

**Articles and Sermons :: Katz, Israel and the Church 10****Katz, Israel and the Church 10 - posted by lwpray (), on: 2004/11/15 16:21**

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 10 - Israel and the Mercy of God

There is yet another place where Paul makes it unmistakably clear that the Church is exclusively God's agent for Israel's restoration.

For just as you once were disobedient to God, but now have been shown mercy because of their disobedience, so these also now have been disobedient, in order that because of the mercy shown to you they also may now be shown mercy. For God has shut up all in disobedience that He might show mercy to all (Rom. 11:30-32).

God has shut Israel up in disobedience and unbelief. Israel is unable to demonstrate the righteousness of God even if it wanted to, which, in fact, it does not. God is therefore judging them for their failure, but their failure serves His every purpose. They are shut up into disobedience. The only thing, therefore, that can extricate the nation from that hopeless fix is the mercy of God. What is the mercy of God if it is in any way deserved? Mercy is not mercy except as it is undeserved. That is what makes it mercy.

Mercy is not merely an attribute of God; it is central and the distinctive of His whole being. When God shows His mercy, He shows His glory, He shows Himself. And when Paul says, "to Him be glory forever," he is saying that the glory of God is going to be revealed by the mercy of God when it shall be extended to a people who are totally undeserving, up to the very moment in which they will receive it. This shall be done before the face of all nations, so that no nation will be with excuse for not acknowledging who, in fact, God is. They will have witnessed both the severity of His judgments in the casting of that people again into all nations where only a remnant will survive the terrible devastation of those days; and they will have witnessed the mercy of God as shown in their supernatural restoration.

There is going to be a Last Days' crisis in which world Jewry, both in Israel and in the nations, will be hounded, persecuted and pursued. And except there be a tangible, palpable mercy extended to them by the Church of the kind that we are describing, not one would have survived. The only way that a remnant will survive the Last Days' attrition of the fiercest anti-Semitism, eclipsing even the Holocaust of World War II, is that there will be places established in the nations where they will find refuge and mercy in that time of need. Our spirits need to be put on alert because it sounds so unthinkable. How can we conceive of a global crisis of this kind? The scriptures, however, are quite clear. This final drama will test and search out the Church, and identify who, in fact, the true Church is, as being that people who are willing to be identified with Israel at that time, when they are so desperately hated (Matt. 25: 31-46).

Re: Katz, Israel and the Church 10 - posted by lwpray (), on: 2004/11/16 1:11

What is Mercy?

This issue of mercy is enormous, and we need to know first, what mercy is and how it is to be extended, and whether in fact we have obtained mercy that we might ourselves extend it. Have we existentially obtained mercy in a way that we can know it? How deep is the comprehension of our own salvation? Is it a salvation deeply aware of being the recipient of the mercy of God? In other words, if mercy is only a verbal category, a commonplace cliché, then we do not yet know the mercy of God. If we think we have been saved for the purpose of doing God a favor, that He needed us because

of our giftedness, attractiveness, or our ability, we are far removed from His salvation. Deep in the secret hearts of many believers there is an acknowledgment of the doctrine of grace, but existentially, in their deepest heart, they believe that they are doing God a favor. Their faith is more in a 'decisional' response than in their knowledge of a God who raises the dead.

Re: Katz, Israel and the Church 10 - posted by lwpray (), on: 2004/11/16 9:46

Face to Face

We have an indebtedness toward the Jew, but if we only fulfill it as a kind of obligation, we will have missed the significant thing required. In Ezekiel 20:35, God says,

...and I shall bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there I shall enter into judgment with you face to face. Something has got to be exhibited by the Church in that crisis moment that is more than obligation, namely, the face of God Himself. Moses asked to see God's face, and God showed him His mercy. It is one thing to be polite when people are irritating and imposing upon you by their coming; it is yet another thing to show them the face of God. Merely to show them the face of religious obligation will not be enough. They have got to see the Lord, face to face. The revelation of the Lord will be the saving factor in this time of crisis in order that those who have been uprooted, cast out and dispersed will return to Zion as the redeemed of the Lord. The scriptures suggest that they will become redeemed in the encounter with the Lord, through encountering His people, in the last hour of their extremity.

Our faces are the keys, being the statements of what we are in the deeps of our heart, and Jews will know that. They are well able to see through the appearances of things. We have got to, therefore, show the authentic face of the Lord in our utter graciousness, magnanimity and love. They have yet to see in us a willingness to take risks for their sakes, and count it a privilege, even if it should require our lives! This is the condition that will move Jews to jealousy: the revelation of a love that is willing to lay down its own life, not only to suffer inconvenience and peril, but death, that they might be saved.

If we are disposed to needing applause, acknowledgment and recognition, then we need to know that we will not likely receive it from a panicking world Jewry passing through our midst. For us to exhibit the face of the Lord means an unconditional love that cannot be offended against, no matter what they, in their perplexity, say or do. We have no expectation; we do not evaluate and measure them by merit or how they perform. They are not required to pass any test. We have for them the love that is unconditional, that makes no requirement, because the spirit of requirement in us, the persistent, pharisaic thing, has been crucified long before.

The very willingness to extend the last of our 'oil and flour,' as the Sidonian widow did for Elijah, might not only be a provision for them, but also for us until the 'drought' is ended. "Give and it shall be given unto you," even when we are looking at what appears to be the last of our supply. If they see in us unbelief and fear, we will have failed in this most historic moment.

Re: Katz, Israel and the Church 10 - posted by lwpray (), on: 2004/11/16 13:03

Israel's redemption is the issue of God's intention for all mankind, for Israel is a microcosm of all of mankind. It is the issue of man, and God's dealing with man, as exemplified in one test case, a nation that He has chosen, a nation that is so 'human, all too human.' If God can succeed in His mercy with them, especially in the light of their known and appalling track record, on the basis alone of an undeserved mercy, then there is hope for all mankind!

And yet for this reason I found mercy, in order that in me as the foremost, Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience, as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life (1 Tim. 1:16).

Everything is tied together in this extraordinary way, for which reason it will be bitterly opposed unto death. The Powers of darkness want to exterminate this people Israel, whose survival and restoration are the key to the coming of another kingdom and the end of their false rule. That is the underlying hatred that explains the enormous persecution that will come upon world Jewry in the Last Days. The Lord, however, will employ it to root up our kin and bring them out of their places of safety and security, and to cast them again in and through the nations in that sifting that brings a remnant of them through. Those who refuse the evidence and testimony of God in His mercy, expressed to them through the overcoming Church, will be lost; for the mercy of God is the statement of God. As one can see from both the books of Amos (Amos 9:8-10) and Zechariah (Zech.13:8-9) the majority of Jews evidently will not survive. Only a remnant will constitute the restored nation to which the Lord can come and rule as King, and from that place, in Zion, out of Jerusalem, restored from ruins, the law shall go forth to all nations.