of a mercy kind of a refuge, but prophetic communities who will not only address their physical and moral need, but their spiritual need, and explain to them why they are in that circumstance. The community will prophetically explain to Israel the cause and reason for its distress.

Imagine the kind of anointing that we will need, the kind of unction to speak to people who are in the midst of that judgment to reason for it in a way that they can understand it and receive it and repent for it, who have no consciousness that God is an actor in history, that God intervenes, that things are not merely circumstantial, that what is happening again in modern times is directly from his hands and is in proportion to your sins. But we have no consciousness of our sin. We thought we were exemplary.

Well, the judgment itself is the statement of your sin. It's not the issue of whether you subjectively understand it or agree with it. The judgment itself is the testimony of your sin.

The fact that you don't know that God is the principal agent in history and that he's sovereign is itself the statement of your sin. You have no knowledge of God because you have rejected the knowledge of God

and now you're suffering the consequences of that rejection. We have something more to do than just provide refuge in a physical way.

We have to give explanation in a compelling way that everything in them will resist. But here, the acknowledgement, because of your indignation, God, and anger, you have lifted me up and thrown me aside. My days are like a shadow.

I wither away like grass. Then we come to the heart of the matter. But you, O Lord, are in thorn forever.

Oh? To be in thorn forever means that not just the present moment and the future moment, but all of the past moments, you were in thorn also. You're not only in thorn in our times of blessing, you were in thorn in our times of prevail, suffering, and judgment. Because you're God.

Because you're sovereign. Because all that takes place issues from your hand. To say forever is to include all time and all the circumstances that have been experienced in time.

Not only the things that bless, but the things that bring painful judgment. What an acknowledgement. You are in thorn forever.

And you know what I want to say? That that kind of acknowledgement and that kind of awareness is itself salvation. And I want to say, only a distress of this proportion will bring the rebellious Israel to these acknowledgements. Judgment will have served its purpose.

There's the redemptive heart of judgment. It's not just a punitive thing, God inflicting His wrath. It's an instructive thing.

It's a mind-opening thing. It breaks you into categories of consideration that you could not before have entertained. Nothing less will do it, or God would have been satisfied with something less.

The judgment serves multi-purposes. They are redemptive. You, O Lord, are in thorn forever, including all the present calamities and past ones.

Your name endures to all generations. Then we come to this remarkable statement. You will rise up, what a confidence, and have compassion on Zion.

For it is time to favor her. The appointed time has come. It has nothing to do with Israel coming of age, Israel graduating, Israel acknowledging.

A set time has come in the economy of God. The psalmist anticipates and knows it. Because God is God.

His judgments will not endure forever. It's not his last word. It's a preliminary word.

What's the word for this? Something that comes before the end. No? Reggie was sure he would know it. Penultimate.

It's a penultimate thing. Judgment is not the last thing. It's a penultimate thing.

That means it's the last thing before the last thing. The last thing is redemption. The last thing is restoration.

The last thing is glory. Somehow the psalmist knows this. He knows that it has nothing to do with something that Israel can perform.

For they are wiped out. They are incapable of performance. God himself has so reduced them.

They need to be so reduced. Because God has got to break the power of human pride and arrogance that somehow it can of itself affect its own circumstances, its own deliverance, its own salvation, its own redemption. God is only an accessory, a Sunday supplement, or a Friday night service.

Unless he's a deliverer, without whose intervention we would have perished. We don't know God. So, you will rise up.

Anything that is suggestive of resurrection and ascension is hidden in those words. You will rise up. Because except that you act out of your ascension authority and glory, there'll be no deliverance.

It's not just the God swearing himself. It's God exercising himself in the thing that was given him a name above every name, an exaltation of ascension to the most high, to the throne, because of his willingness to suffer the abasement of humiliation and death at the cross. You will arise.

You're qualified to arise. And if it were not for your death and resurrection, there would be no deliverance. For the set time has come to have compassion on Zion.

It is time to favor it. Well, what determines that? How does the psalmist indicate when the set time comes? And here's the mystery. For your servants hold its stones dear and have pity on its dust.

Don't you just want to keel over? You're looking for the key statement that releases God to come out of Zion as a deliverer. And there's this ambiguous, poetic statement that needs to be interpreted. Your servants have pity on her dust, compassion on her stones.

Well, who are her servants? Who are your servants? Not Israel itself. If Israel had been a servant, they would not be suffering this judgment. It's the forfeiture of Israel's servant role to be priest to the nations that accounts for its judgment.

So who then is being referred to here? Why does the psalmist say the church of the last days? Because that language was not employed when the psalms were written. It would have confused generations. But I'm saying that that's what the servant is.

The servant is the church of the last days. But what kind of a church? A church that comes of age, that the set time has come, not because something has happened in Israel, something has happened to the church. What has happened? It has come to a place of compassion.

It has pity on the stones. It has compassion for the dust. What does that mean? They've taken an interest in the antiquity of Israel? They're archaeologically minded? What dust? The Amplified says, in the dust of her ruins, I just want to say, beyond record, every present-day city of Israel is going to be reduced to rubble.

Present-day Jerusalem? You see, there's those who say, it can't happen, Art, because Jerusalem is inviolable. This is the inviolability of Zion. God is not going to destroy what is so intrinsic to his own name.

Oh yeah? What happened in 70 AD? What happened in 586 BC? This is not unprecedented. When his glory has departed, he'll destroy the very thing that was united to his name. And it's going to happen again.

Jerusalem, Haifa, Tel Aviv. I mean, if God will not spare Jerusalem, what city in Israel will be saved? It'll be a land that will be uninhabited. Empty cities, forlorn, broken.

Jackals will be dwelling in the ruins. It'll be the most morose, prophetic picture of a vibrant nation reduced virtually overnight to rubble and to dust. You know what the world is going to say? They deserve it.

They really deserve it. They were a threat to world peace. They were arrogant.

They refused to concede to conditions that might have brought about a resolution of the crisis in the Middle East. They deserve it. What is the true Church going to say? God waits for something.

Unless he gets it, the set time has not come. The issue is not Israel. The issue is the Church.

But the Church of an ultimate kind. Not a sentimental kind. Because I'll tell you what will happen to the sentimental.

They will go down, they will reject the Israel that has been humiliated and reduced to dust. Because every hope for her will have been destroyed and lost. The Yentebi hit squad Israel that is so marvelous in its exploits will now be reduced to the most servile, abject condition.

And those who were enamored of the mystique of Israel and the heroic exploits will cast her away like a dead dog. The sentimental, those charismatic saints who love the allure of Israel when she had a bit of something going for her will be the first to reject her. Mark my words.

The ones that I fear are those who love whales and want to preserve the extinct species. Those are the ones that will kill us without batting an eyelash who tremble with such palpitation over the loss of a cockatoo or a remote species. Sentimentality is deadly.

So in all of that rejection of Israel and people clucking their tongues and rubbing their hands in delight something like the two prophets that were in the streets of Jerusalem and were killed and people exchanged presents one with another. They were rejoicing. They had a celebration because they are those who torment those who dwell on the earth.

It will be something like that. A celebration in Israel's terrible deceit and destruction. People will actually enjoy it.

They will take a malicious delight in saying they got what they deserved. In fact, their sins will grow worse and there will be every justification. Pick up the Jerusalem Post or the Jerusalem Report.

Just a recent issue talks about the 300,000 or so foreign laborers in Israel who are living in prisons who are being exported out who never got their salaries whose families were separated. It's virtually slavery because when they had to shut the doors to the Palestinians as a labor source because they were coming in with their bombs they had to open the doors to men from Kenya, from Romania from Eastern Europe who wanted a better wage and they made contracts with employers who took their passports and held them in their control. They received no social benefits no medical benefits.

They were cheated of their wages. They were exploited. Jews doing that to Gentiles.

They're digging a hole for themselves so that when their end comes people are going to say they deserved it. And by every reckoning that's true. But who is going to take pity on them? Who is going to have compassion on them in their judgment? And I want to say that this is not some superficial thing where we just oh, isn't that too bad? To have pity on Israel and compassion on HaGash is to make that one themselves susceptible to the same destructive things that have brought Israel into the dust.

Because if all the world hates Israel and is gloating and delighting in their destruction what will they do to you when you show the evidence of an affinity and identification for that very people? You might find yourself coming under judgment. You might find yourself receiving the short end of the stick. So that this kind of identification is not a cheapie.

It's not a shallow thing that we can put on or take off. It is so authentically the heart of God that those who are in that place have no choice in the matter. Their heart is God's heart.

Their identification is his identification. Because though he was the judge and though he brought the terrible devastation he's not some unthinking, mindless and mechanical deity who can bring this without a twinge of being personally hurt. In all our affliction he's afflicted.

He hates to bring judgment. It's a last alternative. It devastates his soul.

This is the people who are the apple of his eye. These are his elect. This is that nation.

And look at their condition. Twice in modern times reduced to absolute rubble. Their skin clinging to their bones desolate, imprisoned.

But he has compassion on them. But he waits for your compassion. Because the issue of your compassion as I've said is not some superficial and external thing that you can put on and take off in some kind of tongue-clucking way and you're too bad about them.

Your compassion is the issue of not just your identification with Israel but your identification with the God of Israel. By identification I mean your union with the God of Israel. In a word, what God is waiting for is the people for a people a servant people who come into such relationship with him that his heart is their heart.

His attitude is their attitude. His compassion is their compassion. This must be so awesome a phenomenon that the nations who observe it will be astonished.

And evidently it's so visible that they can see it because it says in the very next verse the nations will hear the name of the Lord and all the kings of the earth hear glory. What a demonstration that they see a people in the earth who are Gentile, non-Jews so identified with a people under judgment so much as to share in that judgment share in the shame of it share in the scandal of it and the unspeakable indignity and the humiliation of it. This is such an astonishment at a time when all the world is opposed to that nation that they have to recognize that what they're seeing and what is being demonstrated is nothing less nor other than very God himself.

What the church, the servant people of God will exhibit in that day is beyond all categories of religion. It is such an awesome demonstration of God writ large in an entire people that the nations themselves must acknowledge it and hear the name of the Lord and the kings of the earth hear glory for the Lord will build

up Zion he will appear in his glory. That is the appearance of God.

That is the revelation of God in his servant people. He will regard the prayer of the destitute and will not despise their prayer. Well I wondered about that, the destitute.

Is that talking still about Israel's suffering in judgment? But it says the prayer of the destitute. Israel is not going to be capable of prayer. It doesn't know God to pray.

It may cry out something. But could this destitute be the servant people themselves? That somehow they also are made destitute? In identification with Israel do they come under that same judgment and suffer some of the same consequences? Or are the haters of Israel of such a kind so fiendish in their diabolical hatred of Israel so delighting in Israel's judgment that they inflict upon those who love her so something of the same and render us destitute? If that's true, to be identified with Israel in a way that will bring us to destitution is no small, light thing. It's an ultimate thing.

And God waits for the ultimate thing for when it comes. The set time to favor Zion. That's the mystery.

They're blind. They're out of it. Until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in, then the deliverer shall come out of Zion.

What a remarkable corollary between them. Maybe that's where Paul got it. Out of the psalm.

The mystery of God that he saw in a future way. That the issue is not Israel. It's the issue of the servant people and their identification with the nation, not at its best, but at its worst.

It's an easy thing to identify with her at her best. She's glamorous. She's heroic.

She's exciting. She's a new thing. But in her judgment, where the enemies are ventilating their spite and rubbing it in with taunts and mocks and they're cast out of the land and their cities have been reduced to rubble.

To identify with her then is nothing less nor other than identifying with Jesus not in his exaltation, but in his suffering. If the invitation to be one with the bridegroom is not when he's spanking clean and has on his best tuxedo, but on the cross. Can you identify with him there in a way that you have a union with him there in the blood, the gore, the beatings, the suffering, that you're willing to be joined with that despicable one in whom there's no beauty that we should desire him? It was one thing when he had his beauty, but can you identify with him in his devastation? He suffered judgment and that judgment left him as a wreck.

And even his disciples fled from the ungainly sight. Only the women remained at the cross. Who will embrace that cadaver? Who will let his blood come on them? And the gore of his wounds and the ugliness of that, that's union.

That's love. That's beyond human sentimentality. That's beyond our human capability.

That's an ultimate union and that's the one that will take us into the bridal condition eternally. Not Jesus at his best, Jesus in his suffering and at his worst, where he's most despicable, most offensive, most rejected. Who will identify with him then? Isn't it a remarkable parallel? Israel in the last days will go through its own Lord to Calvary.

It will be despised more than any people. It will have no beauty that any should desire it. It will be fanged up.

It will be wrecked. It will be mangled. Who's going to identify with it then? I don't know if I will.

You think because I'm a Jew naturally that that's going to guarantee that I'm going to be identified with my own people in that condition? Won't they be revolting? Won't there be something in my own humanity that's deeper than my Jewishness that will say they deserved it? How many times have I been there trying to appeal myself to deaf ears? Everything in me will want to agree with the world, except that there's something deeper than my Jewishness. Something deeper than my superficial spirituality. Something so deep that I'm so much in union with the God of Israel that his heart is my heart.

I can't help myself in loving identification with their people in their pathetic condition. That's the set time to face Israel. The mystery that Paul is celebrating is not the issue of Israel alone.

The mystery is Israel and the Church. The reciprocal relationship between these two entities by which the one without the other can never come in to its eternal destiny. The issue is not Israel.

The issue is the Church. Israel will be inoperative. It will be reduced.

It will be the skin clinging to their bones. They'll be hapless victims. God waits for something for the set time.

To have compassion on her stones and pity for her dust is not only to identify with Israel in God's judgment but to invite our own decimation by those who will despise it. We make ourselves candidates to have come upon our heads what has come upon their heads simply by that identification. I told you where was it yesterday? The one dream that I've had.

I've had only a few here. Being yanked out of my bed three or four o'clock in the morning as the sun was knocking on the door and men in their storm trooper outfits with a uniform of some kind bundling us up, me and another person, throwing us in the backseat of the car and running off into the night and turning around and probably in answer to my question why are you doing this? You are among those who love the Jews. If there's anything more offensive to the unregenerate Gentile anti-Semitic vicious spiteful spirit that will sweep the world, more hateful than the Jew himself will be those who isn't that a remarkable thing? And a certain sense of breath worth it will separate the true from the false, the feigned, the artificial, the synthetic from the actual.

Those who have only an outward sentimental affinity from those who are in a profound union with God. Because nothing will measure your relationship with God more in the last days than your attitude towards his people in their judgment. Don't measure it by any other thing.

How you're titillated by how you're moved by worship, how you can cry a crocodile tear for this or for that. What are you going to do in the great dawn of their judgment? How will you relate to them in their despicable and reduced condition when they're hated worldwide and they're fleeing for their life those that have even that capacity will be the issue of the truth. Nothing less, nothing other.

And I'll tell you what, we're not going to find it in a day. It's not going to come to us magically because the set time has come. The set time has come because we have found it.

Not in a day but over a course of time. In eschatological communities of the kind that was described yesterday. Where we recognize that we have not given the compassion for each other.

We have not the mercy for each other, let alone the Jews. And we repent at the revelation of that condition and allow God to do his work on us. Let him bring his judgments upon us and his fire so that when the other fire comes, it's not needed.

We've already passed through. This is not some magical condition. This is an ultimate condition and God waits for it.

Because unless it comes, the age is not ended. We're still then stuck because the age will only conclude when God has a nation redeemed and a church transfigured. And Israel is the key for our transfiguration.

I thought to rewrite the theme of this morning but I forgot. I'll strain my eyes and read my scroll. This identification is false if we still retain an iota of self-righteousness that believes ourselves morally superior to fallen Israel.

Because that turns identification into condescension. Am I getting too fancy? Do you know what it means to condescend to someone? Oh, you're so cute. I've always loved black people.

Jews have always been my best friends. That's condescension. If there's anything that makes a Jew's skin crawl and a stomach knot is when someone says my best friends are Jewish.

It's condescension. If we really identify, we don't have to make unctuous statements like that. We don't have to wear our hearts and our sleeves and show people that we're identified with the black, we're identified with the American, Indian, we're identified with the Jewish.

That's just the kind of false thing that God must bring down. Those are the idols of which Jim was speaking, the false categories that keep us from bridal reality. God can have a bride like unto himself adorned for the bridegroom, the real thing.

And he despises this mock sentimentality and affectation. I've always said Jews are my best friends. What will they be when the rubber hits the road and the ultimate conditions where they're your best friend then your neck is in the news.

So any iota of self-righteousness negates everything. It is an ultimate inner condition for which God waits. The redemptive saga will not be over until it be obtained, for we will not have been fitted for our own servant destiny to the nations if we have avoided first the cross by keeping our lives rather than losing them.

Maybe of all the language that needs to hit the dust are the references to the cross. Talk about the final insult to God is the sentimentalization of the cross or the employment of it as a kind of religious or various other kinds of phrases that we pick up at our current in our time, but we're never sincere. God's dust are the references to the cross.

Talk about the final insult to God is the sentimentalization of the cross or the employment of it as a kind of religious or various other kinds of phrases that we pick up at our current in our time, but we're never sincerely. God's on a vendetta against insincerity, and if there's going to be a bride going for the bridegroom that's like him, we've got to be of the same stuff, true and true, utterly sincere, and so if we

have avoided the cross even as we celebrate it, we'll not come to the condition for the celebration. This is the work of that cross, and I don't know of any place where its working is more effectual.

Israel's pitiful state tests ours. We cannot claim compassion and love. We can only reveal what is the truth of our condition, the statement of what and Israel will find us out as they come into our communities whether ours is a superficial or God's love is unconditional.

It can't be authentic anymore. There's nothing they can say or do, and don't you doubt that they're going to say and do everything calculated to find us out. We have an instinctive cunning as Jewish people to find that secret thing, to press that button that will find us out.

It's only external. That resentment will rise up, the root of which was never dealt with, because we concealed ourselves and kept ourselves from any dealing with God that would have attended it. That moment will be a crisis moment that will reveal the truth of our condition, and God has established that in his great wisdom.

That's why Paul ends the whole statement of Romans on all the depths of the riches of the wisdom and the knowledge of God. Who is that it comes to? What is Paul seeing? He's seeing something so much more than Israel's own redemption, as great as that is and as great as his heart cried out for that redemption. What he's seeing is something more.

In its pitiful condition and all of its slipshod revival consciousness and all of its subjective pleasure seeking and phony baloney transfigured into a bride. The crisis of Israel compels it to a true ground. So Israel's final judgment judges us, and only so could the truth of our condition ever be known.

Hey, this isn't bad. Only so could the truth of our condition awaken in the day of eternity with a shock and a cry and an anguish of heart that we had deluded ourselves about our own condition. And nothing had ever tested it.

Our sanctimonious fellowships and Sunday services could never be the test of the truth of our ultimate condition. Only Israel in its ultimate condition can test us in ours. But we need to be conscious of this mystery or else we'll become wise and self-assured, arrogant that somehow we don't need this and we can attain sanctification without it.

Every present ill that is disfiguring the Church today is in my estimation the consequence of the absence of this mystery. This mystery was given by God to temper the Church. It's His very provision to keep us in a place of humility, to show us what's at stake in the enormous saga of the redemption of Israel and through Israel all nations.

Look at what is at stake here. Why the Church cannot phony it up. Why it must be in a place of authenticity where Israel is not delivered.

The deliverer will not come out of Zion. He's contained in the heavens waiting for the restoration of all things spoken by the prophets since the world began. And he knows when he'll get it.

And he's got to get it in his entire Church. There's got to be a company, a bridal company, a corporate expression of just what he is in himself. That's no picnic.

That's no cup of tea. That's not attending a prophetic school or a three-month discipleship course. There's a suffering in that to go from where we presently are to come to a reality of that ultimate kind.

The world is capable of sentimentality. Jesus wept at that kind of weeping. Remember that? Outside the tomb of Lazarus and they wept.

They were all wringing their handkerchiefs and their fingers and plucking their tongues. Wasn't it a pity this young man had to die so early? The shortest verse in all Scripture is in that text. Jesus wept.

He wept at their weeping because it was shallow, because it was sloppy, because it was sentimental, because it completely misunderstood the whole situation with Lazarus. There's nothing tragic about a young man dying to be with the Lord. If God is sovereign and has always been enthroned, then there's some purpose being served in the wisdom of God by the removal of even a young man with such potential to be taken into the heavenly precincts with God.

That's not something to cry about. That's not some occasion in which we're going to enjoy some kind of self-pitying picnic. He wept at their weeping because it was the statement of how far removed they themselves were from an understanding of God and his purposes.

How little they understood his glory. How little they anticipated what it means to be with him throughout eternity. How little they understood the purpose for this life as being only preparatory and not the thing in itself.

He wept at the revelation of Israel's abject condition revealed in the slipshod, sloppy sentimentality that eventuated in crying around the tomb of Lazarus. He wept over their weeping and he'll weep over ours if our tears are shabby. If our affiliation is sentimental, if it's shallow, if it's carnal, there's only one thing that he'll recognize and that he waits for is a compassion on her dust and a pity for her stones.

That's poetic language to say an identification with Israel when she is reduced to the lowest denomination to which God could bring a nation. Pitiful. Pitiful.

Heart-rending. Then the deliverer will come out of Zion. The set time to favor Zion has come and the nations will observe it.

Fear the name of the Lord. The kings of the earth is glory. He'll build up Zion.

He will appear in his glory. There'll be a revelation of himself. He will regard the prayer of the destitute and will not despise their prayer.

He'll answer it. Someone has said... Well, I'll tell you who this someone is. Charles Spurgeon.

Have you read his commentary on the Psalms? Wouldn't you love to see what he has to say about Psalm 102? How does he understand why God will hear the prayer of the destitute? The way he says it is there's no other prayer that God hears more aptly and is more quick to answer. There's something about destitution that appeals to God's heart. He doesn't hear the prayer of the comfortable.

He doesn't hear their prayers of convenience. He hears the hot cry of those who are reduced to destitution. Well, I looked it up in the dictionary.

What does it mean to be destitute? Wiped out. Empty. You have no resource.

You've been stripped. And that may not only be a statement of what may physically come upon us because of our identification with Israel when it's most universally hated, but also because their condition is of such a kind. The judgment is so severe.

They have been cast out to all nations. Their condition is by every reckoning utterly hopeless that we will feel ourselves destitute. Have you ever felt destitute spiritually speaking? No.

Like, woosh, my God. When I begin to understand what you're after, when I understand what you're wanting, what kind of a church that is formative of this bride that will adorn the bridegroom eternally, I throw my hands up in despair. We're not even at square one.

We put up a sign that says lights out at 11 o'clock and people go on till 12. We ask for this, we get that. Shallow, undisciplined, self-serving, that's our condition.

Will there be ministers to that? I love what Jim said. This is where the judgment begins first with the bridal company, the most intensive dealings of God. Well, when you recognize the magnitude of the task, you're reduced to the awareness of your destiny.

Who's sufficient for this? That was Paul's continual cry, and when God hears that cry, he becomes all in all. The church is not the church until we're brought to a place beyond any capacity of our own to fulfill the purpose of the church. This kind of a Christianity that is something of the kind that we can perform is apostate.

Only a requirement, only a faith that brings us beyond any capacity of ourselves to fulfill is the faith. And God waits to hear the anguished cry of the destitute. When he hears that cry, the set time to favor Zion has come.

Let me read you some of this good stuff. If you don't have the three volumes of the Treasury of David, you'll never have a better investment. 25 bucks, 29 bucks? Ridiculous for the treasure.

Really a treasure. Not only Spurgeon's insightful comments had spoken and written with a quality of English that stabbed you through. It makes you all aware in one swift stroke that the kind of English that we employ today is hardly more than a grunt.

Where's the men's room? Is it time to eat? This is language. This is language superbly employed to express the deepest insights of the nature of God, of his call. It's what language was given for.

And not to be able to speak like that and think like that and communicate like that is to reduce us to something less than for which God suffered and died. It's a treasure to pick this up and to luxuriate in it. And on top of his own comments, you know what he said? He was fastidious in collecting scraps of what other of the great divines of England had said about these songs.

And you cannot find these sources anymore. They're extinct. They're out of print.

You'll never find them. He quotes men from the 1600s. 1500s! At his time, there were still archives, still places.

Maybe before the bombing of London by the Nazis in World War II that devastated whole libraries, he had access. He called it out and it's there. Precious comments.

Wow! Why didn't I think of that? What a way to see this. The restoration of Jerusalem was a marvel among the princes who heard of it. And its ultimate resurrection in days yet to come will be one of the prodigies of history.

We don't even talk like that. What's a prodigy of history? An ultimate phenomenon, an event of such a kind will be considered the high water markable history. Nations will observe it.

That's what the song says. Kings and nations will be startled, they'll be astonished at this remarkable demonstration toward Jews coming from Gentiles who have no reason to have this kind of compassion for that people. They have been the victims of that people who has tortured the church more and crucified its lord and victimized and persecuted its apostles than this people.

And don't think that they're finished. If I appreciated anything from Jim in these days, and I appreciate it much, it's his uncanny fingering of what they're going to be with us in these last days. They're not going to give us a pat on the back and thank you for preparing.

What, you live here 25 years in sub-zero arctic wasteland for us? There will be a flicker of that kind of recognition but a hostility and an anger and a bitterness because we're quote-unquote Christian and they're suffering because again, Christians twice in modern times have brought a holocaust upon us. Oh, it's going to be fierce and yet it will result in the prodigy of all history that the nations themselves will have to acknowledge when God comes out of Zion to bring deliverance because the set time for favor has come. People have had compassion in their stomachs, visible and willing to suffer for that identification.

I don't think it's an identification unless there's a suffering. If it's a convenient one for us and a shallow one and one that we could easily put on as an external thing, the nations will not notice it. They're not noticing it now by those who go to plant trees in Israel and go to Feast of Tabernacle Conferences.

But when Israel is reduced and becomes anathema to the nations and is a despicable people and we'll say again what the Nazis said when they had their great Nazi rallies. The Jews are our misfortune. The world will be saying that.

Yes, Hitler was right. They're a curse. Look what they've done to the economy.

The Zionist conspiracy. I don't know how it's going to be spelled out. And you in that kind of environment, in that milieu that global hatred of an anti-Christ spirit seeking their devastation and their annihilation.

Well, I like them. Yes, they're being judged for their sin, but God has a hope for them. The final word is not in yet and I'm standing with them and I believe them.

Oh yeah? Come over here, buddy. You're more despicable than they are. What do they call an Uncle Tom? The black people that some black person who is an authentic Christian is an Uncle Tom.

He's deserted and forsaken his identity with his people to identify with a white man's faith? And the Indian believers suffer the same thing? What will we suffer in our identification with Jews? It will be a suffering sense, but when God sees it, when the world sees it, it sets in motion remarkable consequences that will be a prodigy of history, the rebuilding, the restoration of that nation. This he does by providential rescues, by restoring health to the dying, by finding food for the famishing. And spiritually, his need of grace is accompanied by sovereign grace which delivers us by pardon from the sentence of sin.

That's what it says here, that he will have compassion in Romans 11. He will rise out of Zion, he'll deliver them and take their transgressions from them because of the covenant that I have made with them as it is written. I can't think of one statement that touches the issue of God in his sovereignty, in his character, in his responsibility, in what he is in God in that one statement.

Of what he has written, what he has made as covenant, what he is able to do as a deliverer, what he is able to do in the forgiveness of sins wholesale overnight in one stroke. Not just their presence in, the history of their sin. Volumes cannot contain it.

The sexual rites, what went on under oak trees on hills, the most pagan, putting our children through the fire. Molech and every pagan kind of thing that even the practitioners of Judaism performed. Men in the temple, that is a horror, that God had to say to the prophet, look at this, in my temple.

The history of our transgressions. Unbelievable. And he's going to remove it like that.

Because he's God. It's the issue of God as God. It's the issue of God who has made a covenant that I will take their sins from them.

I will give them a new covenant. I'll give them a new heart and a new spirit. There'll no more be covenant failing because it's no longer going to be the issue of their ability.

I, I will, I will, I will. The issue of Israel is the issue of God. But it's the issue of the people of God with God as God.

It's the issue. And the church that doesn't have this issue is ipso facto not the church. It's a deformed, stunted facsimile thereof.

It's a grotesque. It has services. It has programs.

But it lacks apostolic content, apostolic reality, apostolic vitality. It lacks prophetic presence. It lacks authentic worship.

For the ultimate issue of all this is worship. And even the anticipation of this great restoration already evokes a depth of worship that nothing else can compel because this is the ultimate glory of God. That's how Paul says it at the end of Romans 11.

For ultimate through him and to him are all things to whom be glory forever. I've been up doing a little homework while you guys were turning over on the other side. The salvation of Jews and Gentiles is penultimate.

What does that mean? Not the last thing, but the next to the last thing. What then is the last thing? It is the ultimate glory of God. Worship is the concluding word.

God has arranged redemptive history to bring the maximum glory to himself. He has arranged it so that it is clear that all things are from him, through him, and to him be glory forever. Where am I quoting? Paul's preoccupation with Israel was not because he was a Jew, but because he was an apostle.

Our preoccupation with Israel is not because of our sentimentality, but because of the same apostolic timber and resonance and actuality of our lives. Because the apostolic burden is God's burden. It's true for Paul and it's true for anything that is authentically apostolic.

In fact, the absence of it betrays that it's false. There are a lot of presumers. False apostles in the last days? False prophets? A dime a dozen.

Impressive. Able to solve problems and quote Paul and do this and do that and managerial and organized and governmental. But where's the mystery? Where's their apprehension of the mystery? And where is the temperedness that comes in both to the apostle and the apostolic church of a quality that brings a humility and a meekness to its very character that comes when it recognizes this mystery.

The absence of that guarantees egotism, vanity, self-seeking. We have it together. We're the conquering church.

We're going to bring the kingdom of God independent of the Israel whose kingdom that is. Paul was right. I would not have you to be deceiving to this mystery.

You will become wise in your own conceit. You will become inflated. You will become puffed up.

And the church that becomes that is the church. It has lost its essential character which is the meekness and the humility of the Lamb of God himself. Only the proper appropriation and understanding of the mystery assures us of this tempering faculty.

The mystery serves us, keeps us from grandiose ambitions about ministry and ambitions of any kind and brings us into a lonely place in the purpose. We're only an interim provision. We are not the thing in itself.

We've only been established to bring Israel back. And if we faithfully serve that, we'll have an eternal reward and glorified bodies to perform. But we are second fiddle to the people with whom God has made his covenant and the fulfillment of which is the issue of God himself.

Can he keep a covenant that he's made? Can he honor his own word? Can he fulfill it? Even against the reluctance and the unwillingness of the people to be faithful to that covenant? He's stacked every card against himself that if it succeeds through a Gentile church he will be glorified forever. And when this happens, it's the end of history. History ends with the conclusion of this great redemptive drama.

This, what do the Germans call it? Heilgeschichte. Salvation history. We don't have a word for it in English.

That shows you how impoverished our understanding is as American Western Christians. The Germans praise God for the great Old Testament scholars understood the symbolic, the remarkable significance. This is a Heilgeschichte.

This is a salvation history. It's a saga that had its commencement with the beginning of time and ends with the final restoration of Israel unto him be glory forever. It takes place in time.

It concludes history. But the glory of it goes on forever. And that church that has not taken the issue of God's glory seriously as the first purpose for its being, as the central purpose for its being, is ipso facto not the church.

The glory of God should be our consuming passion. Whatever it takes to attain that which pertains to God's glory, we are the fools for it. We are sacrificed for it.

We'll let the world despise us. We'll be misunderstood. We'll be dewlovers.

Let them call us what they will, and let them reduce us as they will till we shall be, what's that word? The destitute. But how can we be other? Because we know that this will eventually, whatever it takes, God's glory first and foremost. It's got to be the central thing.

That's the apostolic heart of Paul. And to celebrate God and his glory makes worship the concluding word. To say amen, to glorify God as worship.

And what has suffered more in our charismatic age than worship? It's ghastly. It even opposes the word of God. There are times when they have finished with their worship things, I can't even get out of my seat to speak.

Whatever the burden that the Lord had given that I was so inflamed and waiting to get up to speak it, by the time they finish with their worship, I'm depleted. I'm finished. I can hardly say boo, beef.

What kind of worship is that that so reduces the capacity of a servant to bring the word rather than enhancing the word? Well, it's because it's technical, because it has to do with loudspeakers and overhead projectors and men who are pumped up in their own presumption that they are really the key. There really is where the rubber hits the road. They're the ones who are determining the character of this meeting and whether it's going to be blessed or not.

And their worship becomes an instrument to an end. It's no longer worship. Once it becomes a servile thing to obtain an end of improving the atmosphere, it becomes a technical thing that even contradicts what worship means.

Worship is ultimate. God is waiting for ultimate worship that doesn't have to be prompted, doesn't have to be manipulated or managed, that rises up out of the spontaneity of our hearts, that recognizes the grandeur of God as only his redemptive dealings with Israel will reveal, his willingness to judge and to restore. It's not withholding of severity in order to bring goodness.

There's nothing that reveals God as God than his relationship with Israel and his dealings with that people. To be ignorant of that, indifferent to that, disfigures us, reduces us as church, makes it a succession of meetings, and the hope is of so-called worships. Well, I'd love to read you more from Spurgeon, from some of the sources that he quotes, referring to preferring Jerusalem above my chief joy.

Let my right hand forget her cunning, if I forget thee, O Jerusalem, is more than the attachment to a city. It's the issue of Zion, it's not the issue of architecture, archaeology. It's the issue of God who has chosen the city and the hill upon which he shall set his son as king.

If I forget that, let my right hand forget its cunning, let my tongue cleave the roof of my mouth, because if I forget that, I forget everything. I've lost the center. You know what the ironic thing is? It's the very reason for which I'm being condemned, by so-called prophetic men of our generation, that I have lost the center.

I'm off on a tangent on Israel, and I have forgotten Christ. This is Christ as king, seated in Zion on the holy hill, when his nation will have been restored through the agency of a church that loves her stones and has compassion on their dust. It's his glory that will be revealed, that breaks forth in that salvation.

But what shame must cover thy face, O Christian, if you should not sincerely aim at God's glory? He has chosen Zion. He loves the gates of it. It is because all the glory that he looks for to eternity must arise out of this one work of building Zion.

This one work shall be the only monument of his glory to eternity. Does Zion mean to you what it means to him? Of all of the places? Have you ever been there? The city of David? You can walk by and get a speck in your eye and miss it. There's nothing about it that's grand in the natural sense.

It's a hill, not a glorious mountain, but it's a hill that he's chosen. Because what makes it glorious is that he has chosen it. That he has put his name there.

That he will make it his sanctuary and his dwelling. It will be the locus of his theocratic rule of all creation. That's why it's to be in Zion.

That's why it's to be honored. That's why Israel must be restored. For Zion's sake.

He's Zion conscious, and we are not. We're denomination conscious. My ministry conscious.

I love these older saints. Oh, no wonder that England has become the punk rock culture of the world and giving us the Beatles and Scum and the filthiest aspects of contemporary culture. I've had their argument in Great Britain.

Because where are its urchins? Where are its whitfields? Where are its great men of God and missionaries who have gone to China and places like that? England, there was a nation once alive in God. That men waited for the publication of Spurgeon's notes on the Psalms. Jim mentioned the prolific production of this man in volumes.

But a lot of it was just the transcription and publishing of his messages. What he spoke. What he wrote.

His comments on the Psalms. What a heart. A church that waited and hung on to every syllable.

English society was transfigured by having a Spurgeon in its midst. And the absence of it is the melancholy statement of what prevails today. Young girls chasing these jerks down the street.

These punk rock specialists who charge \$140 to get in and will watch my mouth here take advantage of these young girls. Dine a dozen. Lay with them.

Rape them. Sleep with them. Use them.

Because in their adoration and fascination for the psychic hypnotic power that they have through Satan in a nation that has forgotten. Pray for the restoration of Spurgeon and men who understood the mystery. Who anticipated.

Loved God. Knew that his glory was at stake. That the one monument to that glory will be the restoration of Zion through the restoration of Israel.

And that this is not a narrow ethnic concern. So, oh there's so much. Let us know ourselves as destitute that we may know how to pray.

Destitute of strength. Destitute of wisdom. Destitute of influence.

Of faith. Of consecration. Of the knowledge of Scripture.

Righteousness. We don't know as we ought to know. But we think we know.

And so long as we think we know we're not destitute. When we know that we are destitute then there's an authentic cry that goes How do these saints see that and write that? Precious. Let us therefore under God set the crown upon the head of prayer.

Prayer has always been, has had the preeminence in the building of Zion. Prayer has been the chiefest instrument in the building up of Zion. But prayer of what kind? Prayer that issues from the destitute.

How about our prayer sessions before every day of our convocation? What was it? The cry of the destitute or the well fed and the comfortable and the expectant? Jim is going to pull it off. Or Art's going to pull it off. It's a casual air.

Our prayers are kind of a formality. Our gut is not in it. I had one of these mornings to begin with an exhortation.

Let's not presume upon God. Let's not be guilty of presumptuous sin but think that He has any obligation to bless us. Because yesterday was a blessing, doesn't mean that we can mechanically expect that today.

There's nothing more unbecoming of saints toward God than this thing that we can lean upon His grace and cheapen it. Where we have no necessity to ask to plead to pray, Lord blessing, open the heavens. Lord, we're destitute.

There's no way to communicate a word like this. To give a sense of the great genius of God in the mystery of the faith that makes the church the church and Israel Israel and gives Him a bride forever. Who can speak that in an hour, two hours, whatever? Destitute in the face of the magnitude of the requirement.

Then God answers. Well, let's go back to Romans 11. A few things that the Lord quickened for me this morning.

Going into chapter 12. As I said in our prayer time, these labels are only they were not there in the original letter. One thought followed another.

Precious flow of God through the apostle. So how does Paul continue having described this mystery that eventuates in God's glory forever? I appeal to you, therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. I don't understand why he employs the word bodies.

I don't know of any other context where he again cites that make your bodies a living sacrifice. What is this identification of Israel that require bodily sacrifice? That this word destitution is not a euphemism or an analogy or a rhetorical device, but an actual statement of what we can expect bodily. There'll be a bodily destitution.

There'll be a sacrifice that will be called for, or Israel is not going to be redeemed, except there's a people willing to go that far. Not for Israel's sake, per se, but for the glory of God's sake. That our bodies must be a living sacrifice? This guy's serious.

Holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. Well, I mentioned it at prayer time, I'll say it now for those who are not here.

My experience is this. Nothing has more served to keep me from deception than all of the present currents that are out there than my understanding of the mystery of Israel and the issue of God's necessary judgment for that people. When you bite the bullet on judgment, when you have made peace with a God who judges, something comes into the inner man that was not there before that insulates you from a susceptibility for deception that would otherwise make you victim.

And the way that the Lord made this clear to me, as I described this morning, was a conference on the American Indians up in Ottawa, Canada. And one of the services toward the end was a staged device to bring people to a place of seeming repentance for the injustices perpetrated on the Indians by white men. Who should have been more sympathetic? And I was like the proverbial round peg in a square hole.

I was completely untouched. In fact, I was irritated. I was chafed.

It was painful for me to sit there and watch people come up to my phone and cry their crocodile tears. Yes, I'm so sorry. I ask your forgiveness.

And relieve themselves. Almost like a form of spiritual masturbation to relieve the weight of their guilt when you knew in your heart that nothing authentic was really being transacted. It was a human and religious device to serve the needs of men and to play at something that will assure that the problem will continue.

And the people who had brought me there, who were with me, whom I've known, who had been here to these conferences, spiritual, crying, going up to the microphone, enjoying the bash. And I'm sitting there like a lump. And so we're driving home that night and another question would come.

Art, how did you like tonight? And so what mattered, you would ask. It was, for me, an anguish. It was a grim experience.

I could barely contain myself. How come you were not affected? How come everybody else was crying? I said, I can't tell you. I just, it did not touch me in my spirit.

It was a soulish thing and I've learned where the center of my life is. It's not in my soul and my response to things external seemed or felt or played upon. But if it's real from God, it's going to reach my spirit and I'm not going to cooperate with anything less than cry a crocodile tear to be one of the boys.

I'm going to keep my heart with all diligence because I'm going to wait for the real thing when it comes. Not when men will seek to produce it, but when God by his spirit will call for it. Then there'll be a transaction both in heaven and in earth.

I said, you guys not only had a little play at it and bashed at it, but you even preempted God from the real thing because you staged it yourself. And then I thought to myself, I may have been the only man in the room that saw that. The only man in the room that was impervious to sentimentality and to the play on emotion and outward affection.

I thought to myself, I know how come. It's because I have imbibed and taken into my spirit the mystery. Because I understand the necessary judgments of God.

It's at the heart of what God is distinctively as God and I have not shrunk from it or balked at it. God is a whole thing. His garment cannot be parted.

And those who have acceded to his judgments, not reluctantly like I guess I have to because it says it, but with joy in the spirit and sense that has been communicated to us in these days. That judgment is redemptive. It's the glory of God.

It's not a punitive thing in itself that we have to fear and dread. It's the most welcome thing. It's the revelation of God in his intense love that will not shrink from chastising.

We're raising up a whole generation of kids. My God, they're monsters before they're ten. They're capable of unbelievable cruelty of blowing the heads of their parents off in bed.

There's such an anger, resentment, a bitterness, a hatred against the adult world, their parents, their teachers. What is it? They've never been chastised. There's no one who has ever chastised them because it says if you do not chastise your own children, you hate them.

You love yourself more than them because you cannot bear the pain of having to inflict pain. You're soft. You're mushy.

You're sentimental. You're sloppy. You want to get by.

You want what's nice, what's soft, what's pleasant. You have no capacity for hardship, for pain. Chastisement is a suffering, not only for those upon whom it's inflicted, but he who inflicts it.

In all of your inflictions, I was afflicted because I had to bring it. Not that God just observes it, he brings it. But what love.

And in the Holocaust book, if you leave without a copy of it today, there's a section where I quote a precious brother from another generation, Kellogg, who writes something like this. He said, God does not withhold chastisement from Israel, but severe chastisement. And in the receiving of it, Israel something breaks upon the consciousness of the nation of the love of God that will not spare it, as no other conduct from God would have obtained it.

And it comes broken, shattered, and weeping, and lays its head, so to speak, on the shoulder of God who has inflicted it, with deep sobs, convulsive sobs, of pain, but gratitude for a love that has not spared it. And the father is weeping, even as the son is weeping, on his shoulder. And something happens in that moment of bonding between God and his nation that will endure eternally, and was never there before that time.

I don't know of an age more dangerous than our own, in temptations and seductions and subtleties of things that are being promoted as being prophetic, being apostolic. They seem to have all the marvels. They say it right.

They're impressive. They quote Scripture rightly. Their experiences are supreme.

They write beautifully. How do we work our way through this? Because the issue of the true apostle and the true father is the issue of the church. If we fail to be able to discern those who serve him and those who serve him not, we've lost the game before it begins.

How do we come to an acuteness of discernment of things both good and bad? It comes right out of the mystery of Israel. That's why it follows, the very next statement, that having discerned and seen and understood and received God in his dealings with Israel severely, reducing it to the place of rubble and

ruin, not sparing, that he might restore it. That he might restore it, not Jews and their Zionist aspirations.

And his restoration will be glorious. When Jerusalem is rebuilt, it will bear no correspondence to the present slipshod, jerry-built cracker box that I despise going to today. I can't bear to walk in the streets.

It's not fit for the king. But the new Jerusalem will be built on the foundations of the old. It will be built on its rubble as unto the wood.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/3/SID3105.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/art-katz/the-mystery-of-israel-a-1999-convocation-tape/>

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