

# Communism, Islam, Sept 11, Sovereignty of God - Part2

by Josef Tson

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*God conquers evil by coming with the truth, spoken in unspeakable love, and accepting to die for the hateful people.*

**Duration:** 42:25

**Scripture:** Job 1:20

**Topics:** "Persecution", "Martyrdom"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher shares a personal experience of being falsely accused and interrogated. After six months, the charges were dropped, and the man who had interrogated him expressed his admiration and said he would miss him. The preacher uses this experience to talk about the aggression of love and how Christians should respond to persecution. He then discusses the topic of suffering, martyrdom, and rewards in heaven, emphasizing that martyrdom is the triumph of truth and the defeat of Satan. The preacher also references Revelation 11:9-11, where it is said that whenever a martyr dies, Satan falls down from heaven.

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## Transcript

So, the large picture. God in command, raising empires and taking them down. And God having such strange ways to stir America and to think only about Islam.

Took just two men, Hayatullah Khomeini and Osama Bin Laden to do all that job. Things are so simple for God. Now, we are looking to this new huge empire.

Muslim empire. Think of it as one empire. And we have to conquer that empire.

How? So, we'll talk about the how this morning. Let's go back to the evil empire. Hitler.

1985, I think it was, when President Reagan called it the evil empire. It started in 1917 in Russia. Lenin and then Stalin created the evil empire.

Parallel to it, Hitler started his empire. Another absolutely, totally evil empire. But you have to compare Hitler killed 6 million people.

In Stalin's labor camps perished at least 60 million people. The scale of the evil is just mind-boggling. Now, there is this new evil empire.

The Muslim world. Where do they come from? Who is their author? You shouldn't be surprised that Jesus calls Satan the ruler of this world. The world without God.

But he also calls him the evil one. So, the evil one and then the evil empire. The author of the evil is Satan.

And, of course, his product is the evil empires. Now, evil was proliferating on the planet. And, up there in heaven, the spiritual beings were questioning the Almighty.

Don't you see the entire planet full of evil? And you know, evil in the Bible is always portrayed as beasts. Almighty, Your Majesty, Your Holiness, what do you do about it? Wait, I have a plan. In my due time.

And one day, God tells the whole heaven, My time has arrived. I start the war against evil. Now, I start the conquest.

Look! Look! Imagine there was that army of beasts, the evil, all ready for battle. And going towards them, a little lamb, fragile, innocent, weak, meh. Here I come, beasts, to wage war against you.

And all heaven froze in disbelief. What's God doing? What's He up to? Send against all that evil, mighty, strong, merciless, evil, a lamb, innocent, defenseless? There's no chance. You shouldn't be surprised.

Paul, in 1 Corinthians 1, calls it, in your version, the foolishness of God. I say in your version, because in Greek, it's the madness of God. It's sheer madness to send a lamb to the wolves.

To send your own son, totally defenseless, ready to be slaughtered. The Son of God crucified? It's stupid, nonsense, foolishness, madness. That's what people were saying in Paul's time.

But that's the wisdom of God, says Paul. And we have to unravel and to understand this wisdom, which from our point of view is sheer madness. Conquer the beast by a lamb.

Now let me back off a little bit. Go back to the evil. Evil empire.

I heard Václav Havel, for the ones who don't know this great name, Václav Havel was the leader of the Velvet Revolution in Czechoslovakia, in Prague, then president of Czechoslovakia. And a few years ago, he looked back on communism and he said, communism was characterized by three things. Lies, hate, and violence.

And I smiled because for quite a while talking about Satan, I always said that he has three characteristics. So it's not communism. It's Satan who has three weapons coming out of his very nature.

Satan's weapons reflect his nature. First of all is the evil. Now, first is the lie.

John 8, 44, he is a liar. And when he speaks, he speaks out of his own because he is the generator of the lies, the father of the lies. Whenever he speaks, he speaks false.

He cannot speak the truth. Even if he wants to express the truth, he perverts it. So, the lie.

All the empires that Satan raised are the empires of the lie. And the last one is the Muslim empire. Total lies.

Second is hate. Hitler was hate. Hate for all the other races.

Lenin and Stalin were the utmost hate. Hating everybody who doesn't believe what we believe. And look at the Muslim empire.

The lie and the hate. So much hate everywhere. And of course, violence.

Destroy everybody who doesn't believe what we believe. Annihilate them. Satan is called the destroyer.

So these three things are characteristic of all these empires. The lie, hate and violence. Killing.

Now, when God tackles the evil of the world, he cannot use Satan's weapons. Because Satan's weapons come out of Satan's nature. God couldn't borrow Satan's nature, so he has to come with the truth.

Only with the truth. And God is love. He cannot hate.

He comes in love because it's his nature. And the most shocking thing of all, he comes to meet violence with self-sacrifice. He doesn't kill anybody.

He kills himself. That's the most shocking. But there is something very strange.

Truth conquers by dying. Truth conquers by dying. Look in Mark, Jesus says, when I am lifted up, in John 12, he says that, when I am lifted up, John 12, 32, I will attract the whole world to myself from the cross.

And you have the explanation in Mark 15, 39, when the centurion saw how he died. He said, truly, this was the Son of God. That centurion was an expert in execution.

That was his job, among others. He knew that whenever you crucified somebody, that person would curse and scream and hate. But he was there when they nailed this one to the cross.

And to his disbelief, he heard him say, Father, forgive them. They don't know what they do. What's that? You pray for the soldiers who nail you on the cross? The most excruciating pain invented by evil? And from that moment that centurion is glued to this one, watching his every word up to that absolutely unbelievable, peaceful statement, Father, in your hands I entrust my soul.

I don't know if he knew that that was a quote from Psalm 32, 5, the prayer of the Jewish children going to bed every night. That was the children's prayer. Just like a little child trusting his father, saying, Father, in your hands I entrust my soul, put my head on the pillow, and I go asleep.

When he saw how he died, he said, this is not human. This is the Son of God. Now, at the year about 1200 B.C., A.D., after Christ, as Christians were being taken to the arena to be thrown to the lions, the Romans were absolutely shaken by the fact that these Christians were going to the arena singing with joy.

Mind you, about ten days before execution, each one was tortured a whole day to make them curse their face. And if they stood that one-day torture, then they were sentenced to be thrown to the lions. They were kept about ten days to have their superficial wounds a little bit healed, and then they would be taken to the arena.

So when you read in Revelation 2.10, you will have trouble, and you will be thrown in jail for ten days. Be faithful until death, and you will receive the crown of life. I happen to have grown up in a very devout family, persecuted Christians in Romania, and in our bedroom written large was, be faithful until death,

and they will give you the crown of life.

I grew under that. And when I was grown up enough to read the Bible myself, I went to Revelation 2.10, and I saw that it was being thrown for ten days in prison. I said, well, ten days in prison, that's not a big thing.

But only when I studied for my book on martyrdom, I found out that these ten days were the days between you being tortured and you being executed. That was the rule. When somebody betrayed you that you were a Christian, they would take you to the magistrate.

If you refused to worship Caesar, they would send you to the torturers and torture you the entire day. If you didn't betray your Lord, then they would say, okay, then you will die in the arena. And they would keep you for that just about ten days to two weeks.

Everybody who read John's book knew you will be ten days there and then executed. That's why he said, be faithful until death and you will receive the crown of life. So these Christians were going to the arena singing with joy.

And there was a lawyer there. And this lawyer looked to that and said, wait a minute. Humans don't do that.

Humans don't go to the arena to be thrown to the lions singing with joy. What are these? What do they have? I'll not rest until I find their secret. And he searched and he found the secret.

He found Christ for himself. His name was Tertullian. And eventually Tertullian wrote a book in which he addressed the king, the emperor and said, don't you see the more you kill them, the more they multiply because every drop of blood of a Christian is seed for other Christians.

And he launched this extraordinary slogan of martyrdom. Every drop of blood of a martyr is a seed of new Christians. He was the one who understood the truth conquered by dying.

There is something strange as you see these Christians dying with joy after unspeakable tortures. With joy and with love for the torturers. The people are hit and somehow in their dark minds the light shines.

And they become Christians. The truth conquers by dying. So that's how Jesus came.

This is God's strategy. Coming with the truth spoken in unspeakable love for the hateful people who are ready to kill me. And then accept to die for them.

And they see the light. It was my greatest privilege I would say as I was put under house arrest after I was charged as I told you last night. Every day I had to go for interrogation of the police.

All day in interrogation for six months. They were trying to break my spirit more than anything else. And they appointed the most vicious man they had to do the job with me.

After the downfall of communism I was shocked when I saw on the front page of a newspaper the picture of that man and then on two pages a description of how evil that man was. The most evil interrogator that the six police had at that time. And that man worked on me for six months.

After the second day of interrogation about ten hours at eight in the evening he just said now pick up your overcoat it's late fall and go home and come back at eight o'clock on the barricade. I was already with a hand on my coat to run out but I stopped I turned around and said barricade? Why do you speak in warlike language sir? You should know sir that every morning before I come here I pray for you. I pray for your salvation.

I pray for your family. And then I come to meet the man for whose salvation I just prayed. That's the spirit in which I come here.

I don't come to war. I am talking with a man for whose salvation I am praying. He was hit.

He was choked. He couldn't speak. And then he said oh, oh, oh, okay go home and be back in the morning.

From that day I saw many times as he asked me questions I would just answer telling him my experiences with my Lord. And he would listen sometimes for an hour. It was great for me because instead of interrogation I would just give him an hour of preaching.

But he would listen and then sort of remember where he was and say okay, okay, let's go back to our business. But he listened for an hour. Now, they were always two because they didn't trust each other so they watched each other.

Whenever one had to go out for a few minutes very strange, the other one would become human and tell me a nice word sort of to say I am not like the other one. It happened many times in very strange ways. But that day the other one was out and this wicked man looked to me and said Mr. Zorn, let me tell you something.

Whenever I interrogate somebody, I feel how they hate me. It's real. It's so palpable that hate.

And justly so because I'm not nice to them. But Mr. Zorn, with you it's different. I don't know how to put it but you should know it's a delight for me to be with you.

My first thought was to say yes, but not a delight for me to be with you. And then I sort of froze. Sorry, Lord, for that thought.

This is the greatest moment of my life, Lord. Here is this wicked man telling me he has met a man who, whatever he did to him, refused to hate him but loved him. This is the greatest moment of my life, Lord.

Thank you for it. At the end of six months, they dropped the charges. This man came alone to tell me it was all over and said you go home now.

We'll not call you back here anymore. I'll not see you anymore. And you know I cannot comment on these things but just before I let you go I want to tell you something.

I'll miss you, Mr. John. I'm shocked. I'll miss you.

All of a sudden I realized I was there for him. Now whenever a preacher has this kind of happening, what does he do? Put him in a sermon. So I made a sermon with this.

And I entitled the sermon The Aggression of Love. I told my people this. You have the impression that these people jump on us.

That's not true. They are not the aggressors on us. We are the aggressors in this country.

We intrude here with the truth of Christ. We disturb them with the truth. And because the truth shines, they hate it.

You hate light if you stay in darkness. So they jump on us. But with the last breath, before they kill us, we still say but we love you.

And when we die, the truth shines to them. And the beasts become lambs. Now, that's the aggression of love.

Let me back off and tell you where it all started for me. In 1969, the Lord worked a big miracle in my life. Unbelievable miracle.

I was able to leave Romania for a short trip in Austria. From there, I went to England. I got a scholarship in Oxford University.

I studied there. I got my BAMA there. All the time, with the clear guidance from the Lord that I have to go back to my own country.

And everybody telling me it was sheer madness. Because I left the country only for a short trip to Austria and then went to England with no Romanian approval. Go back would be absolutely stupid.

But the Lord was very clear. Those years, I was in fellowship with the InterVarsity students in Oxford. Almost at the end of my stay there, before going back to Romania, the leaders asked me to go and talk with them.

They wanted to know how to pray for me. They gave me half an hour to tell them my plans and what was going to happen to me in Romania. And I just started to tell them I was the first Romanian in my generation who was able to come out of Romania, was able to study in Oxford.

Now I would go back to Romania with a vision of training a new generation of preachers in Romania. That stayed with me. That's still my passion.

But it was then that I captured it. And I just raved about training a new generation of preachers under Ceausescu. Under that total dictatorship.

It seemed ridiculous. So one of the students, when I finished, with a sort of a lot of pity in the voice, said, Joseph, it all sounds marvelous, your vision. But what chances of success do you have? When I heard the word success, I said, this is typical Western way of thinking.

When I invite people to come to the Lord in Romania, I don't promise them success. Telling them, if you come to the Lord, you get a second Cadillac in your garage. And you will always prosper and always have it great.

I have to tell them, before you hurry to come, count the cost. You know you will lose your job. You may be thrown out of the school.

You will never get promotion. You will always be marginalized. You will always be hated in this society.

If you love the Lord enough to go into that situation then come. But not otherwise. So, never thought in terms of success.

This was an alien word for me. When he threw it to me, I said, oh Lord, what can I do with that word? Lord, I have an idea. What chances of success do you give me? The Lord was quick.

Joseph, my answer is in Matthew 10.16. I send you a sheep in the midst of wolves. Never thought of that like that. But in that moment I saw like in a vision, I saw a circle.

Circle of wolves. A sheep in the center. And the Lord pointed to that and said, Lord Joseph, what chances has that sheep to stay alive five or ten minutes, let alone of converting the wolves? Joseph, this is how I send you to Romania.

With no chances of success. Totally vulnerable. Now, if you go to Romania that way, go.

If you cannot accept that position, never go there. I was so shocked. I don't know what I answered to that student but I know that I went back to my room in the college, sat down and said, Lord, I want to talk to you.

I just found out that I have a father who sends his son to the wolves. Why? Tell me, what do you get out of it? I want to understand your mind. I go there because I obey you, even if I don't understand.

But if I understand, I do it with relish. All of a sudden he said to me, Joseph, as my father sent me, so send I you. My father sent me as lamb to the wolves.

I send you as lamb to the wolves. Don't you see? I only started the war. Now I recruit my army of lambs and I send them to the wolves, as my father sent me to the wolves.

And don't you see? Every piece of land on this planet was conquered when somebody sprinkled his or her blood on that piece of land. All the lands of this planet that were conquered for Christianity were conquered because a martyr died there. I conquer by lambs who accept to go to the wolves and die.

That's my way of conquest and that's been for two thousand years. So you go there because this is the way of conquest. You go with the truth in love.

Love for the ones who are terrorists, dictators, haters. You go there because you love them and want them to become children of God. And you give them the truth and they jump on you and your last breath you say, yes but I still love you.

That's how I was able to tell them my supreme weapon is dying. Dying is my form of conquest. Let me add that let me see, I was given 40 minutes.

It was supposed to start at 35. I still have a few minutes. Sorry, I didn't do a good arithmetic here.

No good there. We talked about the evil one. You know the first Christians understood that whenever a Christian dies in the arena Satan falls down from heaven.

They picked it up from Revelation 11, verse 9 to 11. I saw Satan falling down from heaven. They conquered them by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony because they didn't love their

lives even unto death.

And it's clearly talking about the martyrs. Whenever a martyr dies in the arena Satan falls down from heaven. And all the way through the Roman Empire that was the understanding of martyrdom.

We are the army of Christ. We are the soldiers of Christ. And we go into the arena to inflict another deadly blow to Satan.

Where does it come from? First of all it comes from the book of Job. Job never knows what happened in heaven. There was an argument in heaven.

God boasted that He had the perfect man here. Satan said yeah, I cannot say anything about that but why does he worship you? Because you gave him goodies. Take away all he has and he will curse you.

At that moment God's honor was at stake. All heaven froze. How is God going to disprove Satan? Does God have a person on that planet who if you take away all he has he will still bless God or curse God? And there was only one way to know.

The test. So God said go and take away all he has and we'll watch his lips. The comment.

And you know the news came about oh everything being lost. Made the whole long story short. He stood tall and said the Lord has given, the Lord has taken away.

God's name be blessed. Maybe Satan predicted that he would say cursed. But he said blessed.

God's name be blessed anyhow. All heaven started to applaud. But Satan went back and said wait wait wait it's not over.

You didn't touch him. Take away his health. Give him excruciating pain and he will curse you.

Okay. Go and do it. Don't touch his life.

Out there boils on all his body an unspeakable pain at the one point Job says even if he kills me I'll still praise him. And that moment all heaven applauded and Satan had to run away in shame. He was totally defeated and God was glorified because Job demonstrated to the entire world that God did have somebody on this planet who would go to the ultimate in being faithful to God.

In 1 Corinthians I think 4 or 9 Paul says we are a spectacle with the apostles. A spectacle both for the angels and for people. Everybody looks to us how we take the persecution.

And commentators say that definitely had in mind the story of Job. Just as Job was a spectacle both for the angels and for people. We as we go to our cross to our suffering we are a spectacle and we defeat Satan.

You know Satan has two weapons to enslave me. His first weapon is my sins. That was his title deed.

But that was broken by the blood of Christ. So that's why in Revelation 11 I first defeat Satan by the blood of Christ. But his second weapon, Hebrews 2 14 and 15, by fear of dying Satan kept them in slavery all their lives.

Fear is Satan's tool of enslavement. When I am liberated from that fear of dying and I discover that dying is a privilege and dying is a glorious thing and dying is going home to glory and I go to meet my death with joy and triumph I break that weapon of Satan. Fear of dying.

He has no more power. He falls down to the ground defeated. This is how this is in a nutshell the essence of this book Suffering, Martyrdom and Rewards in Heaven.

Half of it is going through the entire scripture to analyze teaching on suffering and martyrdom then second half is going through the history of Christianity and showing what Christians believe about martyrdom across the ages but then I summarize at the end and these are the main points in a theology of martyrdom. It's the triumph of the truth and the defeat of Satan and it's all the glory given to God because he triumphs through us through our testimony of the truth, through our love and through our self-sacrifice and the eyes of the unbelievers are opened and the gospel is spread to all the world. Jesus the first lamb leads an army of lambs in conquest.

Will you enroll? Let's bow our heads. Thank you Lord for showing us your amazing way of conquest. Thank you lamb of God for doing it for us and thank you Lord for calling us to do what your father told you to do.

Thank you for enrolling us in your army. Thank you for the honor we have to go with the truth in love and accept to die so that the unbelievers may see the truth and Satan may be defeated and all the glory may be given to our beloved God. Amen.

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