

What Ought We to Be About in God in the Last Days?

by Art Katz

The sermon emphasizes the importance of the prophetic word in the Last Days, highlighting Israel's final redemption and the Church's role in restoration, requiring a self-sacrificing remnant to live a cruciform lifestyle.

Scripture: Genesis 12:3, Isaiah 2:3, Isaiah 35:10, Jeremiah 31:7, Ezekiel 36:37, Micah 4:2, Acts 3:21, Romans 11:15, Ephesians 3:10, Revelation 2:26

Topics: "Last Days", "Church and Israel"

Description

Art Katz emphasizes the necessity of adhering to the prophetic word in the Last Days, focusing on Israel's ultimate redemption through a Church that embodies resurrection power and self-sacrifice. He warns that the Church must prepare for its role in Israel's restoration, which is intertwined with the Lord's return as Deliverer and King. Katz highlights the importance of a remnant Church that resists apostasy and false teachings, while being a beacon of hope for the Jewish people during tribulation. The message calls for a cruciform lifestyle and a commitment to living out the truth of God's word, as the Church faces opposition from dark forces. Ultimately, the Church's character and unity will reflect the validity of its message in these critical times.

Transcript

There must be a cleaving to the prophetic word appropriate to the Last Days' purposes of God. At its heart is Israel's final redemption as obtained through a Church, alerted and prepared through such a word, for its own self-transfiguring and essential part in that restoration. This mandate, until now largely unseen, neglected or rejected, can be fulfilled only in the character and authority of true "sons" predicated, as they must be, upon the power of the resurrection life.

The message of death to the self life must, of necessity, likewise itself go forth exclusively on these same terms; i.e. in persuasive resurrection power and truth, or the whole endeavor is contradicted and vain. What is ultimately at stake in all this, and powerfully resisted, is the Lord's appearing as Deliverer and King. His Coming is inextricably joined to Israel's restoration, obtained after a yet future but final time of tribulation and dispersal through the nations (Acts 3:21; Isaiah 35; Jeremiah 30 and 31; Ezekiel 35, 36 and 37).

This final, global sifting succeeds only as the demonstration of the mercy of God expressed through that of a self-sacrificing Church, extending itself to the Jew, at its peril, not regarding its own life as dear unto itself. The Lord's return brings in His millennial theocratic rule constituting the final defeat, through such a remnant Church, of the ages-long usurping principalities and powers bent furiously, at the end, upon Israel's annihilation. In so doing, the overcoming Church brings to completion the eternal purpose of God for itself (Ephesians 3:10), and is fitted now for its own part in His millennial rule and reign (Revelation 2:26; 3:21).

It is in this requirement of being Israel's "saviors" (Ezekiel 20:33f; Rev. 12:14; Matt. 25:35f), and in opposition to the final fury of Anti-Christ persecution, that an apostasy-avoiding remnant Church is brought at last to full apostolic and prophetic stature out of its till-then, characteristic shallowness and self-centeredness. A message of this kind, powerfully resisted and contested, must be brought against the opposition also of competing false apostolic and prophetic presumers promoting an alternative ecumenical "unity."

These will likely be disposed to verbally "slay us" assuredly thinking they are doing God a service! This global process of sifting, both of Israel and the Church, takes place principally in "the wilderness of the nations" (Ezekiel 20:35; Hosea 2:14; Amos 9:9). There, in the out-of-the-way, less frequented places, a people prepared by God, both spiritually and perhaps practically in life-sustaining, food-productive communities, are fitted for the sudden onrush and intrusion of a people in flight in their desperate and unkempt condition.

There, through such a prepared people, is revealed the "face of God" to that remnant of Jews who survive the worldwide process of attrition. These return to Zion as the "redeemed of the Lord" to everlasting joy where "mourning and sighing will flee away" (Isaiah 35:10). In this manner, the Lord is released from a long, self-imposed confinement to be King over them (Acts 3:21) and hence all nations. The restored remnant, constituting then the redeemed, saved nation, Israel, fulfill their irrevocable gift and calling (Romans 11:15, 29) to "bless all the families of the earth" (Genesis 12) as a "nation of priests and a light unto the world"!

The Lord's sanctuary established in the midst of a people now made holy permits the "law to go forth out of Zion and the word of the Lord out of [the rebuilt ruins of] Jerusalem" bringing millennial peace and blessedness to all the nations of the earth (Isaiah 2; Micah 4). We need to proclaim this message to a yet unsuspecting Church in the nations whose affinity for Israel and the Jew is at best fitful and unformed; to call the Church to the requirements of a true apostolicity as being definite and normative, in a word, to a cruciform lifestyle borne out of jealousy for the glory of God (Ephesians 3:21; Romans 11:33-36) and their own eternal reward as participants in the rule and reign of the Kingdom proportionate to every suffering.

The purity, truth and power of that word will be entirely reflective of the degree that we ourselves are living consistently in the reality to which we, through our message, are inviting others. The premium will be upon the validity of our own personal and corporate character as it is daily tempered in the earnestness of "life together" by which also we have radically separated ourselves from anti-Christ dependencies to a life of faith and trust in the provision of God for ourselves.

The message is validated and made urgent and penetrating to the degree that it is wrought out in our own life and experience. Needless to say, we will be bitterly hated and opposed by the powers of darkness. Oppressing and depressing mind battles, demonically twisted communications and the compelling

allegations of the "accuser of the brethren" will be the frequent experience of us all. Our prayer times together, the necessity to "speak the truth in love" and "endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," are, for us, an urgent, daily requirement in which we, like all of us, too often fail.

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