

Articles and Sermons :: Katz, Israel and the Church 06

Katz, Israel and the Church 06 - posted by lwpray (), on: 2004/10/21 11:56

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 6 - Israel And The Glory

The genius of God in the mystery of Israel is not merely His purpose for Israel, or even the Church's role in that restoration, but it is the profoundest revelation of God Himself as He in fact is. In Romans chapters 9 through to 11, there are many references to one principal word: mercy. Mercy is a central attribute of God Himself. When the knowledge of God shall cover the earth as the waters cover the seas, it will be the revelation of the mercy of God, what God Himself is. So something of God's mercy is going to be revealed in His final dealing with Israel, as will not be seen in any other place. If we lose the mystery of Israel, we are not only losing the dynamic of God's dealing with that nation, we are losing God in the way in which He chooses to communicate and reveal Himself. What then is the knowledge of God that we are presently communicating if it does not eventuate in a call to repentance?

We need to ask what God's ruling purpose was from the beginning in electing Israel as a nation. Why did God need to have an earthly representative? He employs men in His purposes, but Israel, as a nation, is called to show God forth. Israel was to be a literal, physical and visible presence in the earth, communicating the reality of God by the visible demonstration of the glory that God has invested in His people. In fact, when you really get down to the question, can there be glory except it be exhibited through an earthen vessel? Can glory be glory except it has a structure that shows it forth, be it a tabernacle, a temple, an individual believer, a fellowship, or a nation? That is why Paul ends chapter 3 of Ephesians with,

...to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.

This is astonishingly literal: a habitation of God by the Spirit in a people who are joined together, who have been fitted together, where His Spirit is not grieved, or alienated, and can abide and dwell. That is why the nations will come up to Jerusalem in the millennial age, because His manifest glory will dwell there. It will be His sanctuary, His tabernacle and His dwelling place.

Re: Katz, Israel and the Church 06 - posted by lwpray (), on: 2004/10/21 13:39

For Paul, the revelation of God's glory is the whole issue. He saw the restoration of Israel and the role of the Church as means to this greater end. The issue is, and has always been, the glory of God, and that He should be glorified forever. The significance of Israel in the Last Days, restored through the instrumentality of the Church, is that this will be the last time when this issue can be met and answered. God's glory is going to be visibly demonstrated at the end of the age by Israel's restoration through the Church, but it is a glory of such a kind that it endures forever. Once the age ends, there is no longer a second shot at it. You cannot go back and do it over. The key is not a lapsed Israel, but the Church as an active, dynamic agent of God operating out of its own freedom to fulfill its enormous mandate, namely, to be God's instrument as Israel's 'deliverer.' The Church is the key, but not a Church that is having its arm twisted; rather one who freely and voluntarily gives itself for the fulfillment of these purposes.

You cannot understand how jealous God is for His own glory, and that He will not allow any flesh to boast. The whole mystery is from Him; the fulfillment will be through Him in order that the glory be to Him forever. This puts the Church on a radical ground. Is that descriptive of the modern Church's mode of operating now? Can the Church say that what we

do and what we are about is through Him, or even from Him, or consciously to Him? Paul is absolutely insistent on this formula. The mystery of Israel will not be fulfilled on any other basis than from Him, through Him, and to Him (Romans 11:36a).

This mystery is certainly not going to be fulfilled by human expertise. Modern-day Israel was established by Jewish prowess, expertise, ability and savvy. There was a day in 1948 when the United Nations had a vote and Israeli statehood was established. We are, however, talking about the Israel that will be the millennial glory of God, and that will come, not by the dictates of men or their agreement politically, but through the sovereign, supernatural work of God out of death. There here can be no other way because this must be from Him, through Him and to Him. It even raises the question of whether God has not allowed a political preliminary state to be formed merely to contrast what men can establish to what God Himself will establish. Present-day Israel is perhaps humanly impressive, but there is one thing that it lacks, namely, the glory of God. What God will establish out of His own sovereign power will be glory to Him forever.

Re: Katz, Israel and the Church 06 - posted by lwpray (), on: 2004/10/22 3:37

We may think that the present resettlement of Israel is a masterful stroke of God's success in the affairs of men, but from the heavenly perspective, can we bring ourselves to consider that it must be a profound failure? The only reason that we applaud it is because we do not see as God sees. God allows what we call successful to become a failure in order that He might bring forth something that is larger than the issue of success, namely, the thing that pertains to His eternal glory. We think humanly of the things that we desire, but we do not think of God's desire, or the things that pertain to His name, His honor and the fulfillment of His eternal purposes.

Our problem is that we have been so desirous to see the nation Israel receive some kind of relief and satisfaction. Humanly speaking, we want to see them established. But what is our focus? What is our object? What is our jealousy? Is it their establishment and their deserving satisfaction at last, or the glory of God? If our jealousy is not for God's glory, then we may have to suffer the pain and the anguish of watching present-day Israel subside into death. Mere sentimentality is as destructive to the purposes of God for Israel as outright rejection or anti-Semitic disdain. Everything in you will want to rush to Israel's bedside and lay hands on, pray for, and lift her up and help and sustain her. When Jesus heard that His friend whom He loved, Lazarus, was sick, that is precisely what He did not do. He did not rush to the bedside of Lazarus, to bolster up and to preserve that natural physical life, though He loved him. Jesus remained longer where He was, sufficient for that life to die, and said, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified by it (John 11:4)." " "

The same thing that makes Paul an apostle is the very same thing that makes Jesus the ultimate, quintessential Son of God. They both had a passion for the glory of God. This passion has a higher criterion than the sickness of a friend. What anguish of soul are we willing to suffer for that glory, because suffering must necessarily precede glory every time, without exception?

Re: Katz, Israel and the Church 06 - posted by lwpray (), on: 2004/10/22 10:57

No Cross, No Glory

Israel will not be saved or restored except by a Church so intensely jealous for the glory of God that it will exhibit the obedience of the Son by not acting prematurely out of its own humanity, its own compassion, or its own desire to alleviate suffering. It will allow death to have its full course, that there might be a resurrection from the dead that will glorify God and the Son of God. And there will be no entering into, and identification with, suffering unless there is a very actual, existential and real expectation of the glory that follows.

The Church at large is more or less content to talk about the glory of God, but has not any realistic expectation to see that glory. It wants its own success and the perpetuation of its own establishments. What will it take to restore this apostolic and prophetic vision to the Church? Where are the candidates? Anyone who brings this vision will likely be a threatening figure, because everything that we are talking about, the intensity of facing issues of truth and reality, is everything that the Church does not want. What it wants is turning up the amplifiers, the euphoria and the impression of an alive fellowship, without the costly foundational and unmistakable reality. In fact, a good definition of present day Christianity is that it wants the sense of the power of God, and of the gifts of God, but without the Cross of God. The crisis of Israel, then, is not only for Israel's sake, per se, as it is for the Church. Nothing less will raise it from its torpor; nothing other will obtain its glory.