

**Articles and Sermons :: Katz, Israel and the Church 04**

**Katz, Israel and the Church 04 - posted by lwpray (), on: 2004/10/4 11:15**

An item not for intellectual combat and killing

An item to be digested unto life and holiness among Gentiles and Jews.

An item to be regarded as a heart cry on the Walls of Jerusalem, the heavenly and the earthly.

An item for the prayer chamber, to mobilize a heart when the many turn against the Jew.

Lars W.

The Mystery of Israel and the Church

Art Katz

Chapter 4 - Israel and the Nations

We need to open our spirits and catch the flavor and sense of this mystery. God, in His wisdom, has chosen a nation to be central to all nations. This is not an unusual concept in the economy of God. Israel herself had twelve tribes, and God did not think it extravagant that one of the twelve, Levi, should have no other function but to be priests to the other eleven. In exactly the same way, and by the same principle, the entire nation of Israel is to be a nation of priests unto the world (Exodus 19:6). We know that the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable (Rom. 11:29); and when God makes a promise, establishes a covenant, or declares something, then we need to know that it is irrevocable.

Some biblical scholars suggest that the number of nations that proliferate today is the result of man's rebellion against God. We can see everywhere around us the splintering of national entities into sub-entities based on ethnic and religious lines. When the smoke clears from the devastation and destruction at the end of the age from the consequence and outcome of man's own inordinate ambition for nationhood, rivalry, sovereignty and pomp, we will find a vast reduction to the over two hundred nations that now exist. It is clear that God intended a definite number of nations at the first, in proportion to the number of the sons of Israel:

When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the children of men, He set the bounds of the peoples according to the number of the children of Israel. For Jehovah's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance (Deut. 32:8-9).

Acts 17:26-27 seems to substantiate that:

And He made of one every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed seasons, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek God, if haply they might feel after him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us:

The nations must not think they can go on in an autonomous existence independent of the nation, Israel. God has made a provision to keep nations in certain boundaries and relationships that would keep them sane and healthy, with God the recognized Head over all, rather than them imposing themselves on one another by the use of violence. There is a place for legitimacy of nations, but only within a certain comprehensive structure that God Himself provided, namely, the centrality of Israel to all nations. The greatest tragedies that have afflicted mankind through history have come out of the rebellion of nations in their own independent determination to rule themselves, to their own self-aggrandizement, without regard to that nation which God intended as central. There will be no peace until that pattern is established on earth, which, in fact, marks the beginning of the Millennium, the thousand-year reign of Christ (Rev. 20:6).

Re: Katz, Israel and the Church 04 - posted by lwpray (), on: 2004/10/4 16:13

The Millennium begins when Israel is restored to her God-appointed place in Him, and indeed, the nations will finally come up to Jerusalem on the Feast of Tabernacles to pay homage to God, whose sanctuary and dwelling place will be with the people Israel (Zech.14:16). The law must go forth out of Zion and the word of the Lord out of Jerusalem or there never will be a turning of swords into plowshares (Micah 4: 2-3). God is so in earnest about this that He says that the nation that will not honor Israel will suffer a curse (Zech.14:17). He will take from them rain and bring upon them the consequences of judgment if they still stubbornly refuse to submit to God's design and intention. The rebellion of mankind is deep-seated against God, and it is no more clearly reflected and revealed than in mankind's opposition to the nation that He has chosen. God's choice is the revelation of Himself as God, and it is a choice that is exactly the antithesis of man's. It is His choice, however, that will prevail, to the everlasting praise of His glory.

Nations cannot be related to God and recognize the boundaries and purposes of God independent of their recognition of , and their submission to, the centrality of Israel for all nations. The greatest drama of the Last Days, now already in process of coming to the fore in world history, is the attempted annihilation of Israel by the nations in order to remove God's very provision for their relatedness to Him. To remain, as a nation, outside of that relationship with Israel is to be outside of God.

Re: Katz, Israel and the Church 04 - posted by lwpray (), on: 2004/10/4 17:13

Has God Rejected Israel?

With this in view, Paul finds himself having to answer a question raised by the believers in Rome, "Is God finished with Israel?"

I say then, God has not rejected His people, has He? May it never be! I too am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin (Rom. 11:1).

Paul gives his own faith in God as the evidence that God is not finished with Israel. In a very real sense, Paul is in himself the very personification of that nation, all the more in his militant opposition to the faith followed by his radical conversion. We have in him an exact pattern of what the future of the nation itself is. He is in himself already explicating and setting forth Israel's own destiny and apostolate to the nations, namely, to be a blessing to all the families of the earth. His temporary setting aside of the Jew by God, however, is not some arbitrary decision independent of the judgment that Israel has incurred upon herself:

Just as it is written, God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes to see not and ears to hear not, down to this very day (Rom. 11:8).

Their blindness is a judgment, particularly over the issue of the rejection of their Messiah. It was not some momentary failure at a historical point in time; it was rather the culmination of a long history of apostasy and alienation from God that had become so deep-seated that when very God came in the person of Jesus of Nazareth as the fulfillment of their own scriptures and expectation, He simply could not be recognized. He was rejected, despised and brought to the place of death, albeit the instrumentality of that death was the Roman authorities. Their blindness was, and still is, the consequence of their own sin and must be judged by a righteous God.

Re: Katz, Israel and the Church 04 - posted by lwpray (), on: 2004/10/5 2:49

God's Cosmic Purposes

The whole of this mystery is predicated on God's unswerving principle of death and resurrection. The glory of resurrection (the mercy of God) can only issue out of death, so, in order to demonstrate His mercy as His final testimony before all nations (Ezekiel 39:7), a surviving remnant of the nation of Israel is scheduled for death and resurrection. We have known the resurrection phenomenon as individuals, but God intends it for Israel as a national demonstration. They will, and must, pass through death in their experience, without the comforting knowledge that it will result in resurrection (Ezekiel 37), for how else is death, death? Unless this takes place, there will be no consummation of the age; there will be no return of the Lord, and there will be no establishment of His kingdom. For His kingdom, by necessity, is the kingdom of David, the kingdom promised to Israel. It is not a kingdom for Israel's exclusive gratification, but a kingdom that will bless the nations through the nation that God has appointed and chosen to be central to all nations. We need, therefore, to have a sense of God's cosmic design for the nations, understanding that Israel is central to God's redemptive dea

ling with all the nations. Our view of redemption must be elevated from personal salvation to national salvation.

But the reader may ask, "Why should Israel be so central to us as the modern Church, since it was not central to generations of saints before, who were quite spiritual, yet did not recognize the centrality of Israel?" The answer lies primarily in the fact that these are the Last Days, and the Church that is impervious, or indifferent, to the purposes of God for the Last Days is, ipso facto, not the Church. In fact, reference to Israel is conspicuously absent from current teaching in the Church. It is simply outside their consciousness. The Church has a lot of great things to say, but in these Last Days, they are missing the focus of God that compels the Church to be Church.

Israel's final redemption is the final consummating event of God that concludes this age. Any preoccupation with prophets and prophetic things that omits reference to the great, epochal event that is yet future, namely, the restoration of Israel to her God after thousands of years of apostasy and alienation from God is also, by that definition, not prophetic. In fact, our continuing lament and criticism of the present celebration of prophets is that there is, even among them, for the most part, an absence of any significant reference to Israel and the Church's relationship to Israel. This is the most momentous thing that is before us historically, yet there is so little awareness or preparation that we cannot conceive of the fact that there should be a prophetic upsurge and this theme be absent. The very conspicuous absence of the theme makes us suspect whether indeed what is being celebrated is truly prophetic.

A serious hour has come, and we have to prepare ourselves, both spiritually and physically, in a way that we would not have ever conceived or bothered about before. We would have been content to be merely charismatic or evangelical, because that was sufficient for our purposes, but now a purpose has come to our attention that is His purpose, and it is an ultimate purpose. God is setting the stage, and Israel is appointed by God to be the nexus of His whole design for the government of the nations.

**Re: Katz, Israel and the Church 04 - posted by lwpray (), on: 2004/10/5 11:55**

The Government of God

He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and His kingdom will have no end (Luke 1:32-33).

If that God, and that King, can reign over that stiff-necked people, a people whose last national statement towards God was, "We have no king but Caesar" (John 19:15f), then what do you think will be the disposition of other nations? If God can possess Israel, a people who, in all their unbelief and opposition to Him, have blasphemed His name in the nations, then He will have all the nations. It is going to take a final breakdown of Israel's last rebellion and self-will. There is no other way, but they will be grateful later.

For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness from then on and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this (Isaiah 9:6-7).

We are brought right into the whole reason why a Child is born and a Son is given, namely, that the government will rest on His shoulders. It is the rule of God going forth in His own character, that is to say, in the meekness of the Lamb. The rod of iron speaks of an absolute uncompromising stance, but it will be in the gentleness of the Lamb. It is the glorious benevolence of God! It is His great wisdom going out to the nations that will keep them from their own violence, hatred and perversion.

Is our government, then, upon His shoulder? How shall it come to the nations if it has not yet first come to the Church? Are there pockets of rebellion, self-will and independence of spirit to be found in the very congregations of God? Are we more ruled by convenience than we think? For example, are we saying, "Did you like the service? Do you like the pastor? Do you like the program, the worship?" If we do not like it, we find an alternative down the street. We should rather be asking the Lord where He would have us to be planted, and to suffer with that people, in that place.

It says in Isaiah 2,

Now it will come about in the last days, the mountain of the house of the LORD will be established as the chief of the mountains, and will be raised above the hills; and all the nations will stream to it (Is. 2:2).

This is highly symbolic language. The word 'mountain' always refers to rule and government. However mighty the nations think they are, there will come a time when they will humble themselves and stream to Israel. Can you imagine the proud nations, who are now devouring one another, being broken and submitting to God and God's choice? This is future. In the Last Days it shall come to pass.

And many peoples will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Ja

cob; that He may teach us concerning His ways, and that we may walk in His paths” (Is. 2:3a).

That is what government is. It is not bureaucracy; it is not shuffling papers, or men stuffing their pockets with political gain. The purpose of government is to teach us concerning His ways, and that we may walk in His paths. It is the righteousness of God as it pertains to the relationships of a moral mankind on earth.

For the law will go forth from Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And He will judge between the nations, and will render decisions for many peoples; and they will hammer their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, and never again will they learn war (Is. 2:3b-4).

When the kingdom of God comes, men will be changed in all of their ways, but in the wisdom of the Holy Spirit this one thing is cited: Men will hammer their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, and never again will they learn war. God has put His finger on the heart of the kingdom of violence and death that has raised up an elaborate and enormous network of profit-feeding agencies that make men dependent upon it for their livelihood. Nice guys, who go to ball games, are trembling lest peace should come and there be no need for the weapons they produce. They would lose their high-paying jobs and the lifestyles that such an income supports.

The most drastic thing that could happen to nations today is peace, real peace, where there is no necessity for armaments, nor for having a great military establishment that designs and requires the high-tech implements of war.

If the veil could be lifted, we would be shocked to realize how much the production of armaments is dominating and directing the course of nations. The manpower, the energy, the time, the brilliance, the brains and all of the faculties that could have ended poverty in the world overnight are producing, instead, the things that pertain to death. It is the wisdom of the Powers of the air, promoting and fostering greed, ambition, lust, power, influence, violence and death. This is cosmic in its proportions. These fallen angels, who want to continue to manipulate mankind and exert their notorious, false rule over them will be finished when the King comes.

**Re: Katz, Israel and the Church 04 - posted by lwpray (), on: 2004/10/5 14:48**

The Restoration of All Things

Jesus is waiting,

...whom heaven must receive until the period of restoration of all things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time (Acts 3:21).

God has bound Himself, and confined and kept His Son from actual entry into His creation to rule and reign as King, until the restoration of all things spoken by the prophets has been fulfilled. When you read the prophets, there is one great theme that they express, namely, the restoration of Israel from ages-long apostasy, at the end of the age, out of a time of unbelievable calamity, back to God and back to the Land. That people and that Land are God’s locus and the conveyor of the millennial kingdom that will be established with them physically and geographically, and be expressed through them. Israel is finally brought into their call as a nation of priests and a light unto the world. Jews are brilliant and gifted people, but God did not primarily call them to music, to the stage, to the theater, to the film industry and all of that. The ushering in of the millennial kingdom brings true government from Zion, the government of God, the only government that is a true government and that will ever bring peace and righteousness on this earth.

Naturally speaking, we do not actually anticipate the kingdom as a literal, explicit and political entity. There is a sense in which the kingdom is inward, subjective, and consists of kingdom principles and values. This, however true in part, should not, however, be allowed to eclipse or to displace the larger part, an anticipation of an actual, literal and political rule of God. The government of God is theocratic; it is executed in perfect righteousness without any self-seeking. It is the benevolence of God, and the wisdom of God on how to live being brought to mankind. We must not take the literal statements of God and spiritualize their meaning away. By so doing, we do a disservice to God that is presumptuous and tantamount to blasphemy. Our whole faith will be revolutionized when we give to God’s Word the literal meaning that He Himself intends for it to have. It is so radical in its implications that it is little wonder that we spiritualize it away. Could it be that we do not have the courage, nor faith, nor desire to take it at face value?

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...a hardening has come upon part of Israel, until the full number of the Gentiles come in, and thus all Israel will be saved; just as it is written, "The Deliverer will come from Zion, He will remove ungodliness from Jacob. And this is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins" (Rom. 11:25b-27).

This does not mean every Jew, but only that surviving remnant from among them that constitutes the elect Israel of God. The rest will suffer the attrition and death that comes to those who are rebellious against God and will not receive His salvation, despite His every appeal, as we shall see when we begin to examine the book of Amos. It is an enormous Last Days' saga, and the Church is the principal actor. It is the Church coming into the solemn configuration of what God intended for it as a glory. It is brought to fullness and maturity, and prepared for its own millennial destiny and glory, namely, to rule and reign with Christ from heavenly places (Rev. 20:6).

To Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen (Eph. 3:21).

That means the end of the Church as a plaything and a denominational enterprise where men of ambition find platforms for themselves. God has chosen Israel, not because she is lustrous, nor because she is numerous, nor because she was one of the great ancient powers. She was always a nothing people, and that is precisely why He has chosen her. He will be who He will be, and He will choose what He will choose. The critical question is: "Will the Church choose what He chooses?"

Israel is becoming increasingly aggressive and offensive in her self-defense, and her behavior is going to become worse; this must, we believe, of necessity, be so. Jews everywhere are suffering the adverse consequence of Israel's declining reputation. This is part of the program of God to bring Jews worldwide into a place of opposition, contempt and finally, persecution by unregenerate man in the nations. It is the Powers of darkness themselves who are aiding and abetting in all of this hostility and opposition. They want to avoid losing their place of power by annihilating this people from the face of the earth so that Israel cannot be restored. That is the nexus of the fierce anti-Semitic hatred that is presently escalating. If we do not understand this invisible realm of reality that underlies the world, its structures, its governments and its society, then the mystery of Israel will continue to be bewilderment to us, and we will be ourselves offended in Israel's impending calamity.

We are summarizing the mystery of Israel as the issue of world government and rule over creation, which includes the place that God has designated for this people with regard to other nations. When the kingdom comes, it is not only theocratic and millennial, but also forever. We are not talking about some transient thing or some temporary administration, but rather the final, decisive and conclusive work of God for all creation, and that endures eternally. In other words, when the Powers of darkness are finally out, because Israel is finally in, they are out eternally, and therefore it helps us to understand why they are so vexed. We can expect a global anti-Semitism of which the Nazi era was a mere forerunner. However vicious the systematic annihilation of six million European Jews was, it must yet be seen as a preview of what we shall expect globally in the Last Days when that same satanic hatred is poured out in every nation. The Church in Germany collapsed like the 'proverbial deck of cards' under that demonic power; we need to be instructed by their collapse, because we have every reason to expect the same phenomenon, this time as it will be seen in every nation, including our own!