

Communism, Islam, Sept 11, Sovereignty of God - Part1

by Josef Tson

God is in control of everything and is using events to prepare the way for the gospel in the Muslim world.

Duration: 48:25

Scripture: Psalm 46:10, Matthew 5:10, Matthew 10:28, Acts 5:41, Romans 8:28, Philippians 1:21, 1 Peter 4:12-13

Topics: "Sovereignty Of God", "Missionary Work"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker begins by acknowledging the important role of missionaries and their desire to share their stories and literature at mission conferences. He then shares a personal experience of being arrested and interrogated by six officers. Despite the intimidating situation, the speaker maintains a strong belief in the sovereignty of God and sees the officers as mere instruments in God's plan. He encourages the audience to support missionaries by visiting their tables, engaging in conversation, and showing interest in their stories. The speaker also mentions the importance of gratitude, even in difficult circumstances, and provides a pamphlet explaining why he thanked a general for beating him.

Transcript

Thank you for this very warm welcome. I don't want to extend this plunge directly into the most important job, and that is representing all the missionaries here. You always give them three minutes, so I have to speak a little bit more about every one of them.

Missionaries work in foreign lands. They are lonely there. And there in the mission field all the missionaries have a dream.

Their dream is that they come on furlough, they come to a mission conference, and at the mission conference they spread their table with their literature, with their stories. And their dream is that at the end of the service you rush all of you to their table, and pick up the literature, and go home and forget the football match, and read their literature. But when the church service is over, everybody goes straight out and they stand behind their table alone.

Much more alone than in a foreign country. Because they see that you don't care. Will you please make the missionaries not suffer loneliness this weekend? Go to their tables.

Come to my table. I have these three brochures telling you the story. I also have this pamphlet on martyrdom.

I have the brochure with our mission. Have you ever thought that somebody who got a great beating from a general, then say to the general, thank you for the beating? I explain in this pamphlet why I thank that general for that beating. And we have my book there.

Talk with the missionaries this week, this weekend. Ask them questions. Stir them to tell you their story.

That's why they are here. Let them share with you. And show interest.

Get on their mailing list. So that you receive their mail, their newsletter. Read it to your children and pray with your children for the missionaries.

This is why we are here, to establish fellowship. We go in those lonely places knowing that you are behind us. Knowing about us, praying for us, writing to us.

That is partnership in missions. So, I know that always after this talk, missionaries come to me and say, thank you. You really represented us there.

And now after I did this, I am free to talk, to give you the message. It's a rather strange title if you look into the bulletin. Sovereignty of God, Communism, Islam and September 11th.

What do they have in common? And why talk on this on mission week and mission conference? You will see immediately the links. And the fantastic perspective you will go home with tonight. Sovereignty of God for me means that God is in control.

Everything happens because He wants them to happen. Permits them to happen. But He knows why He allows them to happen.

He has clear purposes in that. One day I was arrested. I was taken to the secret police.

It was the day when they charged me with propaganda which endangers the security of the state. Crime punishable up to 15 years in prison. I went into that room.

There were six officers behind that table covered with red cloth, communist color. I was asked to sit at the small table in front of them. A colonel, there were six ferocious men, angry, dark faced.

Colonel read the indictment and then he started to speak. Told me how grave my situation was. When I had the chance to speak I said, Sir, let me explain to you how I see what's going on here.

What's going on here is not between you and me. What's going on here is between my God and myself. My God has some business with me here.

I don't know what. But certainly He has some business with me here. Maybe He wants to teach me a few lessons here.

I only know, Sir, that you will do to me only what my God plans you to do. And you will not go one inch beyond that. Because you are only my father's instruments.

He didn't like that. But how I loved it, because that moment I didn't see six ferocious men there, threatening. I saw above them my beloved father pulling six strings.

You know the marionettes? Those six and my father pulling six strings, that's how I saw them. Now when you see them like that, you are not scared anymore. They are your father's instruments.

Imagine right now the people who make your life miserable. Maybe they are part of your family. Maybe neighbours, maybe who knows.

But don't look at them as people who make your life miserable. Look at them from now on as your father's puppets for you. Marionettes.

His instruments. When you look at the world like that, you can live in the world unafraid of the world. Because you know that your father is in command.

You know I studied in England in 69, 72. And then I was one of the most stupid people in the world from the world's point of view. I went back to the communist country of Romania.

Everybody said, that's stupid. You got free and then you go back to the prison. You know why I was able to go? First of all because my lord said, you go there.

I want you back to your people. But then I understood him as being sovereign. I also understood another thing which I developed in all my talks.

I understood the value of martyrdom. Value of dying for the gospel. I knew that if I went back home and preached there and died, that would not be a tragedy.

That will be part of the job. That will be part of the victory. And when you understand the value of dying for the gospel, and you see it as a glorious thing, why afraid? They may kill you.

So what? That's no danger. That's honor. Now, communism.

You know what communism is? Anybody told you what communism was? Let me give you the simplest definition of communism you could ever have. Communism is the idea that if the government nationalizes all property, farms, factories, banks, everything becomes state property. And everybody is the employee of the state.

And the government runs all the economy. You create equality and heaven on earth. That was the promise of communism.

Well, the big problem is that the government is not a good administrator. As soon as something gets in the hands of the government, it gets rotten. Try it.

Everything that the government touches goes wrong. Now, we found that after 50 years of experimentation. Anyhow, because the government nationalizes everything, then they have to control everybody.

They have to watch everybody. And so you have secret police watching everybody. Then nobody wants to work.

We have the saying that they simulate that they pay us and we simulate that we work. And the system is totalitarian. That means total control on everybody.

The system of anti-God and anti-America. You know why? Because they promised heaven on earth. They promised plenty and they could not produce it.

And they knew that America had the plenty. And America was all the time the rebuke on them. So they wanted to destroy America.

And Khrushchev was here. This was the Moscow chief in 1961, I think. He told America in New York at the United Nations, we are going to bury you, America.

And there were 6000 rockets with nuclear warheads on them, programmed for the American cities. And this was the nightmare of America. And America concentrated all its power somehow to make communism collapse.

Good old President Reagan, who understood this better than anybody. He also understood what was its nature when he called it the evil empire. Now, it was in 1977 that I had this understanding that communism will collapse all of a sudden.

I started to tell my friends, don't fight communism. It's finished. It will collapse all of a sudden.

Now, if you think that I made the story after the event, just one thing. Well, I have tapes from churches in the 80s. I came to the churches and I told them, communism will collapse all of a sudden.

And everybody looked at me. But there's a magazine called Books and Culture. And there's an article there in 1999.

Mark Knoll, the historian, tells the story how in the 80s, all the experts were saying that communism will conquer the entire world. And there came to Wheaton, Illinois, this Romanian, who told them communism will collapse all of a sudden. And Mark Knoll said that he looked to me and said, who is this man who dares contradict all the experts? So you have at least one historian who records this strange thing.

You heard of Radio Free Europe? Radio Free Europe was the American radio for Eastern Europe, for the communist world. Everybody in the communist world had shortwave radio. Listening every night to Radio Free Europe or to Radio Liberty, as it was called in the Soviet Union, the American radio for Eastern Europe.

And in the 80s, as soon as I came out in exile, Radio Free Europe, who knew about my problems there because of my arrest, asked me to be a speaker on Radio Free Europe and have a program 50 minutes every Sunday to preach the gospel to Romania. You know, for eight years, I preached the gospel to Romania every Sunday, being listened to by the entire country with the American taxpayer money. You don't know what the American taxpayer money can do.

And I was telling my people that communism was going to collapse. And there was a dear brother who came from Romania and said, Joseph, please, everything you preach on that radio is fantastic. Everybody listens to you.

But Joseph, stop saying that communism will collapse. Because it's impossible, it's too strong. And you only make laughing stock of yourself because it will never happen.

And I smiled and I said, look, brother, your problem is that you only see the strength of the enemy. I see above the enemy my father. And one day my father will make a sign with a hand like that.

And communism will collapse. And in 1989, my father made that sign. And you, all of you who are old enough to remember, look glued to the TV to see how country after country in Eastern Europe threw out communism.

So simple. Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Poland, Hungary, and then in a bloody revolt, the Romanians. And then Soviet Union.

What happened? And, well, speaking humanly, there were two things. First of all, there was the promise of heaven on earth. It turned out that communism created hell on earth.

Totalitarianism, police state, and economic ruin, and poverty. People are not stupid. But second, America built Radio Free Europe in Munich, Germany, beaming to all these countries and telling us the truth.

Telling us what is the free world and what is the slavery of communism. And they were mainly people from the communist world who managed to run out and who became speakers on radio and spoke back to their own people. It was that radio that opened our minds to not believe the communists anymore and to know where the truth was.

And eventually, all these nations woke up and threw communism out. Now, let me... I cannot bear if I take two or three more minutes, but you don't know where communism died. Do you? You don't.

And you don't believe. You know, we were always told that when our leaders come out, they take them to fake things. They are not shown the true reality because it's famine in America.

Now, you don't believe, but that's what we were told. It's famine in America, but the Americans don't show them that. They take them to sort of staged food stores to show them the riches there, but they are not true.

President... what was he? He was General Secretary of the Communist Party, Yeltsin. He took the power in 1989 in Kremlin. He still believed, he'd never been in America, he still believed that here they will show him only the staged things, the fake.

So, he visited Washington, he visited New York, and then he went to Dallas, Texas for some meetings, and then in a few hours they left free for him. And without the American escort, they went to a Safeway food store to see a real thing. And now you had to go to a food store in Moscow to see how empty and ugly and dirty it used to be.

Unbelievable poverty. Even at the food store where the Communist Party bosses made their shopping was poor. And compare with that, Safeway food store was unbelievable.

They started to count how many kinds of carrots, how many kinds of cabbage, how many kinds of tomatoes, and so on, and all clean. In our shop nobody cared to wash them, so you had to buy them as they were, with mud on them. And the meat, how many kinds of meat, all cut nicely.

In our meat shops they had the entire animal, and they were just cutting pieces as it came, and sell them to you. Well, they could not believe. And they are so common people, with cars full of things, so it was obvious that these people could afford them.

I tell you, it's mind-boggling when you see the truth. Yeltsin went to the plane. He went back to Moscow.

In the plane he didn't speak with anybody. He sat on his chair, his seat, put his head between his fists, and sat like that for a long time. A journalist overheard him saying, groaning, what did they do to my people? And there and then he decided, when he arrives home, he completely demolishes communism, and he goes to private economy.

So you don't know that communism died in a Safeway food store in Dallas-Davis, because that's where the truth came to Yeltsin. Now, let me just give you another important item. As I was there in the communist world, strongly believing in the sovereignty of God, I said, Lord, why do you allow communism? I know it will collapse, but why do you allow it to be? By that time, here is what I saw.

Fifty years of communism, atheist propaganda, created a hunger for the truth as nowhere else in the world. A hunger for the gospel. Now, communist empire was, from Czechoslovakia to the other side of Soviet Union, 13 time zones.

That was evil empire. 13 time zones, continuous land. All of a sudden, when it collapsed, the Lord told me beforehand, don't you see, I prepare the mines for the gospel.

When communism will collapse, this will be a vacuum. This will be the most prepared piece of land on this planet for the gospel. And you know, when communism collapsed, the Russians who said, we are going to bury you, started to cry to America, send us your missionaries.

And I tell you, even after 15 years now, there is no other place so hungry for the gospel than the former communist world. Do you know what God did? Overnight in 1989, the evil empire became the greatest mission field of the world. Just like that, overnight.

The evil empire became the mission field. But it was God, through communism, preparing that hunger, so that all that vast area become open to the gospel. And we just looked to that evil empire and we didn't know what God was up to.

You see how our sovereign God looks? So communism collapsed at the end of the 20th century. God finished with that evil empire. Now, you know, I love to know the mind of my father.

I love it. I want to watch him, what he is doing. And now, let me tell you, my father had a problem.

His problem was the Muslim world. Muslim world, from Mauritania and Morocco, North Africa, to the other side in Indonesia, it's about 16 time zones. One billion, two hundred million people.

Totalitarian countries. Total control, like in communism. Promising heaven on earth, if they apply it totally.

And anti-American. Now, God's problem wasn't so much the fact that all these countries are closed for the gospel. No, my father's problem was America.

Because America was afraid to go there. Well, a few missionaries were courageous to go, but not many. And America, as a country, as a people, couldn't care less about the Muslim world.

As long as they give us their oil. We are not concerned that they are dictatorial, that they are totalitarian. Let them give us their oil, and we close our eyes to what's going on there.

My father said, now I finished with communism. Now I have only one piece of land on the planet which is totally closed to the gospel. Now the communist world has become a mission field.

How to do it in the Muslim world? How to stir America so mad that America will think day and night only Islam. That was my father's problem. And it was so simple.

He smiled and said, oh, it's so simple. And he invented, this is the word I use, but he raised Ayatollah Khomeini. If you don't know, Ayatollah Khomeini was an Iranian mullah, or whatever grade he had, who was in exile in France.

In 79 he staged the coup in Iran, threw the Shah out, and he became the ruler of Iran. Every Friday he would preach in the big mosque in Tehran. We apply Islam totally.

We are going to create heaven on earth. But, brethren, the problem is America. America poisons our youth.

We must kill America. America is the great Satan. We must kill Satan.

Every Friday all across the 80s. Now, I wonder how many Americans heard about those sermons. Even if they heard, they just laughed.

Kill America. It's so naive, so stupid. Who can kill America? But God raised the second man, a young man who said, oh, the job is to kill America.

Well, I'll do it. I'll build an army of suicidal people. And with that army, from all the Muslim countries, I'll kill America.

His name was Osama Bin Laden. September 11 is the beginning of the war to kill the great Satan. The great action to kill America.

And all of a sudden America woke up. What is this? The entire Muslim world is boiling with this suicidal army. And they are serious, dead serious.

Now, if we don't open their minds, they kill us. We either conquer their minds, or we perish physically. And all of a sudden, all the might of America is directed towards the Muslim world.

Now, President Reagan understood. President Bush, sorry. Bless him.

He understood. We have to create a demonstration. If we don't show that the democracy is better than dictatorial regimes, they will never open their minds.

You know why they oppose so much the elections in Iraq? If democracy is built in Iraq as in Afghanistan, the minds of all the peoples in the Muslim world will get open and say that's better than dictatorial regimes. So, stop that. But let me tell you something else.

You didn't hear this news. Who cares about this? I'm still working with Radio Free Europe and Voice of America and from time to time give them interviews. The American government decided two years ago they will close Voice of America and Radio Free Europe for Eastern Europe and all the broadcasting might of America will be directed towards the Muslim world.

Who knows how costly the investment is, but you don't know. Every language in the Muslim world has to have radio, maybe TV, to open their minds, to get the truth. Because this is a battle for the minds.

But brethren, there is a third thing. Who in the Christian world of America ever bothered to understand Islam? Now, all of a sudden, almost all the best American preachers publish books about Islam. And good books telling you what Islam is, why it is false and how to approach the Muslim people.

And it's only beginning, it's only four years, not yet four years old. So writing books takes some time, but it's already there. Everybody's concentrating on the Muslim world.

And my father looks down and he smiles and says, you know, it took me two men, Ayatollah Khomeini and Osama Bin Laden to do it. And all of a sudden, all America thinks Islam, sleeps with Islam, wakes with Islam. It may be a long thing, maybe 50 years as it was with communism.

But God will not let you rest because of the suicidal army. God will not let America rest until we conquer the Muslim world. Now you see how simple it was for God to turn you around and direct all your energies to the Muslim world? It's God's doing.

And if you look like this, you always say, wow, my God. My sovereign ruler, how wonderfully you work. Now I'll continue the service tomorrow morning and then Sunday morning.

Let me add just one very important item for tonight. Islam was created by just one man, Muhammad, about 622, I think, when he launched the new religion. It's a combination of Arab idolatry plus Old Testament and plus New Testament.

It's very strange. Muhammad just brought things together, made all the prophets of the Old Testament and Jesus be just prophets, and then he is the ultimate, the greatest prophet. And so it's a mixture there.

He sort of knew Christianity from hearing. By that time, a lot of Christianity was no more Christianity. There was a lot of superstitions and other things.

But one thing that Muhammad understood was the force of martyrdom. Because martyrdom was what made Christianity conquer the Roman Empire. It was that strange thing that Christians were being taken to the arena to be thrown to the lions, and they were singing songs of joy, we are going to be thrown to the lions.

How glorious. And people, Romans, just looked at all other nations and said, what is that? Humans don't go to die singing with joy. What do these people have when we don't? And people would find Christ.

It was martyrdom with joy that made Roman Empire collapse and Christianity triumph. So Muhammad took it and perverted it just like the other things from the Old Testament and from the New Testament. And here is what he made of it.

First of all, he told his followers, we have to conquer all the world by the sword and impose Islam by the sword. If you conquer countries who don't accept Islam, you just make them slaves. And make their lives so difficult until eventually they accept Islam.

And that was their policy all these centuries. Violence, hate, and everything by force, and add on top of that what he told his armies. If you die in the battle for Islam, you are a martyr and you go to heaven and you have the greatest happiness possible for humans in heaven.

Because you are a martyr. And so you have these people in Islam who are not afraid to die. What is the true martyrdom? True martyrdom starts with the fact that you are equipped with the truth.

And you love to tell the truth to the people in darkness. Second, you love those people. And you love even the ones who jump on you to kill you because you disturb them with the truth.

You go with the truth in total love, ready to be self-sacrificed. Knowing that when they kill you, your truth shines the best. That's why I told that man who threatened to kill me at the secret police in Romania.

Don't you understand? Your supreme weapon is killing. My supreme weapon is dying. Here is how it happens, sir.

You know that my tapes are all over the country. My sermons have spread like fire. Now, when you shoot me, I practically sprinkle those sermons with my blood.

Everybody will know that I died for my preaching. Everybody will pick up those tapes and say, I better listen because that man was real. He paid with his life for what he preached.

Sir, my sermons will speak ten times louder because you killed me. In fact, I will conquer this land for God because you killed me. Go on and do it.

He sent me home. And then a colonel told another pastor, we know that Mr. Cohn would love to be a martyr, but we are not that big fools to fulfill his plan. That's why they didn't kill me.

Because they realized it didn't play for them. Eventually, they just threw me out of the country. Now, mind you, see, I lectured to a group of missionaries once, telling them that you are chosen by God to be a martyr.

If he refuses martyrdom to you, you are not allowed to provoke it. You are disqualified if you provoke it. That's the rule.

But if God chooses you to be a martyr, that means he gives you the greatest honor and the greatest crown. And when I finished, a man my age came to me and said, Joseph, I was a missionary in China in 1949 when Mao Zedong came. All my colleagues were killed.

I don't know why they threw me out. And Ceausescu threw you out. Joseph, we too were rejected for martyrdom by our Lord.

And we both started to cry. And we embraced each other. People looked at us and didn't know what was going on.

The people who felt rejected for martyrdom said, well, I cannot tell the entire story, but I am involved now deeply in spreading Christian teaching in a lot of Muslim countries. And if we are discovered in what we do, they will just slit our throats. So I still have the chance to be a martyr.

So who knows if the Lord will give me that honor or not. But I am not afraid. When another officer threatened to shoot me, he said, sir, don't you understand when you shoot me, you send me to glory? I am not scared of that.

And he looked at me and said, you are mad. You are not normal. When I say to somebody I shoot you, at least they jump for a moment.

But you smile to your ears. You are not normal. Of course I am not normal.

I am above normal. Why be afraid of being sent to glory? And you know, there is no more dangerous people on this planet than the people who are not afraid of dying. Because you cannot do anything to them.

That's real freedom. And that was the freedom in Christ that I had there. So let's stop here tonight because it's 9 o'clock and we have to go home.

Last century was the century of communism. God transformed the communist empire in a mission field. Huge mission field.

Now God has turned towards Islam. And he forced you all to come with us there and think how to conquer all the peoples of Islam for Christ. Otherwise they kill us.

It's God who is doing all these things. We are in a mission conference. And one of the purposes we are here is to understand what God is doing in the world.

And to say, Lord, I want to be a part of that. What can be my part in what you are doing in the world? And just look at that. Ask the missionaries.

What can I do? I want to be sold to this purpose. I want to live for what God is doing. And if you come with us, we succeeded in the mission field because we are here in the recruiting business.

We want that army of lambs who go to conquer the beasts. But more about that tomorrow. Will you bow your heads right now with me? Oh Lord, our Father, what a glorious thing it is to know that you are sovereign.

That you are in command. That you raise empires and you make them collapse. And we have seen this with our own eyes.

And we can say what a great God we have. And we see what you are doing now as you force us to go to the Muslim peoples and conquer them for you with the gospel. Thank you Lord for showing me.

And thank you for showing me what I can do now for the Muslim world as one who did so much for the communist world. Thank you for doing everything through me. And thank you for the fact that I can say totally and absolutely nothing was done by me but by Christ who works through me.

Here we are Lord, all of us. Take us. Show us what you want to work through us.

Thank you for receiving us. Thank you for using us. For your glory.

Amen.

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