

The Origin of the Nations

by Art Katz

The sermon explores the origin of the nations, their rebellion against God, and the significance of Antioch as a church of the nations, highlighting the importance of understanding God's universal intention for all mankind.

Duration: 1:26:16

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, John 6:68, Romans 8:6, 1 Corinthians 1:29, 1 Corinthians 2:9, 1 Corinthians 2:12, 1 Corinthians 2:14

Topics: "Nations"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the role of the church in nations and how it has historically failed in being the presence of God in the nation. The speaker specifically mentions the issue of the church in Israel and the importance of the believing presence and messianic believers in that context. The speaker shares a personal experience in Tanzania, where he preached about the conversion of the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts. The sermon emphasizes the need for the church to understand the divine perspective and respond appropriately to the role of the state in the last days. The speaker also highlights the concept of revelation, explaining that the hidden secrets and precious things of God can only be known through the revelation of the Spirit.

Transcript

I'd like for us to look at a text that Willie quoted, just to underline a few things in it. In 1 Corinthians 2, I think it's important for us to consider this at the very outset of the school. If we're going to receive anything of God, it will have to be that which is given and revealed by the Spirit and not by any other means.

Because we want the things which God has prepared for us at Lenten, which is in verse 9 of 1 Corinthians 2. This will be the first school in which God has not prepared things for us. If it's different from any of the schools that have preceded this, every school has been outstanding and exceptional in its own way. There's been a unique content or a theme, a thrust of God in every school.

So what will it be for this time that the souls of God have convened now that He has prepared for them that love Him? But how shall we receive what He has prepared? Because they are revealed, it says in verse 10, by His Spirit. How jealous God is that we should not appropriate or seek to obtain something except by His Spirit. The primacy of God centers upon His Spirit.

He'll not allow any other faculty. And that's what soul is. Soul is mind, reason, thought, emotion, feeling, will.

These are enormously significant human attributes. You could not live without them, but you cannot obtain from God by them. And we need to be clear about this because we have young men here who are attending college and are being schooled in the world to learn and to obtain by the exercise of soul.

So much so that spirit is discredited. But here in this text, God singles out and underlines and gives uttermost significance to the operation of His Spirit and our spirit without which we cannot receive anything from God. And it's really interesting to say that because I believe that this school is going to be considering, what shall I say, secular or cerebral matters, intellectual, thoughtful things about society, the world, nations, the church.

But how do we understand those things and what is God wanting us to see in them must be the issue of the revelation by His Spirit. Look how jealously God, G-O-D, guards, G-U-A-R-D-S, the treasure and the things that He has prepared for us. But God has revealed them unto us by His Spirit.

So just do what I did, put the word revealed in a framework, in a box. Revealed means that it's something given by God that can only be obtained by an operation that He also grants by His Spirit that no man can know. It says, so the things of God knoweth no man.

The issue is man or God. And the great paradox is that God who has given us soul will not allow us by that same means to learn the hidden, secret and precious things of God for they are revealed by the Spirit that no man can know. Talk about humility.

You cannot by what is in you as man know the secret and the hidden things of God that He has prepared for those that love Him. They are revealed. God is the one who reveals.

We cannot compel that revelation. It is something given to those who will, in verse 12, receive. Now we have received.

See how man is helpless and dependent upon God for what He reveals and what we can receive by the operation of God and not the employment of our own soulish faculties because these we have always at our disposal and at our use. We can will, we can think but God says we have received not the Spirit of the world but the Spirit which is of God that we might know. I'm cutting it off right in the middle of the statement that we might know.

We cannot know by man or by soulish faculties but by the receiving of that which is revealed by the Spirit that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. In chapter 1 in verse 29 that no flesh should glory in His presence. We just need to underline in our own hearts how God looks upon this issue of soul versus spirit and to know that this is under attack today that everything that is in the world and even in the religious realm has been accentuated to get believers to operate out of their soul rather than their spirit.

But God in this text clearly underlines what the means or the mode is by which we receive anything from God. No man can know. It's an insult to man, it's an offense to man.

Man wants to know on the basis of his own manhood on the basis of his own ability, human faculty that God says no flesh shall glory, no human attribute shall be the key to obtaining those things that can only

be received because they are revealed by God. We're helpless and dependent upon God. We even have to distinguish then between words that we can produce out of our humanity that might be instructive as against spirit words which give life.

And many of us can live entire Christian lifetimes and even serve God out of words that we produce out of our skilled humanity but they are not life-giving words. So if you'll just give me a moment or two more as a companion text, look at John 6 where the Lord Himself will not speak anything other than the word that is spirit and life. Because in John 6, 63, it is the spirit that quickens.

The flesh or the soul or that which is natural profits nothing. The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life. Even what I'm sharing now, however correct they might be biblically, if they are not issuing out of God by the spirit, they are not life and they profit nothing.

It does not even instruct us. And Jesus asks in the same text, does this offend you? Because He spoke mysteriously about eating His flesh and drinking His blood. Does this offend you? And many moved away from Him at that time.

And then He asked His own disciples, will you also go away? And Simon Peter, verse 68, answered Him, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. You can even just put eternal in parenthesis and just center on the word life. For you have the words of life.

Where shall we go? Your words are spirit and life. There are many rabbinical words, pharisaical words, and religious words, but they don't quicken. It's interesting that many heard Jesus in that day speaking about eating His flesh, drinking His blood, but not all believed.

Some turned away on that very word. We said, does this offend you? It's the word of spirit and life. It was a mystery word.

It's calculated to offend every natural category. It's abrasive. It's offensive.

It's even disgusting. To speak to Jews about eating flesh and drinking blood is the epitome of offense that is central to their whole history and tradition. And yet He spoke that offensive word, but it was the word of spirit and life.

But many did not believe and turned away. But the disciples said, where shall we go? You have the word of spirit and life. We don't understand it yet.

We are equally offended with our Jewish kinsmen, but we are not turning away from it and trust that if it's a word, I'm paraphrasing or filling in, that if it's a word of spirit and life, it will subsequently come into our understanding, not by the operation of our soul, mind, but by the revealing of God. This is a paradigmatic text. It's a one instance, but it encompasses all instances and may encompass the instances of our school in these very days.

I don't know what is coming forth. I'm less prepared to begin it than at any previous school, but I know that if we're going to be hearing the words of God, they will offend us or violate our categories or upset what we think and believe and know to be true about God and yet it will be something that has to be factored in. So, may we believe.

May we be open for the spirit that reveals. May our spirit prevail over our soul and keep it in place. Because the world is encouraging us to exactly the opposite, particularly in young men, particularly young men in worldly institutions of education.

So, I'm encouraging you and the Lord is encouraging us at the very first statement that we should hear at the commencement of these days is the issue of soul versus spirit. Man cannot know. God has seen to that.

It's humbling. Humbling makes us totally dependent on that which is revealed that we can only have by receiving because it is given by the spirit. Got the idea, guys? The Lord is not just wanting to give you an instruction of a particular kind.

He's wanting to refashion you and fit you for your call and function in the last days in this world as the conflict between the world and the church, between soul and spirit, between darkness and light, become the prevalent issue of the last days which you'll not be able to negotiate nor to discern nor to address except you be in the spirit. It's interesting that the development of soulish faculties increases pride. I know.

I understand. I think. I speak eloquently.

I feel. I'm sensitive. I, I, I, I, I. But what is given of God has no quotient of pride in it at all.

In fact, it requires a humility because it can only be received by the spirit which God himself has given. See what I mean? So I just want to pray, especially for the young men, the young believers whom God has sent to us in these days, that they might be encouraged to be the men and women of the spirit who are willing to be humbled, to be dependent and wait on only that which is given when it will be revealed as it pleases God that you might receive the things that he has laid up for us which ought to be treasured and cherished. David? So I thank you, Lord, precious God on high.

Thank you. For the note that you have struck. And don't think, Lord, that we were not mindful this morning as we began.

It was so sluggish. Pitifully sluggish that there was every temptation to become soulish and personable and turn up the juice and be cute and winsome and get things revved up out of soul. But we prefer to suffer the death of the sluggishness and whatever it was, my God, maybe you yourself, even right from the outset giving us an issue to see if we would lapse into soul and not wait for that which is revealed, that which is quickened, that which will become joy for us, will become reality, will be true praise and true worship so long as we don't lapse into what we can produce out of our own humanity to improve the morning.

We'd rather suffer the death of a failed service and even that failure is a success than we should move out of the realm of spirit and be engaged, my God, in our soulish faculties that want to take over the show to improve it. So we bless you, Lord, for the testing that has come, at least I'm reading it that way, and perhaps more significantly than we understand. Thank you, Lord.

So may your spirit prevail in these days. We desire revelation, Lord, not that we should become astute and look at me and what I understand, but because it will equip us for those things for which we are called in these last days. You have things saved up and prepared for us in these days that cannot be obtained by man, but only received by that which is given by your spirit.

Lord, we ask that the heavens would be open to us. Tomorrow morning when we assemble, Lord, in that deathly silence of beginning, that from the first word you'll be the alpha to the last word two weeks later of which you'll be the omega. And the whole thing, my God, will be a givingness of God, of something prepared for this time and this place that has not been given before and for those whom you have assembled.

Thank you. Oh, we bless you, precious God on high. We trust in the operation of your spirit.

We thank you, my God, that you're the Lord over all. You give, you reveal, we receive. Thank you, my God.

Bless the young ones. Bless your saints in this room this morning, my God. Encourage our hearts and teach us and equip us and establish us as your people of the spirit.

We thank you and give you praise. Bless your great name. Even as we sing the great words that Jesus first pronounced that was critical for all that followed right to the cross, the spirit of the Lord.

And in fact, it will bring us to the cross, the obedience to speak and to do according to the spirit. Will Christ, the nations, the powers and the nations, the faith of Israel, is not some parochial, narrow nationalistic interest that pertains to Israel alone. Israel is the provision of God for all nations.

From the very first, the intention of God for the redemption of the world was the selection of Abraham. And out of Abraham and out of his seed, a people. And out of a people, a kingdom for his name.

We'll go over this several times. So I'm just making it an opening statement that the subject of Israel is not some isolated ethnic consideration of a particular people. It is the issue of the nations.

The issue of Israel is the issue of the nations. For according to the divine wisdom and providence of God, the law, and I'm not talking about some narrow legal code, the law, the Torah, the instruction of God for nations for sanity and righteousness must go forth out of Zion. The law must go forth out of Zion and the word of the Lord out of Jerusalem.

And I know that the church has been guilty in spiritualizing this direct literal statement of God away. It's a form of anti-Semitism. It's a form of Gentile unwillingness to receive the wisdom and choosing of God.

God has made this choice in his divine wisdom. He could not give to the whole world at one time the revelation of himself, but he has chosen in the selection of a people and a nation to make himself known to all the ends of the earth. And when you read the Psalms, you come again and again to the recurring theme of the cry of the psalmist that all the earth shall know you.

In the New Testament, every knee shall bend, every tongue shall confess that Jesus is Lord to the glory of God the Father. Every. So the faith of God is not a narrow provincial thing.

It is God's universal intention for all mankind, all the world, through the structure of nations. Paul says in Romans, in Acts 17, he has given to, he has made of one blood all nations of men and established their bounds and their habitations that they might seek after God if happily they might be found with him. Paul sets forth before the Greeks God's cosmic intention for his creation.

He has established the nations. He has set their parameters, their boundaries, their limitations. There's a structure and a design and it behooves us to understand it as Paul did because he challenged the Greeks

in their own lofty self-centeredness to know that they are only part of a grand design and that God will fulfill it.

So the nations, the issue of the nations is in the last analysis the issue of God. And the nations have been from their inception in rebellion against God who has made them and established their parameters and their borders. And so the whole struggle, the whole heilsgeschichte, the German word for salvation history is the struggle and the conflict over the nations as to who indeed shall prevail.

The God who created them or the false gods of this world under their prince to rule and jerk and manipulate the nations. And the instrumentality which they employ, the mode of it is called the powers. The principalities and the powers of the air that reside in the air over all nations and assert their influence upon all nations that they might be in active rebellion against God.

So we need to come into the framework of this. The nations are not a geo-physical or geographical accident. Their design, their structure, their relatedness, their races, their nationalities, their cultures are all distinctive elements of God's making that will redound to his glory but which the enemy plays upon to bring strife, discord, envy, and violence one against the other.

That's why the gospel and the apostolic genius of the church had its inception not so much in Jerusalem as in Antioch. The first sending forths were out of Antioch. Why? Because Antioch was representative of the nations.

You read in Acts 13 and there were at Antioch certain prophets and teachers and then he names them and shows from their name their nationalities. One was called Niger who is evidently black. That's what the word means in Africa.

And there was Saul, a Hebrew, and Barnabas and there was a Roman and one from Cyrene from the Mediterranean. They were different in nationality, color, cultural origins but they were together in one place. They worshiped the Lord together.

And when they came to that place of overcoming national discord and enmity and strife which had characterized those national cultures since their inception, Jew and Gentile, enmity, abrasiveness, discord because differences are naturally the ingredient for division and strife. We are comfortable with those who are like us but those who are not like us are an object of suspicion or fear or envy. God overcame that at Antioch by his spirit.

And when they came to a reality in the spirit where they worshipped the Lord together you could believe it was not that they were singing something off the projector. Their worship was the statement of the reality of their life together. And the scriptures don't tell us how.

It just tells us that they had come to a place of this attainment and then the Holy Ghost spoke and said separate unto me. Paul, Saul, and Barnabas for the workmen to have called them. The first apostolic sending into the nations is a church of the nations in its diverse constitution different from the early church in Jerusalem that was exclusively Jewish.

That was an achievement in itself that Jews can get along together. Something that present Israel has not obtained and never will obtain until the Lord comes. There is a division between Sephardic and Ashkenazic.

Those Jews who are of Sephardic is the Hebrew word for Spanish or Latin in their origin from Spain, from Portugal and Ashkenazic which is the Hebrew word for German those that have come from central Europe. Lighter complected more education oriented very different in their appearance and even in their culture. And they can't get along.

And the Orthodox and the secular and they can't get along. Isn't it remarkable? Jews who have been an object of persecution and oppression in the lands where they have been alien when they have their own land do no better with themselves than by which they were received in other nations. But Antioch was a jewel in the Lord's crown.

One of my messages in Singapore on this recent trip the Lord woke me up at 4 a.m. that Singapore is the Antioch of Asia. Why? It's English speaking but essentially Chinese but there are other a compound of other racial and ethnic strands in Singapore that can go out to all Asia. They will be ascending forth as it was out of the Antioch of Acts when they will worship the Lord together.

So why? Because they represent God's ultimate design. Antioch in itself is a microcosm of God's macrocosmic intention for the world. Nations dwelling together in unity centered in the Lord.

Okay. So I think we ought to begin at the beginning which is what book? Genesis. Genesis and see the origin of the nations and their rebellion against God from the beginning which remains to this day and will be the climaxing issue at the very end of the age.

In Revelation is it 20 or 21? Where the river of life with the tree of life on both sides of the river and the tree has 12 kinds of fruit and gives its fruit every month and its leaves are for the healing of the nations. We need to become nation conscious. The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof and the nations and those that dwell therein.

These are not places for us to go as tourists. These are places for us to go understanding who is their creator and what their ultimate destiny is with God. And we're going there to speak to the church of the nations and sometimes to the nation itself about who their Lord is and that they will one day bow their knee and acknowledge Him.

And there will not be peace nor prosperity until they will. So I've already had a foretaste. You'll excuse me if I get biographical from time to time and share a little something.

But in Tanzania in Africa I was speaking out on an open field competing with blaring loudspeakers from the other end where the saloons were that were playing rock and roll. And I'm standing on a rickety slapdash stand that was raised for my speaking and the message that the Lord gave me was out of Acts the Ethiopian eunuch. His conversion before Paul's.

He had the black men and the Jew. And when I came down off the stand and a lot of people milling about a man came to me and he said I'd like for you to speak with my employer. I said gladly who's your employer? Oh he said she's the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court in Tanzania.

The next day I was in her house. And as I walked into her house I came to the portal of her house the Lord quickened the scripture righteousness exalts a nation. And sin is a scandal or a shame for any people.

And I came in that was my message righteousness exalts the nation because though you have won your independence from your imperial British colonial powers your condition now is worse than when you were

under their authority. You're more poverty stricken you're suffering from drought corruption failed crops internal dissension because you have not walked in the way of righteousness. Righteousness exalts a nation.

God doesn't even say you have to be converted. But you do have to avoid graft corruption misappropriation of white owned lands intimidation all the kinds of things into which governments can lapse whether they are black or white. We have a message for the nations even before they come under the sovereignty of God.

And a message to the church in the nations to be for their nation the spokesman that brings to them the divine perspective. Are you guys following me? Amen. I lost all I don't want to say all my closest German friends when the Lord gave me the message on Acts 17 that someone needs to go to the Reichstag in Germany to the seat of German government and to tell them what Paul told the Greeks in Athens that God has weeped in times past but he now commands all men everywhere to repent.

Repent of what? Repent for not having sought the Lord who has established your nations. What do you think it is? Your playground? You think he gave you that? That you can do your thing? And have your imperial designs and your ambitions? God is a creator but he is a purposive or purposeful creator. The nations are established by God not for our amusement our enjoyment or our playground or let alone our exploitation but to fulfill his purposes and his glory.

And I said you have an obligation as the church to confront the rulers of your nation as Paul did in Athens and tell them that God has weeped in times past but he is commanding now men everywhere to repent of not having sought him for the purpose for which their nations were created. That offended my German Christian friends. What about the gospel? What about Christ? As if I'm somehow negating the gospel but they had a narrow view that somehow we don't bother the nations we leave them alone.

That's their secular business so long as they leave us alone and that we can have our Sunday services we can have our programs and we can have our evangelism. That is an inadequate understanding of God's redemptive purpose for the church in the nations. So I want to encourage you and I'll be saying it many times the earth is the Lord's and the nations and those that dwell therein who have no biblical perspective.

We have an obligation to bring to them the perspective which we enjoy for they are completely bereft of it. They are secular authorities and yet they are responsible for the God whom they do not know because they have not sought him. And we need to tell them that God will judge them for that grievous neglect and to show them in their history what has been the consequence of that neglect.

World War I World War II Rwanda genocidal tribal murder every kind of horror that has drenched this earth in blood is through the issue of nations acting in their own selfish national interest at the expense of another because they have not considered God. Serbia the whole of the Balkans the Albanians versus the Serbians the Croatians all of that are men acting out of their own self-will in their own prideful identification with their own unique national ethnic identity at the expense of another. And that it eventuates in violence shows who in fact their real Lord is the Prince of this world who loves chaos destruction bloodshed and devastation based on racial and ethnic hatred and enmity.

We have a message to the nation's saints. We have an obligation to the nations because we have a perspective that they cannot conceive until we communicate it. What is wanting is someone of Paul's authority as a sent one to address the philosophers and the rulers of our nations and to bring to them an

understanding of the divine perspective for which they will be held accountable and in judgment.

Okay Genesis we won't go all the way back but past the flood and the sons of Noah that come out of the flood because out of these three sons come all of the divisions of mankind and subsequently the nations. So from verse 18 the sons of Noah chapter 9 of Genesis were Shem, Ham and Japheth. Here are the three basic divisions of all mankind.

Ham was the father of Canaan these three were the sons of Noah and from these the whole earth was people. Now we have a choice right here. Does this stand scientific scrutiny? Will the anthropologists agree to this? They will give us a much more complex explanation of the origins of nations and of men and of races so we have a choice.

Whose testimony do we subscribe from the beginning? This is God's statement of the origin of nations. So for me in my house I'll stand with God's explanation. I don't care what the anthropologists say this is God's statement of origin.

Genesis is the book of origins.

So Noah was a man of the soil was the first to plant the vineyard he drank some of the wine became drunk and he lay uncovered in his tent and Ham the father of Canaan saw the nakedness of his father told his two brothers outside then Shem and Japheth took a garment laid it on both their shoulders and walked backward and covered the nakedness of their father their faces were turned away they did not see their father's nakedness when Noah awoke from his wine and knew what his youngest son had done to him he said cursed be Canaan lowest of slaves shall he be to his brothers and he also said here's a prophecy blessed by the Lord may God be Shem and let Canaan be his servant or his slave may God make space for Japheth that is to say enlarge him Japheth is the father or the origin of all the

European nations Caucasian European nations Shem is the father of the Shemites the Hebrews, the Jews Arab peoples and Canaan Ham of the Black maybe even the Oriental I don't know and so and let him live in the tents of Shem and let Canaan be his servant after the flood Noah lived 300 years all the days of Noah were 950 years and he died I don't want to major in this it's critical God giving the configuration of the three basic stems of all mankind and something happening in a very sparsely described event where the father is uncovered what does that mean to us where we have nudist colonies and the nakedness is nothing but evidently something about the dignity of the father even in his drunken state that needed to be guarded by respectful sons for thou shalt honor thy father and thy mother

even before the commandment is articulated there's something instinctive and in the conscience of men with regard of sons to fathers that is critical and evidently the youngest of the sons who was less sensitive to this obligation peered in or saw his father at a disadvantage now maybe he exulted in that sons would have that tendency to elevate themselves above their fathers and he allowed himself an indulgence in seeing his father in that condition that became for him a curse and therefore was transmitted through the generations the other two sons having heard this would not even look on their fathers nakedness but carried the covering on their shoulders and covered his body without looking upon it can we understand this as modern people? some of the commentators say that it was more

than just looking upon his father's nakedness dwelling on the word in verse 24 and knew what his youngest son had done to him that there's a hint of some kind of homosexual abuse of the father by the son in the helplessness of his drunkenness and in his nakedness that's only a speculation but some

commentators suggest that, I don't know but the word done seems to suggest something more than having looked upon him in his nakedness whatever it was, it was sufficient to bring out of Noah a curse against that son and to condemn him to a role of servant to the other brothers but in the prophecy he says something very significant Japheth is to be enlarged and what have we seen in the history of the world but that Japheth has been enlarged European nations European civilization, European

industry European culture is foremost in the world the descendants of Canaan and Ham have not been enlarged in that way they have been more the exploited peoples by the Europeans to take from them their raw materials or their labor but Japheth has been enlarged and yet God says Japheth must come under or into the tent of Shem so just giving you another little anecdote out of my recent experience in Russia a young man who started at the age of 19 with a bible study in his living room, today is the pastor of a congregation of over a thousand and he's not yet 30 he's young obstreperous conceited because of the remarkable spiritual success that he has had and I had to say to him and he treated me how shall I say this suspiciously looking me over and to what degree is he going to allow me to

speak at his church or so on and I said you know what you need you need to come in to the tent of Shem I'm Shem and you need to come in you know to enter a tent means you have to bow low and this proud son of Japheth, this European who has really got it all together he's impressive, he's clever look what he's done with this church he's a good preacher but until you bow and come into that tent, you're missing a vital dimension from your whole countenance that will be a loss to those people under whose authority who are living and serving under your authority but for him to bow, to come into this tent was a difficult thing to do could anybody take a shot at that what is there in this blessing, in this requirement, what is the wisdom of God that has not been fulfilled by the Japheth nations

to this day humility humility let's see, humility required of them and until it is obtained they are going to remain obstreperous, conceited arrogant and defiant you know why? because to be enlarged necessarily tends to make you that if you're enlarged, you're successful you have technology, you have science you have culture, you have learning of necessity that is going to be self-exalting you need to be tempered by the one thing that God himself has required and nothing else will suffice how are you to be tempered? you've got to come into the tent of Shem and Shem is not technological I've had a long-standing controversy with technology all my life long, especially as a believer often the sound equipment goes out, the taping equipment goes out, the light side I don't know what it is I

don't have a mechanical bone in my body I'm celebrating I just hung up a towel rack in the bathroom by myself if something goes wrong, I have to call for another brother I just don't have it and I know I don't have it and I contend not to have it see, we need to know how God has defined us and called us and not to exceed or go beyond his limitation or usurp another calling that is not our own one of the great dangers and problems of the church today are men usurping prophetic calling, who were never called maybe they have a gift of gab maybe they have other natural, promising characteristics that people will seize upon, but what a presumption to take to yourself an office or a calling that God himself has not given and maybe one of the problems in the world with the Canaan nations is

their unwillingness to be servants.

You know, when I've seen in Africa African believers who are submitted to God they are usurping people there's something very precious about that servanthood, it's God given in fact, Jesus says later, that it's the servant you want to be a ruler, you want to be a head, be a servant servant is not disgraceful, it's

ultimate honor, it's not cursed so much as a benediction, if it is rightly received and walked in, but what if the servant wants to be like Japheth, what if he has ambition, what if he presumes what if he wants to be as as Shem we have got to recognize God's definition and submit to it as this Russian pastor was unable to do and yet it would have been his making, we must come into the tent of Shem Shem doesn't have it in any impressive way technologically, but he does have it in

a very distinctive way because Paul says if the falling away of them, Paul says if the falling away of them has been the blessing of the Gentiles what shall their return be but life from the dead we Shemites have something for mankind and people have told me again and again that when they hear something coming from a Jewish believer there's a quotient and a dimension that they don't hear from another it's not because we're skilled it's something that God has given from the beginning each great nation group has its distinctive and this is ours what is Israel's present unhappiness it wants to be like all the nations of the world it wants to be the great commercial success of the Middle East it wants to be the Hong Kong of the Middle East and we Jews are good at it but it's not our calling

we're not called to commerce, we're not called to culture we're called to be a blessing to all the peoples of the Earth of a distinctive Semitic spiritual kind and it goes back to the beginning God is already establishing a governmental scheme the bowing down and coming into the tent is to recognize the authority of God that issues from Shem to all nations and where do we see that later on well I've already quoted the law shall go forth out of Zion to all nations and all nations shall turn their swords into plowshares and spears into pruning hooks and shall study war no more something happens to the nations when they subscribe to what issues from Shem because Shem are the guardians of the shalom of God and of the righteousness of God for the nations and so the rule that issues from them

is coming in under the tent, that's good Amos chapter 9 talks about and I will raise up the tabernacle that has fallen down and Eden which is the symbolic people that stand for all Gentiles shall come under that rule so even in Amos chapter 9 and other places in scripture that I can't think we'll see it as we go on this issue of a rule of God issuing out of Shem to all nations was God's intention from the very first and it's expressed here in this terse single statement of Japheth coming or dwelling in, that's the better word, the tent of Shem so God's governmental intention but the word government itself is not used, it's implied is given in this first statement and we'll see that theme developed and extended throughout all the scripture then chapter 10 goes on to show how from these

sons Shem, Ham and Japheth, the children that were born to them after the flood are all of the distinct and particular nations that have issued you can see in verse 3 the descendants of Goma I think Goma is also used with reference to Russia Ashkenaz which is the Hebrew word for German Togoma I think refers to Turkey, there are modern nations that have come out of these ancient names as the ancient names have dissolved the descendants of Javan in verse 4, J-A-V-A-N is the name for present day Greece so these are all of the Japheth nations that have issued from that stem and with their own language it says their families in their nations then it goes on in verse 6 to Ham, Cush which is Ethiopia Egypt, Put maybe Sudan of today, the north of the African nations, the descendants of Cush,

Sheba Havala and so on we know that the queen of Sheba came to see the glory of Solomon's rule Cush became the father of Nimrod in verse 8, he was the first on earth to become a mighty warrior verse 9, he was a mighty hunter before the Lord, therefore it is said like Nimrod, a mighty hunter before the Lord the beginning of his kingdom was Babel Eric and Akkad, all of them in the land of Shinar which would be today's Arabia and from that land he went on to Assyria and built Nineveh so here we have the origins of

the first humanly contrived kingdoms and cities in a man who is named as Nimrod and those who have made a study of this and I haven't the whole of Babylonian rule culture pagan goddesses mythologies all have their origin going back to Nimrod and it says that he was a hunter before

God doesn't mean that he was a hunter who submitted to God before can be understood in another sense that God saw him but does not mean that he approved because already there is a statement in hunting and in warrior a physical and aggressive and violent dimension that we know is not in keeping with God's intent God would be expressed with men like Isaac and Jacob who were dwellers in tents.

It was Esau who was the hunter so right in the beginning we see certain dispositions in these early leaders of races and nations that have come full bore in our own generation something about violence killing, hunting that has been the bane of mankind and so out of Nimrod and his descendants come present day Egypt in verse 13 and in verse 14 the Philistines Canaan became in verse 15 the father of Sidon hath the Jebusites the Amorites, the Gergesites, the Hivites, the Archites all of the Canaanitish civilizations that were in the land when God brought Israel out of Egypt and brought judgment against them through Israel for the cup of their iniquity was full and of course the conflict today is in no small part the continuation of this ancient enmity between the sons of Canaan and the sons of Shem that yet prevails and maybe there is no way to understand the bitterness, the anger the vengeance, the wrath rather the cruelty of the Canaanites today the Philistines or the Palestinians except that it's traced back to this origin and the only answer to that is the redemptive work of God that can change these ancient dispositions and bring them into the nature of God himself but left to themselves in their natural continuation they seem to exhibit the historic propensities that were in their forefathers right to this very day so we have to understand the great conflicts of our present time as being set in those things that go back to the beginning and will not be resolved until there's a submission to and a coming into the very nature of God which can transcend these beginnings so would you say that God's answer would be to dissolve these distinctions and make of us one uniform race of men and that there would not be color, ethnic origin national disposition or genetic differences is that God's answer to the conflicts that have issued out of difference by abolishing difference to abolish difference is what Satan is after to make unisex neither male nor female and rob God of the glory that only resides in the distinctiveness of what is feminine and what is masculine.

I myself cherish these unique differences that God has implanted in creation and the glory will be to him the greater when it all is a testimony to his great sanctifying work where he nullifies the adverse and promotes the things for which these differences were created in the beginning and so that around his throne, what does it say, every tribe every tongue will be rejoicing and blessing the savior of their souls but in their distinctive difference, in the uniqueness of their language and their origin what would be the implication today for the church in its own formation and its own congregations is there a question for the church today is it seeking to encourage the uniqueness of its members and draw forth from them the particular and unique wealth and contribution that each should

give each member how does it say, flowing out given from every joint or shall it have a kind of unity that comes by a uniformity of establishing everything off the production line so that each one is the same, says the same looks the same, acts the same is this an issue for the church is there something going on of which they're not conscious because the temptation for unity and agreement would be to suppress or to dissolve the unique differences of the saints because to tell you this dear saints we're not going to enjoy the differences until we have first suffered them right that's true of our marriages what threatens us in our wives and their particular feminine dispositions are the things that will ultimately bless us if we can bring through the grace of God the transcendent sanctified

and redemptive benefit but if we squelch it because it's threatening we lose the benefit and likewise in the way in which we can be intimidating in our masculinity there's a struggle and a tension in working our way through and the temptation is to take a shortcut to suppress or to seek to eliminate rather than to cultivate and bear the first painful problems that come with the conflicts that must necessarily ensue until you have worked your way through the church is the church and will glorify God in its willingness to bear the pain of differences before they become the blessing and the glory got the idea that's true even in the callings of God prophet and teacher I don't know of two callings more intrinsically opposed by their very nature than the prophet or the teacher the prophet with

his sweeping larger view and that seems to be running carelessly over the particular verses that say this but how about that and the impatience of the prophet with the teacher who's stuck in the particular and doesn't see the larger picture of necessity there's a tension where one wants to reject the other or get him out of his hair so that the teacher can have his way or the prophet his way but what is a church that is totally prophetic without the balance that a teacher brings and what is the church that has only teaching without the infusion of that dimension that can only come prophetically so even in the church and in its offices and its callings we have the uniqueness of the differences of God that must not be subdued or eliminated because they're in first flush threatening we'll

know that we have attained them when we enjoy both the shalom, the peace, the righteousness and the joy of the Holy Ghost but there's no formula of how or when is the balance struck it's something that we have to work out in the particular expression of where we are in the body and our location and time.

Every church has this obligation but what is suffering? It's the cross and so if we are cross avoiding and want only convenience smooth operation a pastor who is a CEO what does that stand for?

Chief operating officer who wants to run a smooth operation and organize it if that's the ultimate value is efficient operation you lose the glory and if you have a congregation of 300, 500 or 1000 how are you even going to meld and bring together these particularities they're lost in the obscurity of the many so probably what we need then are congregations small enough where they are face to face where these things can be both expressed and worked out and we're willing to suffer the pain of those adjustments suffering precedes the glory even for the church as well as for the nations and you know what we're in fact talking about the church is the laboratory or the microcosm of God's intention for the nations we're working on something that has an implication far beyond us for when the

ultimate redemptive thing takes place called the millennium the world has obtained what the church has long before set before it in its own reality what is the church but the compendium of the nations but look at what we have here look at the diversity that we have in this room representative of the nations so the church is the laboratory to work out and to show to the nations God's intention for themselves is that the picture how many of us have considered that that the church is already a school a foreshadowing of God's intention for the nations for it the genius of God is represented in its diversity ok so we can spend much time looking over chapter 10 the Lord gives all of the detailed descendants maybe just before we leave that chapter verse 25 to Aber by the way I believe that Aber

is the root of the word Hebrew was born two sons the name of one was Peleg for in his days the earth was divided and the name Peleg itself means division so we're going to read in chapter 11 raising up of the tower of Babylon to be higher than that of God it must have taken place in Peleg's generation for it's at that time that God divides the nations and gives them their own locations less in their false ecumenical unity

they would threaten even the glory of God as we'll see in chapter 11 so Peleg the name means division associated with the division of nations described in the chapter that we are about to read so in chapter 11 now the whole earth had one language and the same words as they migrated from the east they came upon a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there and they said

to one another come let us make bricks and burn them thoroughly and they had brick for stone and by tomb and what is that? that's asphalt, that's tar for mortar then they said come let us build ourselves a city and the tower with it's top in the heavens and let us make a name for ourselves otherwise we shall be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth isn't it interesting that what they fear most is God's intention that they be scattered or separated over the face of the whole earth but their instinct was unity of a religious and political kind so as to rival God himself we need to study this thing because this is the etymology this is the origin of the rebellion of nations right from the first and so everything is from the first everything that will be characterized and

expressed at the end has had it's origin from the first and if we are to understand what is the nature of the rebellion of nations against God we'll find it here it has not changed the form of it and the expression of it may alter and it may be cloaked or disguised but the the nub of it the enmity and the envy against God and the jealousy to exceed God and to make a name for ourselves is ever and always at the root of national dissent against God we need to see that why must we see that because we are in the nations I'm a Brooklyn boy rooting for the Dodgers and and repenting and collapsing when they lose the World Series because of one wrong pitch that allowed pitched by what was his name and Whitey Lockman hit it over the fence and the Giants won it was a day of mourning for

Brooklynites why? because of our identification with Brooklyn with New York with USA, with Germany, with France we can laugh at it in the form of fanaticism the word root from which the word fan comes that has become an acceptable word but it's totally antithetical to God to become fanatical about such identifications but when it begins with sport it ends with rivalry France and Germany England, Russia all of the elements that went into World War I and if you have never been to Verdun V-E-R-D-U-N in your travels to France I recommend it well that was where the no man's land was the great battlefield between Germany and the Allies where they went back and forth over just an acre of ground that took an entire generation of all these nations.

How many Beethovens and Mozart's and Liszt's and philosophers and great spokesmen for God theologians and pastors were wiped out on that battlefield and in Verdun is the oscieri and the word for bones in Latin where the bones were taken up out of this no man's land and filled a space that would occupy five or six football fields is an entire generation that was spent out on that no man's land going back and forth over an acre of ground it was an unbelievable horror, bloodshed and waste that issues out of national rivalry and identification that must necessarily put you at odds with that other nation who is different from yourself and shares a comparable ambition to excel and to be superior don't think that that has been extinguished because we have paid two world wars World War II took 40 million lives.

World War II if I understand history correctly is nothing one or other than the continuation of World War I and World War I is only the outbreak of those historic racial and ethnic entities that were simmering in the Balkans and in Europe long before so we're talking about a very serious matter national pride now what about the church of the nations what did they do when World War I broke out what did they do when World War II broke out there was hardly a nation that went to war that did not receive the endorsement the blessing and the prayer of its church they were doing God's business, fatherland God and country so that

God becomes equated with country and sanctions approves and blesses the conduct of those nations even when they destroy what is made in God's image where does that leave us where is our citizenship where is our identification and where will we stand when the nations of which we are part will embark on policies that are anti-Christ and anti-God do we give them our sanction our approval, our blessing our cooperation and our participation or do we stand and oppose them there's only one entity in the world that can have any understanding of these things and stand for God as opposed to the satanic play upon the nations that's the church so the conduct of the church is critical in history and I have to say and we'll examine this the church has historically failed to assert a greater loyalty and a greater identification than that which is national in the last analysis it has reflected and gone with its nation and its policy rather than standing for that which is above nation, namely the loyalty to God, what will that cost to oppose the national consensus what would have cost the church in Germany to stand for God as against standing with Hitler and the Nazis it will be costly Germany had and has state church, I know you Americans don't understand this, you think that they have what we have, they don't they have a national church and the pastor, the protestant pastor or the priest, catholic or protestant are the only two valid identifications that the government acknowledges, they also issue birth certificates as they also bury the dead, they are involved in vital functions to which people give their adherence and pay their taxes because the church is functioning in a civil mode, we don't have that here, we don't have a national church, but to be a Pentecostal in Germany or even a Baptist is to be outside of the state church system and you are what they call the free church and you do not receive any of the tax monies that all German citizens pay so that they have a place where their children can be infant baptized, why?

The infant baptism is the obtaining of your birth certificate your identification and a place to be buried and otherwise they do not cross the portals of those churches, they are empty on Sunday, but they serve a civil function so the state church system goes all the way back to Rome and Luther continued in that and so wherever you were born in Germany, you became a protestant or a catholic by virtue of the church system that prevailed in your locality, this is totally outside of our American experience but we need to understand and so which way will they go?

They will go whichever way the nation goes because the nation butters its bread when a German pastor retires he gets 90% of his paid salary in his retirement or a theologian where do you study theology in Germany? In the state universities not in separate institutions as we have them like Fuller or Dallas Theological Seminary in Germany the seminaries are part of the university structure and you cannot get your diploma and you cannot get your minister's credential unless you have gone through that system so you see the way in which the nations have interfused the issue of church and therefore they don't have an entity that can be independent of it and speak contrary to it or even direct it in the godly way without cost when the Hitler time came two churches arose one was the national church that had Hitler's portrait on its platform and the swastika and the confessing church which are those who held to the credo of the faith Bonhoeffer, Karl Barth and many of its pastors and leaders found themselves in concentration camps accused of disloyalty to the state God has established the nations but the state is an indication of a political supremacy of an entity beyond God's intention where the powers of the air are operative that men should not just respect the institution of government as structure but of the state as idolatry and if you do not bow to the state you are disloyal and you could suffer the consequence I'm just reading in some material that came to me the first thing that Hitler did as chancellor of Germany was to wipe out overnight all political opposition he just sent his goons in and men were killed in their beds, knifed, hacked to death done in and he was celebrated as having saved the state and he made a justification for himself that he as the anointed and given Fuhrer has saved Germany from subversive influences that would have threatened

the state and for the state's sake it was not necessary to bring these men to trial or to give them court hearings or go through all of the jurisprudence necessary that civilized nations have always observed but for the state's sake he had to act with the expediency of eliminating these subversive threats.

That's how the Nazi system was born and established in Germany and it is also a preview for us in the way in which anti-Christ will act through nations emphasizing the role of state in the last days and what will our response be as the church is the critical issue that needs to be considered for which reason the Lord is giving us this kind of instruction.

You guys need a break?

The questions have come up in the break time that I think are well worth investigating so feel free to bring up those things that will enrich us one of them talking about the role of the church in nations how vital that is and how the churches have historically failed in being the presence of God in the nation and bringing to the nation, secular nations some understanding of the divine perspective maybe the most powerful issue today in that regard is the issue of the church in Israel what ought to be the function of the church today in Israel, the believing presence, the messianic believers and are they functioning in that and what would it mean if they did huh? from anything that I have been able to observe it seems that the messianic believers give a blanket endorsement to the state

that the state is of God and that God's purposes are being worked out through it and that they have to show an identification of loyalty and support that's not an unbecoming thing we're exhorted by Paul in Romans 13 to give respect and loyalty to the governments which we find ourselves so what would you say about the issue of the church in Israel now what posture ought it to be taking is it taking it or is it defaulting and merely not only reflecting but what's the word supporting and condoning national policies that ought to be brought to question we're going to see soon when we look at the history of the church in Japan in the 1930s and 40s the church is western in its origin living in Asia and very self-conscious that they shouldn't represent a mentality and a mindset that is non-Asian

or non-Japanese for those of us who are old enough and go back to our own country in the 1950s to be considered un-American because you were a pink or leftist or Marxist was a grounds not only for being ostracized out of the movie industry or other professions but for a prison sentence un-American what does it mean to be un-Japanese what does it mean to be un-Israeli does the church have an obligation to correspond to the nation which it finds itself or the way in which Peter describes the church itself as a royal nation that we ourselves are an identity within nations so it's a real critical thing you can see that this necessarily brings up the whole issue of God, of authority of the Bible what is the basis for a church taking an issue that would put it in conflict with its own nation

that it takes its inspiration of authority from the scriptures well, what about the Koran? what about the Bhagavad Gita? how about other holy books and other literature? what makes your Bible superior? so it thrusts the church into a difficult situation of having to quote and cite its absolute origin that it represents the God who is God that the Bible is a definitive statement of God and that therefore they are even enjoined in their responsibility to God who is God, to speak into the nation on the issues of righteousness the last thing the thing to be most dreaded in modern times is to be called dogmatic what's the word? other words like that prejudice authoritarian we're supposed to be liberal and sanctioning all cultures and points of view, this is the pluralistic society, many pass

to truth but to stand on an absolute ground an apostolic ground of the word of God puts us in enormous conflict with the nation, with the world itself and one that will bring upon our heads a severe retribution or even within the church the church itself will be offended by this absolutist claim maybe we talked about irony and paradox in our prayer time, the tensions that we, here's a tension to be absolute in our conviction because God is one and his word is one while at the same time having a spirit of humility and contrition that can present the absolute perspectives of God without the arrogance of man by which it would be rejected, it would be considered arrogant even when it is in humility, how much more if we in fact are arrogant we have the truth, we are in that remarkable tension,

good question is how did Paul express that at Athens in Acts 17, he spoke absolutely, God has appointed a day in which he will judge the world by that one whom he has raised from the dead, there was no equivocation no compromise in his statement at all speaking to Greeks who had no biblical background and yet was it spoken with an arrogance that would have repelled them or did it come in an apostolic meekness and humility as the truth must so where is a church like that maybe this is the real question where is the church that can stand for God in his absoluteness and also reflect him in his character and where is such a church formed within the congregations of the saints where these issues of character and life are worked out face to face and where apostolic men of authority can be sent

to address the nations when God sends them seeing that they have come to a place of separation even from arrogance even from egotism that they can come in the character of God because he says if they receive you they receive me well as I often read the Psalms that are so clear a statement of God if only Israel would turn to me if only they would look to me, if only they would call upon me I think to myself why isn't the church in Israel calling these verses to the attention of that nation whose heritage it is but you never once hear of a messianic congregation doing that that would be considered I don't know what, either arrogant or they do not themselves believe that the nation can be helped if it would turn to God in that way I don't know it's kind of an irony that if you're standing

for God in the best interest of the nation, you will be looked upon as opposing the interest of that nation its best interest spiritually speaking may not coincide with its policies so you'll be seen as opposing the nation but though your heart is for it and you're really giving it the thing that it needs I'm already being called a Christian antisemite by Jewish believers because of our perspective another thing is to distinguish between nation and state state is a political apparatus and its state that has come in the 20th century to become an object of worship as we will learn about the principalities and the powers of the air they find their place of operation within the structures of an organizational kind raised by men in institutions that's the state and they use that to bring the

loyalties of men to themselves even their devotion and worship but is there something to be distinguished between state and nation God says in Jeremiah about Israel that the nation will never pass from before me and one of the places in the prophets the enemies of Israel say let us extinguish them as a nation to extinguish them as a nation is to rob God of his whole apparatus for the redemption of the world they must continue as a nation but does that mean that the present state is the same as the nation is there a way in which we can be identified that the purpose of the God for the nation but be critical and opposed to unrighteous policies of the state was that the fault of the church in Germany that they did not make this distinction and that therefore they thought that subservience to

the state was loyalty to the nation that was required of them according to Romans 13 from Paul and therefore they gave a blind obedience to a nation that exterminated its own Jewish population and is that

nation confined to the present state of Israel or is it the statement of a world Jewry, we're not even conscious of this identity, are seen by God as being part of the nation and that the full restoration of the nation is yet future and is not to be confused with the present existence of the state which could only be a median toward that end so these are remarkably rich and complex questions and we will be discussing them this is only the beginning to get you stirred up on these distinctions so what is the church where does the church owe its first and ultimate loyalty to the state or

the nation in which it is residing or of course to the Lord of all nations and how will that be construed by the nation if not a threat and we're going to see that the persecution of the church has historically been on this issue and so the fear of persecution of the church in Japan led to its compromise and its compromise led to its lack of authority at a time when it could have been an instrument toward the promotion of the faith in Japan the fear of persecution so maybe we just need to understand that we are in a what's the word unhappy predicament of a higher loyalty that must necessarily and invariably put us in opposition to lesser authorities and that we have to be willing to pay the price of that maybe the willingness to pay that price is the greatest demonstration and the witness

of the greater loyalty to the one God and the failure is to condemn us as merely being another faith posture and another cultural religious expression no more and no distinctive than any other I talked about the persecution that the church must necessarily face and has, Jesus himself being the exemplar persecution unto death and I'm reminded of the statement that's made in John chapter 11 after the resurrection of Lazarus when the high priest said you know nothing at all nor consider that it is expedient for us, the same language that we're going to see in Genesis 11 let us make a name for ourselves, it is expedient for us, the same issue 4,000 or 6,000 years later the timing is the justification for his death that one man should die for the people and that the whole nation perish not and

this spoke he not of himself of being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation, but here's the issue of nation that is the trigger to his very death being seen as a threat to the nation and the sign of course over him on the cross Jesus of Nazareth, king of the Jews the issue of king is the issue of rule of nation so let's look at chapter 11 at the first expression of these rudiments these, what's the word intruders

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