

# Dvd 14 the Core of Prophetic and Apostolic Reality

by Art Katz

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*The church must be an end-time people, willing to face ultimate conflict with the powers of the air and extend mercy to the Jew.*

**Duration:** 1:12:42

**Scripture:** 2 Chronicles 20:17, Acts 16:25

**Topics:** "Prophetic Ministry", "End Times"

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## Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of the church being a part of God's cosmic moral drama, preparing for the end times and the salvation of Israel. It calls for a deep sense of reality, seriousness, and moral discernment in the church, highlighting the need for prophetic guidance and the manifestation of spiritual gifts. The message stresses the significance of being sent by God and the necessity of being a distinct, sacrificial, and morally upright body in a world that is spiraling downward.

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## Transcript

Jesus, son of God. And our hearts come at them for the kingdom of God, that they might be an end-time people of God, proclaiming His salvation throughout the earth. The issue of history, which is the issue of generations, is the issue of the church.

It's a catalogical mindedness, which includes an apocalyptic mindedness, where, of course, the things of the end have to do with final judgments, with devastation, with fire, with ruin, with explosion, with flight, all the kinds of things. But before it's glorious, it's painful. And particularly for the people of Israel.

So for those of us who are at a level of sentimentality and want to see these people to succeed at last, it is unbearably painful to consider that there's yet a final apocalyptic dealing of God called the time of Jacob's trouble, through which they must pass, wherever Jacob is. Not only the nation there in the Middle East, but Jews in Wellington. And everywhere, and in America, especially in flight from persecution in North America.

You know, it's a remarkable thing to be called to an obedience like that in the coldest part of the North American continent, where our temperatures are always consistently below that of Alaska. I don't know why it is there's a draft that comes down out from the north that brings a severe chill and sometimes goes

on monotonously day after day, week after week. 30 below zero, 20 below zero.

With the wind chill factor, John and Jane could tell you stories. I just shared one episode where we plugged the car in because we had a sister pregnant about to give birth and wanted to make sure that if there was an emergency, we could take her to the hospital. So we plugged the car in.

All of our cars have plugs so that the oil in the, whatchamacallit, you know, will be fluid. The next morning, there was crisis. I don't know what the wind chill factor was with the cold.

It was severe. Well, the engine started, but the transmission was frozen stiff, and the gears could not be shifted. And finally, we got a doctor from the Indian reservation to come and save her life.

So we lived in a place of peril, trial, struggle, that magnifies every issue and saves us from dreamlike fancy of what we are so long as our life only consists of succession of Sundays. But when it includes Monday and every day of the week with the same people in a severe environment, living beneath the standard of poverty established by the United States government, then you have a formula in which the deep and true issues of life are going to be expressed and are going to require. So that a year in that environment is more conducive to true maturity than ten or more years in the happiest and best of charismatic fellowships if they're confined only to Sundays and midweek services.

That was our environment, our formative life. So, the powers of the air know whom to fear. They know whom to respect.

And maybe of all the prophecies that have been spoken to me over the years, the one that I perhaps cherish more than many is that the powers of the air will fear you. They will be in dread at the sound of your voice. Your presence will terrify them.

I'd like to see that fulfillment. And I gave an invitation to ministers in the Philippines. What would you rather do? Impress men or terrify the powers of the air? These precious Brown brothers, all of whom have come out of poverty and are enjoying free pea soups and a salary, food on the table, even a secretary in some instances, were faced with a question of you want to advance in that religious system and defer to men and find favor with men and advancement and continuation in that religious security? Or would you prefer to be a terror to the powers of the air? In order to be the latter, you have to forsake the desire for the approval of men and the promotion that comes from it and risk even the measure of security that you're enjoying now with the prospect of going back to the frightful conditions of poverty out of which you've come.

I've never seen men rise to an invitation with more trembling than that invitation in the Philippines. My Lord, they knew exactly what was being required because so long as they are deferential to men and concerned with success and escalation in a system, the powers of the air will only yawn in their face. But when they declare a death sentence on self-interest and an end to poverty and want to be this kind of threat to those powers that brood over every city of their land, it's going to take a rejection of the one to obtain the other.

And they rose with a real appropriation of death and of the cross. It was a historic occasion. I'll never forget it.

I came out sweating because the place itself was hot. I had poured out my soul, bringing them to this climax of choice which was not in my thought when the message began, but it was the logic of the

message to give such a call. We stood on the sidewalk, the brother with me from Ben Israel, sweating.

I said, Lord, what I would love right now is just to be on my back in a pool. Where do you think we were within an hour? I was on my back in a pool in one of the most lush private clubs in a hotel in that city because the Filipino woman who was chauffeuring us about was a member. All you have to do is just breathe to the Lord and intimate, and there it is.

I'm calling men to lay down their lives in utter consecration, and there I am on my back. Such are the paradoxes of the faith that if they knew, they would say, cats, thou hypocrite. But you know when you've paid your dues, you can speak like that to men, and you can be in Egypt, and you can be in third world countries, and they don't have to know that you've lived for 30 years in a standard that is lower than their own.

You don't have to announce it, but something is conveyed of the reality that has settled as a spiritual residue in your inmost being that somehow touches every word that proceeds from you with a quality of reality that it would not have if you were of the typical American holiday inn specialist flitting from hotel to hotel and meeting to meeting. And so I esteem that reality because reality is the name of the game, and we need to be able to come to people who are living under difficult and perhaps in the future even grim conditions and be able to speak to them words of life and things that would beggar even their imagination. And convey that with a conviction and an authority that is not the mere escalation of your voice.

I'm saying all that to say this, what I must need to be in myself is what you need be in yourself, corporately as the church. That resonance, that authority, that depth, that reality. And I know that you don't have sub-zero climates to which to run, but when you open yourself to the Lord to be such a people, he has ways to temper the soul and to fit you to be part of something that can be rightly called apostolic and prophetic.

Which includes this radical, not just an acknowledgement, a radical anticipation of the end where it would not be exaggeration to say it's going to be marked by suffering. There's going to be conflict. In fact, I have never been more ravaged spiritually in my history in service to the Lord than here in Wilmington.

The brother is here in whose place I stayed that night in which I don't think I slept a wink. Because all through the night I was being run over by massive Mack trucks and bludgeoned and bloodied and beaten and there's not a word for it. It had just happened to me in Manila.

All through the night, up. And there's my brother from Ben Israel, no longer with us, left in indignation in a huff. The brother with whom I went to the house of the Lord has lifted up his heel, but at that time he was with me in Manila and here.

And I turned my flashlight on him in hope that maybe I might wake him, that he might not allow me to suffer this by myself because it was agonizing. No, he slept right through. Never lost a beat.

Snored right through the night with wonderful rest while I myself was groaning with a beating. I don't know how to express this. To feel it as if it were in fact physical.

Where you're almost left for dead. You're pounded. Your mind, your thought, your heart, your feelings, your emotions, your body.

It's an anguish. I experienced that in Manila. I came here and I experienced it the first night in Wellington.

And then it occurred to me, both are capital cities. And that's where the powers of the air are most pronounced. And somehow, why did they run me over? Because little thing that I am in myself, I represent something of a kind that constitutes a threat that they recognize.

You take the end seriously. You're being prepared for a consummation that shall make its requirement and that it will not be romantic to suggest that not all of us will survive. That there will be martyrs again.

There will be cracked skulls and blood running into eyes and the kinds of things that we think happen to people in distant places. We need to consider it will happen to people in places like this. That there were people who kill us and claim they're doing God a service.

That we will constitute some threat although we think ourselves and are harmless as doves. Yet to them, what we represent are unwillingness to be fitted into the ecumenical design. Our insistence on this narrow gospel and its promulgation especially to the Jew, a community that they don't want to see stirred perhaps.

Whatever it is, there will be factors that if we determine on being an end time people, eschatologically minded, moving to a conscious conclusion, which means that our every service and activity has got to be something provided toward that end. There's no such thing as just a message in itself. Everything, our activity, our fellowship, our services, are elements in the formation of a people who are apprehending the end and know that there will be ultimate requirement for which every present service and Bible study and so on is provision.

Is that the picture? I love my wife's use of that word. She's Danish. She always adds a syllable.

Picature. I'm asking the church everywhere, you got the picature? You must get the picature. Consciously and willfully.

When you do, the powers of the air recognize something has happened. Something has shifted. And you who have been up till now an object of indifference in which they say, Jesus we know, Paul we know, who are you? All of a sudden know you and take you seriously and give you a new kind of regard and opposition that was not your experience before.

And who wants that? Who wants to experience the harassments and the machinations of these powers? I just gave you a taste of what it means and how they can work a man over in his sleep. Rob him of it and crunch him and leave him almost for dead. They're not a light thing.

So I can almost say, the church that is the church understands the subject of the principalities and the powers of the air. It's not a little cutesy stuff. It's not the issue of individual deliverance to which it has been reduced in our generation.

It's the issue of ultimate conflict with those powers who if they had known, might not have crucified the Lord of Glory. They crucified the Lord of Glory. The instrument was Rome and the willing condescension of Jewish leadership, but they were the architects of that death.

And the cruelty of that death, the savage, brutal treatment was not just the expression of Roman civilization who devised crucifixion, but the powers of darkness that had full sway through that civilization to give expression to its essential character through cruelty. There's a war on ultimate conflict in which we can only employ spiritual weapons. And what does Paul say? We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but

against the principalities and powers, the rulers of this world's darkness.

This present world, they're rulers of this world's darkness. You know it, don't you? Why do my pants keep... I should have had more fish. Okay.

So some of you have heard these things and you've read them, the book Apostolic Foundations. If you don't have that book, sell your shirt, sell whatever it takes. You must have it.

Classic. It's the summation of 30, 40 years of groaning over these realities and seeking to live them out. But in it, I take up the remarkable scripture.

We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but we wrestle against principalities and powers, rulers of this world. We wrestle. So what is the distinction of an apostolic prophetic body? It's a corporate entity that can wrestle and knows against whom it's wrestling and knows that something has got to come out of its deepest gut in order to win in this combat that will require sacrifice, fasting, prayer, discipline.

Because wrestling and I... I am not in the natural a wrestler. I like boxing, but why does Paul use wrestling? Because wrestling is the summation not just of a man's skill and strength, but his grit, his moral determination that he cannot conceive of losing. And whatever it takes in preparation, in investment, in sacrifice to be part of a corporate entity that can wrestle, because it's a we that wrestles.

It's not an individual virtuoso. We wrestle. And unless we are a we, there's no wrestling at all.

But to be that we means to go from our privatistic assemblage of individualities into an entity that is corporate and is the church that can wrestle. Because wrestling is not polite. You snot all over yourself and your sweat runs into your eyes and you're gasping for air and who knows what.

So you'll not be disposed to perform it if you're self-conscious or tidy or polite or respectable, which is characteristic of the atmosphere of our church setting. This is combat. This is struggle.

And it requires the people who are not embarrassed to be on their floor and stretched out in agonizing intercessions and groanings. Why? Because they've been through it together. They've been revealed long before.

They've struggled with one another. They've had their embarrassments, their humiliations. There's nothing now that needs to be concealed or hidden.

It's all hanging out. And that itself is a suffering. That's more than embarrassment.

That's humiliation. That's the cross. That's pain.

To come to a body that is a we who can wrestle is already a statement of the cross. And you'll not have any stomach. You'll not be disposed to leave your privacy and its safety unless you know that you're moving toward a consummation, a conclusion, and you don't want to be found eternally embarrassed by learning then, at the end of the age, that you've lived beneath the glory of God and fallen short of the intention of God in a kind of a safe, predictive Christianity that did not make any ultimate requirement of you.

If you hear me long enough, it's only a matter of time before I use the word ultimate. We're going to face ultimate last days requirement to be to the Jew what we must in their hour of unbelievable severity that will

eclipse any previous trouble that they've known. It will make ultimate requirement of us because we'll be required to extend mercy that they might obtain mercy.

But how shall we extend it if we don't in fact have it? Well, we have it, Art. Yeah, you have it phragologically, you have it technically, you have it as a doctrine, as an article of faith, but that's not going to do Jews a bit of good. They don't want your statement of mercy.

They want palpable mercy. They'll need palpable mercy, the kind that saves them out of death because they'll be marred and batted more than any man. Who should even look upon them if they have no beauty? They'll be despised the world over and harried and pursued by demonic powers that will not be satisfied with anything but their annihilation.

And you're going to take them in? Stinking, mean-spirited, and be caught in the process of doing so? Hey, that might mean for you concentration camp or a death for yourself. Jews have never seen this. Could it well mean that God means that we ought to move them to jealousy? Will be given in that final hour? When they see from us an extension of mercy and unconditional love coming at risk and cost, they'll know that they'll know because we Jews have an uncanny ability to see through and know what is false and true, the phony and the real, and what we'll be seeing and receiving we know cannot be a posture.

It's not an affectation. It's not a display. Something deeply authentic, which is very God, is coming to us through Gentiles at risk of their lives while we're hated.

Well, why don't they hate us? There's something unusual about this people. They're so in God. And it's His mercy they're extending because these are the least of His brethren.

How do we come to that condition and ought we not to be preparing for it now? To be conscious of the end is not really to have a theological disposition but a practical recognition that that end is going to require something that is not presently available in practicality or in our character. We're not there spiritually or morally and we'll never get there independent of our brethren. We'll get there only with those of like mind and heart who are being formed together to be such a body.

That, by its nature, requires more than Sunday services. So how much are we willing to be required of and how far are we willing to go? Am I just spitting out my final breath in vain that there's no real intention to be an apostolic and prophetic entity in this nation? You don't mind talking about it and reading it and letting it infuse your coffee table conversation, but the reality that has got to be such that Jews will recognize very God in what you're able to extend because you have a mercy to extend and not just the principle of it or the thought of it as an article of faith. How did you obtain that mercy? Through your own struggle.

I'll tell you what, dear saints, to go from this privatistic and anonymous thing called church today where nothing is required of us but the dollar in the collection plate and the singing of the hymns into the kind of facticity that I'm putting before you is clearly an ultimate challenge, ultimate requirement, multiple deaths. I've suffered more at Ben Israel than I have suffered anywhere in the world against Jews who are hostile against me or any factor in the world. My greatest suffering has come in the body, which is the church.

Misunderstanding, spitting your guts out, being called an enemy of the gospel after you've sacrificed everything or your humiliation of your wife yelling out for everyone to hear, go tell them what a great saint you are. All of the embarrassments and things that could have been concealed if we had lived privately now come out in abundance in the reality that community is. It's a suffering, saints.

And the only way to get through it, to achieve its purpose, is to receive mercy. We need mercy. How long did it take us to realize that being nice guys before we came to community lasts only a week, 10 days in community.

We're not nice guys enough. And the communion, the plastic little thing with a wafer that we had to tolerate once a month, it was grim and mechanical. And we were glad when it was over.

I thought, well, we'll come to community. Enough of that nonsense. You know what the strange thing was? We couldn't wait.

Not just once a month, once a week. And then it became every day. And we couldn't afford wine.

We had water. But for us, it was water turned to wine because we needed the substance and spirit and essence and power of the life of God merely to be to each other what we ought. So this is going to mean a whole renaissance and review and fresh esteem for the sacraments of God which have fallen into disuse or into trivial employment because our life has not been earnest enough.

Get earnest. Determined to be this, you'll rush to the communion table. And you'll be like me.

Beside the occasions when you take it together with your brethren, you'll be taking it every morning by yourself in your necessary morning and devotional time. Sometimes I take it before my devotional time because I know that I need a fresh implementation of his life even to go through the issues of devotion. I can't do Oswald Chambers' Justice and Spurgeon and my other readings and the psalm for the day and the chapter out of Proverbs.

It'll just be mechanical hash unless I'm coming to it with an intensity and seeking its application and being moved to references in Scripture in which before you know it, two hours have gone. It's an exertion. I need even communion just for the process of devotion, let alone itself working.

So you'll know that you're on the right track when you can't wait for the next occasion to take the Lord's body and the Lord's blood and you'll no longer ever be satisfied to call either of those emblems. The words will jam in your throat. Emblems? This is substance.

This is spirit. This is life and we need it for we live through him and by him and for him and unto him as Paul has said. For of him and through him and to him are all things to whom be glory forever.

Do you know what I'd say to this body that I'm describing for you? Hypothetical body that has this end time view and is able to wrestle? It is also insanely jealous for the glory of God. Figure that one out. So much so they're willing for every sacrifice.

So much so they can bear the humility of community. They can bear the being misunderstood and all of the struggles and whatsoever is required because they don't want to fall short of his glory. This is the distinctive of Paul.

Take the jealousy of God's glory out from Paul and you no longer have Paul. This is the wellspring. This is the animus for his apostolic life.

The jealousy for God's glory. Not the success of the denomination or our ministry or whatever other lesser thing occupies us and we think we have sufficient motivation. Only the jealousy for God's glory will enable you to be his fool.

Only the jealousy for his glory will enable you to be for Israel, for the Jew, what you must because Paul's identification with Israel and his brilliant statement of the mystery of Israel in the church was not because of his own human and natural identification with his kinsmen as a Jew. When he begins chapter nine with, I would wish myself a curse for my brethren's sake, it's not a man speaking out of his racial ethnic identification. It's a man speaking out of his apostolicity because he wants their redemption, not from the level of a Jew as a Jew, but as an apostle for the glory of God.

So the whole great statement ends with, for of him and through him and to him are all things to whom be glory forever. If I could do any last thing for the Church of New Zealand, if I had the means, I would give you a shot. I would give you an injection of the jealousy for the glory of God.

If I had any one thing that I could dispense, I would give you that because if you have that, everything else follows. We'll not get it by any means except being infused by the life of God, which by its nature is a jealousy for his glory. That's an apostolic distinctive that we need to query, search, pray for, obtain, or we will fall short of the kind of life of sacrifice that true Church will require.

Only his jealousy for glory will enable us to bear Jews in their mean-spirited ingratitude when we encounter them or they encounter us in the last days. If you're easy to be brought to a huff and a puff, and you're not receiving appreciation for your sacrifice, and if that's the way they're going to be, well, tough on them. You will have missed the historic moment for which all things have been moving from the beginning to the end.

Because we read of Ezekiel in chapter 20, I will meet with you God says to Israel, with a fury poured out, twice it's spoken, in the wilderness of the nations. And I'm the author of that statement at some previous visit to New Zealand that the whole of New Zealand will be the wilderness of the nations for Jews. Not just a corridor, not just some rural area, the whole of New Zealand will be the wilderness of nations for Jews who will fly through it coming from God knows where, from the Philippines, from Bangkok, from San Francisco, because the stratagem of God will not be the shortest distance between two points.

But uprooting sophisticated, urban Jews who have never cried to God, you get this morning's tape, will find themselves in such places of remoteness and obscurity and hiddenness and fear that they need to be encountered by those who in their mercy extended will see the face of God, and not mere religious obligation. If they see only your dutiful, obligatory, evangelical face, we have missed the historic moment. They've got to see a strange people who can take their abuse, take their mean-spirited attitude, their anger, because they're going to interpret this last uprooting, this anti-Semitism as another expression of the bankruptcy of Christianity, just as they have interpreted the Nazi Holocaust, and which to some degree is true.

Something like my experience and encounter with my Jewish kinsmen when I speak at university campuses as an ex-Marxist and they see the name Katz and I come into collision with them, and the anger sometimes is vitriolic. You know how Jews look at a man like me? He's a traitor. Why else would a Jew in his right mind become a Christian and promulgate that Christianity to Jews and dissuade them from their Judaism, to adopt some kind of pagan hocus-pocus of some myth of death and resurrection and virgin birth and dissuade us from our historic truth? That man has got to be a traitor.

He's in it for something. It can't be in his right mind. There you stand.

And they hold you accountable for the Holocaust, for the pogroms, for the persecutions, for the crusaders and the wholesale obliteration of Jewish communities as they travel through Europe and looted and pillaged and raped. I'm just reading a book right now. David Barron.

Before I fell asleep this afternoon, as long as I could keep my eyes open, I was reading about the treatment of the Jews in the Middle Ages. God! Germany, France, England, the expulsions, the looting of them by their removal because they were in the banking business, which a Christian could not require usury. So they were functioning in a role that would bring envy, resentment, and bitterness to those who have to pay interest to Jews and watch them prosper.

And the way in which you can be saved from having to pay back is to kill them. Take their possessions and appropriate and loot their possessions. It's a bloodbath.

Do your homework for God's sake and read what these people have suffered at the hands of ostensible Christians. The pope, the bishops, they ran into the castles for protection. They could not obtain it.

The doors burst down and it was be baptized or die. And they died, sanctifying the name of the Lord, killing their own wives, killing their own children, and appointing someone who killed them and then leaked to his own destruction. Women waited down their clothing with stones and jumped into rivers and streams holding their children who would rather perish than face the prospect of baptism.

That's the history. And every Jew knows it without studying. He's intuitive.

He's taken it up with his mother's milk that's in the air. Christianity has been our undoing. Of course, they can't distinguish between born again.

It's all Christian. My mother wondered how I could ever go to Germany who would not set her foot in a folks home. The cards are stacked against us when this people will come to us out of their last extremity.

And what we ought to them will be the issue of their survival, their redemption, and their return to Zion that there might be everlasting joy upon their heads, mourning and sighing, you cannot have a view of the end and omit God's final dealings with Israel. For a time of Jacob's trouble and universal sifting through all nations, as we're told in Amos 9, I will sift you through all nations. Better to believe that, anticipate that, and prepare for that, even if it does not come.

Then it should come and find you unprepared, overwhelmed, because when it does come, I'll tell you this, it will come suddenly. I'm still on the first paragraph. Well, we can stay up together until 3 o'clock this morning and you can see me off.

Why should I suffer alone? Okay. When the powers of the air see us with this disposition, this willingness, this embrace, this mentality, we're mocked. We're a threat to be opposed, upon whom their vicious spike will be ventilated, because such a body will find itself in felt disjuncture and enmity with the world.

One of the greatest compliments I ever got from the Assemblage of God pastor hearing me speak to a college group, he said, I never heard a man who more hates the world than this outcast. We will be in disjuncture with the world. We will be increasingly ill at ease and not at home.

This world is spiraling downward, and its moral character will become increasingly offensive. We cannot give ourselves to it or remain in silence about it. Something will be required from us.

We will be in increasing disjuncture with the world, and the friction will be evident. With our kids in school, society, the things that are taking place, and that is a necessary character, characteristic of such a church. It's conscious of the evil that is in the world, and knows its origin from below.

Its values, its systems, its false values will be more and more acutely discerned and repudiated. You know when I had the TV set removed from my house years ago? When I came in one evening, and all of the kids from the community were glued to this TV set, and they were watching something about the Olympics and the love affair between a Russian woman athlete and an American, there was no sex, there was no foul language, there was nothing in it that was visibly vile, and when I saw what they were watching, something rose up in me, in such indignation that I did not even have a moment to explain myself. I didn't just shut the cotton-picking thing off, I pulled out the plug, and that thing was out of the house the next day, because there's nothing more vile, more dangerous, more evil, than that which purports to be good.

Romantic love. It was out of the world and the wisdom of the world and the values of the world, and here are the children of the community sucking it up as if it were going out of style. They would have been less affected if they had watched pure pornography than to see something that is ostensibly good and romantic but utterly false, and the values of which are vile if you can but see it.

And you need to see it. I don't know of a church in any other nation, perhaps Switzerland, that has as much requirement to see through the things that are apparent to the things that are real than the church in New Zealand. I myself would be in Ghana if I lived here.

I'd be seduced by the environment, the beauty of it, the clear skies, the sun, the beauty of the whole thing. It needs to be contended against and seen through. You have to develop a faculty to see through the things that are apparent to the things that are real.

In a word, you have to become like Paul. Seeing the things that are invisible and eternal and the eternal weight of glory will give you a proper seeing toward the things that are visible while the powers of the world want to suck you in and draw you in to say that what is visible constitutes what is real. Are you guys following me? I'll tell you what, if you persist in this, and it won't be easy, and you'll be a mocked person because you'll be looked upon as sour or disgruntled or, what's wrong with this? All the other kids are doing it.

My friend's mother lets him do it. Why are you so upset over something that does not seem to be apparently evil? That's why it's evil. What does it say in the last days? Perilous times shall come.

Men shall become lovers of self, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God. Why doesn't the scripture say in the last days dangerous times will come? That's a word we're more familiar with. Perilous? What's the difference between perilous and dangerous? And if you're not asking questions like that, you're not the Biblical exegete that you must become.

Theology is not for theologians only. It's our inheritance, our legacy. We need to be reading these giants and studying them, Carl Barth on Romans and John Stopp and various other commentators and the treasury of David and Spurgeon, and being able to draw out and compare word for word.

When we come to perilous, we need to stop and hold that word in suspension and dwell upon it. What's the difference between peril and danger? Danger is evident. There's the sign, danger.

But peril is hidden, unseen, disguised, clothed, made to appear as something other than what it in fact is. The church of the last days will be a discerning body that sees through the appearances of things that purport to be good and for which the world desires our subscription and to recognize it as the deepest evil that has its origin from below and not only to avoid it but to blow the whistle on it and reveal it for what it is to those who are naive and have not the advantage of our discernment. Is that the picture? Then you're in trouble.

When was it that Paul and Silas were publicly stripped? What an embarrassment for orthodox Jews. Beaten to a pulp with the cat and nine tails, 39 strokes that left the flesh open and went right to the bone because on each of those nine strands was a piece of bone, a piece of glass, a piece of metal, something that would cut. Why? Because they delivered a single woman who made her masses much profit by her soothsaying, by her occultic, demonic ability to read fortunes.

And when she was delivered by one word from Paul, being grieved, not just annoyed. And this did she many days. Well, why didn't he take care of the situation from the beginning? Because the Kairos had not yet come.

Because she's not just looking for the elimination of inconvenience or annoyance. He's a man in God. And there came a moment in God when the Lord had him to turn and say, come out of her.

And it came out that very hour. And when her masters saw that their hope of profit was gone, when they had touched a profit motive, when they had put their finger on the pulse of the world and the heart of its system, they were dragged before the authorities, out into the marketplace where the action really is. And these men, being Jews, were exceedingly trouble our city, and they caught it.

They were beaten to a pulp, thrown into the dungeon, and be made fast in buns in the lower dungeon of the stink of that excretia and urine and the moanings of prisoners. They had touched the world system at its heart. Profit.

I'm not calling for some kind of adolescent socialism and anti-capitalism. It's much deeper than that. God is calling for an erudite, mature seeing of the world as system, predicated on false values to which the whole of humanity has been conscripted, spitting out their lives in meaningless activity, without any consciousness whatever that the purpose of life is being found of God and being fitted for eternity, caught up with merchandise and having and spending and getting.

Their kids are the prime object of the giants of commerce of our time. What kind of Nike shoes they're wearing? The black kids in America wear their uniforms. Baggy dungarees and shirt out of their pants and a big t-shirt, everything is oversized, tapped backwards, ostentatious jewelry, even with a cross, a jacket of a certain sport kind.

The current sport shoe that is now most to be desired with air, they'll murder to get it. And if they have not that uniform on, how does a kid dare go to school and suffer the reproach and the rejection of his peers because he's not appropriately dressed? He can have on his back a hundred to two hundred dollars worth of junk and he better have it if he's going to get by socially. They're manipulated.

They have become the objects of commerce and they themselves are being made merchandise. The souls of men are being made merchandise. Not so bad here as in America, but how long will it take you to play catch up? So those who are apostolic and prophetic corporately have a maturity and an insight, a

discernment, a sensitivity to see through the things that are apparent to the things that are real because after all, what in the last analysis does apostolic mean if it doesn't mean real, if it doesn't mean reality? What is that reality? How is it obtained? How is it maintained? Whatever it is, it's going to be different in every point and particular to what the world offers and has men to pursue.

We'll be in opposition and we'll blow the whistle on it because people are going insane. They're beserk. Their lifestyles, their misuse of time and energy, their bodies, obesity and America, one third of all Americans are obese.

Not just overweight, obese and we're talking about kids before they've entered their adolescence. They're already mountains of flesh because of the fast food business and the various other aspects of the culture, drinking pop and sugar and all of that jazz and living in an undisciplined way. How shall they have a disciplined home? They have only one parent, but they have one.

Everything is a quick fix in energy, so there's a kind of a madness for which God has called the church to be an island of insanity in a world going increasingly berserk. Now we need to turn to the woman and cast that spirit out from her that she herself should not be a piece of merchandise. And when we do, when we blow the whistle, when we call people to the consideration of true values that would affect a lifestyle that takes away their commercial prospect, you'll find an opposition to yourself like nothing you've known before.

It gave to Paul and Silas grounds for extreme beatings and thrown into the lower dungeon fast with their hands and feet in stocks without any hope of deliverance and the assurance of gangrene and death by a man who was faithful to the heavenly vision and all he did was find a woman who's a sort of purple and a former demoniac. And there was the enemy at his elbow saying, you really missed the Lord. Look what it's got you.

You thought that you were being faithful to the heavenly vision and now you're in a place in the world outside from Asia, no contact with the sending body. You'll rot and die in gangrene and it was all futile. There was no numerical increase.

Only two souls were affected and you're finished. And at midnight it says, Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises to God. You know it's a privilege to suffer for Christ's sake? When you see you willing to bear the prospect of suffering in the extension of your mercy to them, not grimly but joyously, they will be out of their skulls.

Not only will they be out of their skulls, but the powers of the air will be finished in that moment. When they see a rejoicing in suffering, they are at an end of their ability to intimidate, threaten and work their wiles. What can they do with someone who rejoices in his suffering? That's why Paul so complimented those saints in Hebrews chapter 10 who took their stripping joyfully, knowing that in heaven they had a greater recompense.

They knew in themselves it wasn't doctrine. They knew in themselves that though the stripping was painful, there would be a recompense in heaven that would far exceed the loss. And they took the stripping with joy.

They would need not have suffered it if they were not so identified with Christ and with his cause. When you can rejoice in the afflictions that come, by that identification, the powers of the air are finished. They're

broken.

They have nothing that they can play upon to intimidate and threaten. This is the final statement of a reality with which they cannot face. But how to come to it? Tell me when you tire.

Of course, I'm still on page one. Okay. So that kind of reality and the ability to blow the whistle on a deceptive world is already a first installment and a harbinger of a kingdom to come.

We've come to a reality of a kind that is heavenly, that can only be attained corporately. It's already a visible aspect of that which will be eternal, now already in the earth. Another kingdom, another mentality, another set of values, another appreciation, another quality of fellowship, of sacrifice, of joy unspeakable, full of glory.

It's another kingdom. And when people will glimpse it, it will be sufficient to emancipate and deliver those who are the deceived victims of the kingdom of this present world. So such a people are living out a conscious cosmic drama.

Have you ever used the word cosmic? Or is it just me? Is there something in me that likes the grandiose? Or is this elementary to true faith? We are involved in a cosmic moral drama. We're privileged to be called to be participants in its outworking and in its consummation. If you don't see it, don't believe it, then of necessity your church life and your Christianity is predictable and dull, and one Sunday is like another.

I see my life set in a context that is of cosmic sweep, of eternal significance, where every moment counts. That's why we volunteer to have this moment, one last opportunity, to bring something of a kind that if it's not given, it will not be obtained. You have a heightened sense of reality, a heightened sense of seriousness.

There's nothing light. It's the end of lightness in the church. It's the end of the casual, charismatic air.

There's a new seriousness that comes into the body, a high seriousness, but it doesn't make you morbid. It doesn't make you an object of being strange in that way, though you will be a stranger pilgrim sojourner. Seriousness is appropriate to what we are about as saints.

We're involved and called to a great cosmic drama that had its inception even before the advent of history. It was in God's heart and mind when he created what he has. It required the coming of his son in painful death and sacrifice as to be the pivot and hub of the whole unfolding of this redemptive drama.

And the genius in the heart of it is moral. When have you spoken that word last? When have you seen that the issues that are before you, whatever their content, is in the last analysis a moral issue, that we are not permitted the luxury of silence when something is happening in our society, like the legalization of prostitution and, I was told today, 12, 13, 14-year-old kids selling themselves for \$5 a bang. To be silent and know that is to be immoral or amoral.

If the church loses its moral character, it's lost everything. And God's intention to give men the dignity they deserve is in their moral life. We have to be guardians and jealous for what is moral, cultivate the sense of it, see the issue that is at hand and its moral root.

I've written letters to the editor in Bemidji, Minnesota, whether they're publishing. I'm writing letters to Jewish men that come through. I'm living in New York City now.

I attend lectures, debates, and forums, and if I can't raise a question publicly, I'll sit down later and send the speaker an email letter and then send copies of it to the three Jewish publications. Only in one instance was I published. But here's the point.

Whether I'm published or not, whether these men will receive my letter or not, I am not at liberty to be silent. I have got to respond. There's a moral requirement that does not allow for my passivity.

It's not whether it will be received or whether it will work. It's rather a matter that what we are in God requires something to be expressed, even if it falls on deaf ears. It's not the issue of utility.

It's the issue of what is moral. When we come to a church of this kind, the issue of the gifts of the Spirit and of the Holy Spirit is no longer a denominational question. That is only the prerogative of Pentecostals or Charismatics.

It becomes the imperative for all the church. This is God's nuts and bolts provision for the church of the last days, fighting it out and struggling against the world and dealing with the powers of the air, being formed into community and taking the purpose of its being seriously, needs all of the panoply and blessedness of God's exquisite gift of His Spirit and its expression. Because we're going to face unforeseen circumstances for which no past experience will have prepared us.

And in that moment, we're going--we will need to hear a prophetic word. We will need to hear a tongue and an interpretation. We will need to receive an explicit direction because we are at a crossroad where one wrong misstep will be fatal for ourselves and for others.

So unless we respect, esteem this remarkable provision and give the environment that God intended for it to function, we will lose a critical faculty gift of God for our last days' direction. Remember Israel when the three Gentile armies, the uncircumcised, were ready to do in Judah? They were facing odds that were overwhelming. Crisis of ultimate kind and King Jehoshaphat called the people together, declared a fast.

It was a serious matter that justified a fast. And there they stood before the king with their children. Their national life was at stake.

There was no apparent answer. And in that crisis, a voice rang out, a prophetic cry. This is not your battle, the Lord says.

This is my battle. But go ye out against them tomorrow. And when they heard that word, they fell on their faces.

The Lord had spoken, giving them a hope, a confidence that they would go out. But tomorrow, to hold the prophecy that came this afternoon and go out tomorrow in the cold great dawn when your humanity recognized as you're facing overwhelming odds? That word of prophecy was a life saving provision for a nation. Why did they fall on their faces in the hearing of it? Who was this guy that gave that prophecy anyway? Was this some guy looking for a little notoriety to become conspicuous, give a little word of encouragement? Because if that was not God's word and they'd go out tomorrow, they're dead.

But when they heard the word, they went down on their faces and worshiped the Lord. Why? Because we're even told who it is who spoke that. He was a priest, known by name, known by character, and that when he speaks a prophecy, there's no question who is its author.

They knew just as they knew when the king said, who are the sweet singers of Israel? Because it was not a professional worship thing. The people knew who the sweet singers were, and they said this one and that one. And he set those sweet singers in advance of the army, and they went off singing.

And when the enemy heard their praise and worship, they were confounded and slew one another, and Judah was three days taking the sword. What a lesson for us out of the Old Testament. We need to know who's speaking that prophecy.

We need to know who's laying hands on us. And indeed, if we don't have hands laid on, what wisdom do we have in leaving New York City and going to Singapore, and then to New Zealand, and then to Australia, and then to Kenya, then to Uganda, then to Cameroon, then to Burkina Faso, in seven nations in seven weeks, except you're sent by the laying on of hands. For a sent one is apostolic.

Sending is the root of the genius of the word. But sent by whom? By one, by those who lay hands on us and send us forth with blessing. That is more than just a little sentimental gesture at their convenience.

Because having laid hands on the sent one, they are signifying to the powers of the earth to God, we will continue in intercession and identification with this one who comes out from our midst and whom we are sending. That's why you're receiving what you're receiving. That's why Singapore received what it has received.

That's why what we spoke in the tapes that my brother made at the retreat that just ended yesterday are sublime. What a rhema from God. What the pre-incarnate Christ who has ever considered.

I must consider if we are to give God the reckoning and the glory that is his by factoring in what he was even before he came. Never before spoken. Starting in Singapore with dread.

How do you begin with 700 Chinese on the issue of sin and judgment? Paralyzing except your sent. Sending is everything sent. And in the last analysis of I had the time and you had the disposition, everything here is calculated to make you a sending body.

That we know whose hands they are that are laid upon us. Because I'm not going to let any character who wants to get into the act lay hands on me. Because whatever he is in his moral character and life will be transmuted.

I will lose something. Something will be removed. I'll be dulled if a character of that kind lays hands on me.

I want to know who they are. I want to be in relationship with them in a continuous way. I know the character of their life and I can receive that blessing.

We need to come back again to these elementary realities that the first church knew that was a glory to God and was the expression of his power. This is just page one and we can hardly bear it to hear it let alone to affect it. So, because I'm full of mercy, I'll not go further.

But pray blessing on the Church of New Zealand. I was one of those naive ones, was it 20 or more years ago when I came here for the first time? Traveling the world and if someone had said, in which country would you say is a Christian nation? I would eventually have said, New Zealand. I'm getting a Holy Ghost chill now just to rehearse this with you.

That was 20 some odd years ago. If they ask me today, I don't think I could say it. I think God wants me to be able to say it.

You're not in the G12 list of the most prominent economic powers of the world. You're a backwater. You're something much smaller, limited, but for what? Who has established your geography and your remoteness and the character of this nation whose whole purpose would not be an exaggeration to say is for the Church.

For God has created all things and all of that through the Church. The manifold wisdom of God might be demonstrated to the principalities and powers of the air. It's not for merchandise.

It's not for civilization and all the rest as much as it's to be admired and respected. It's for the purposes of God in the last days. For the consummation of all things, the conclusion of the age, the coming of the Lord, His kingdom, His glory, His righteousness in the earth.

It's to see Israel redeemed that they might return to Zion with everlasting joy on their heads knowing they'll not again have to face the terrible disaster and scandal that the time of Jacob's trouble is that will exceed the brutality of the Nazi time and take a greater number of victims. Their everlasting joy is not only their knowledge that this will not again be required, but that they have come to a place of centrality to all nations and extolled and elevated and be made very high that those nations that will not recognize that God has honored this people who have so defamed Him and blasphemed His name in all nations that now they become the center and the hub of Zion not because of their deserving but because of His grace, because of His mercy, because of His election, because of His choosing. Israel's redemption is a statement of God as God and to say that God has established the church for that purpose and that this is the primary focus of the church and especially of New Zealand is not an exaggerated statement.

Unless you see that, unless you believe that, and give yourself an appropriate measure for that, you are living beneath the glory of God, you're lackluster Christians, you've lost your distinctive and your call and you'll eternally rue the failure. Let New Zealand be the outstanding statement of the restored church in its apostolic and prophetic constituency to be admired by the church of all the world of the reality for which God gave His Son and that Jews must meet or they will altogether perish and not make it to Zion. So Lord, put a seal on this.

There's so much yet unsaid but enough has been said that if we aptly dwell upon it, the rest will follow. So bless this congregation, Lord. You've got it where you've got them.

And the sudden notice of a meeting that was just haphazardly struck because there was somehow time to be found for it. And insert this, my God, together with all the rich volume of the speakings that have issued in these days and let it come into the very foundations of the church. Let there even be a determination tonight by as many as have ears to hear that God is requiring.

There's something more than what we understood and it's going to require sacrifice to obtain because my house is a house of sacrifice or it's not my house. So come, precious God, bless this people, so ordinary in their appearance, so undistinguished except for certain notable exceptions. And isn't it just like you to take the mockery, undistinguished, ordinary, weak, plain thing and make that the ingredients pertaining to your glory? Come, my God, and bless this church.

Bless this church. And may my Jewish kinsmen who have not even a whisper of understanding of what is being spoken and expressed and transacted here tonight be the recipients in a soon enough coming time that when it comes will come suddenly but will not find the church of New Zealand unprepared that is the church. Because you have spoken, because you've been heard, because it has been received, and because it will set in motion all the things that are needful for their deliverance, their rescue, their salvation, their return.

A glorified church, a restored nation, a kingdom come, the king himself. Thank you, Lord. Seal this word.

Let it be effectual, I pray. We thank you and give you praise. In Jesus' name, God's people said, Amen.

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