

As we're about to observe the Day of Atonement, starting tomorrow evening which pictures our becoming at one with God in unity and oneness of life and as we're about to observe the latter part of God's plan contained in the meaning of the Feast of Tabernacles and the Last Great Day, it's good that on this Sabbath we focus on the One who has made all this possible, our Father in heaven. That's what this sermon is entitled, *Our Father*.

We are so blessed. The Almighty God has so richly blessed us. It's incredible when we focus on things like that. We are blessed to be able to see His plan, His purpose, His way of life, the truth of life, His great purpose for our lives and His family. We are so blessed to see Him. God's given us that ability because if He hadn't drawn us, hadn't begun to call us as He has, we wouldn't be able to see God, we wouldn't be able to see that plan and that purpose. So we're going to focus on some of those things that He, God, God Almighty has blessed us to see even more clearly over the last several years.

Our Father from the beginning has so loved us. It's an awesome thing. So often when people are drawn into the Church, they have a difficult time sometimes grasping even the beginning of God's love, because we equate His love with human love and God is not like that. God is so merciful, so patient, filled with love. His way is love. John just makes a statement, "God is love." And that word is agape which is a love that comes from God. Other scriptures, I love the way it explains it in the Bible, gives types of definitions if you will, and it explains it as a sacrificing love. To love mankind, especially, is a totally giving kind of love and that which was manifested in the life of Jesus Christ, so that kind of love is giving to the point of self-sacrifice, within the human life anyway. And it's an awesome thing to understand, to begin to see God, to get to the point where we understand and know God better and better as we continue to grow. So again, God has so loved us from the beginning, before we even existed. Awesome thing to understand.

So let's be reminded of His purpose from the beginning. It's good to go through some of these things. It's good that we focus on a lot of this before we approach the Feast, before we go through the Day of Atonement, before we go into the Feast of Tabernacles and finally the Last Great Day and those things that we're looking forward to in the future that are about to come to pass, to begin that process of a new world, a new age.

Let's turn over to **Isaiah 45** – we'll focus on some of these areas so that we can have a stronger focus on God Almighty as we enter this Feast season because so much of the attitude, the mind that we need to have as we approach and enter the Feast is to have a spirit of gratitude, of thankfulness to God Almighty for what He's given to us, for what He has made possible for each and every one of us and so it's good for us to indeed be in awe of Almighty God. **Isaiah 45:5** – it says, **I am the LORD**, and that word there, I always appreciated the way Mr. Armstrong read it because just like in the Old King James, I don't speak with the 'thee's' and 'thou's', it's just an automatic translation in your mind when you speak, its like someone who would be listening as some do in some areas. I think of over in Europe, today, as the sermon is being given, that oftentimes what they do, especially when I'm present there, there'll be a few that have a difficult time understanding English and so as they're hearing it in English they'll speak it in Dutch, they'll translate it automatically right away, and that's an awesome thing to understand that kind of ability because I sure don't have it, but with English I'm able to do it from Old English to modern English. But this word here, when you see the capital letters for God, all letters are capital G, O, and the

D, in the Old King James, or the words LORD, it's the same word as a whole throughout the Bible, the Old Testament, and it's the word for Yahweh and Mr. Armstrong just automatically always translated it as the Eternal. God says, **I am the Eternal**, because that's what the word means. Yahweh means the Self-Existing One, the Eternal. And He said, **and there is none else, there is no one else, there is no God**, and that word there is the word for Elohim. We're going to stop as we go into another area after a bit here and take a look at things that will help us to better understand the uniqueness of why God gave this word to the Israelites. Why God chose this specific word that is so unique that it has caused a lot of problems with translations. Even in Genesis, in the beginning, that it's so awkward to translate some of the things that we see that God said because of the kind of word that it is. It's a uniplural word and so they have translated awkwardly and they haven't translated it well, because man doesn't understand the plan of God. They don't understand why God chose that word. Words mean so much. It conveys the thought, and I think of the word of God, it is the mind, the being of God and God conveys those things to us in words and words mean a lot, especially with God, and the word of God, the truth of God.

So, He says, **there is none else**, there's no one else, **there is no God/there is no Elohim**, unique word because it means there is no God family. There is no family of God **but me**: Why did He say it that way? Yes, He has a plan and purpose, He wants us to understand that indeed the plan is for a family, but there are reasons why, especially in some of these things over and over again with the Israelites that He began in the very early parts, especially when you go back to Genesis and Exodus when God worked with Moses because the first 5 books were basically compiled and put together by Moses and by those who were with him at that time, of those things that they saved and put into scripture that God inspired that would be a part of scripture. And so very powerfully, this word conveys a great deal; but there are more reasons why and connected with it all God wants us to understand the importance of family, an eternal family. But in the beginning, and through time, there's only been 1 that's in that family: Yahweh – that's what He's saying. There's only 1 – **there is no one else in Elohim. There is no God, Elohim, beside me: I girded you, it says, though you have not known me: That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me.** This is an awesome thing that we've gone through in the last many years beginning in 2005 because God brought us to a point in time to understand such a basic truth, something that He hid from us because the reality is we can't understand the truths of God until He reveals it to us and there were some things that God wanted to remain hidden, not revealed. Just like with Pentecost. That was a great trial upon God's Church and that has been used properly and misused through time by those who want to twist and distort things, those who want to change something will use the excuse of Pentecost by saying, "Oh well, you know, if Pentecost had to be changed, maybe there are other things, and this is one of those things that we need to look at as well," and so they've misused it in order to find something else to change or justify.

An awesome thing that we've gone through in time. God kept that back from Mr. Armstrong. He didn't give it to Mr. Armstrong to understand that Pentecost was always on a Sunday. We thought it was on a Monday for many, many years in the Church, because God was leading Mr. Armstrong out of the Protestant world into the truth. His background was very strong in the Protestant world, and for 50 years God was restoring truth to the Church because by the time of Sardis, everything had died out except for 3 basic truths. Incredible. And so, the same is true for us. There are things that God hadn't revealed. We hadn't been taken totally out of the trinity yet. Mr. Armstrong understood that there was no trinity. Mr. Armstrong understood that the holy spirit is not a being, but it's the power of God Almighty, but what he wasn't given to understand was that Jesus Christ hadn't eternally existed... that concept that is in the trinity... that Jesus Christ and God the Father and this being the Holy Spirit, the Holy Ghost, you know, is something that's existed for eternity. Not true. The holy spirit has because it's the power of God, it's not a being, but Jesus Christ had a beginning. He had a beginning in human life

and then in the God family. And so God's revealing that through time – that there was no one else beside Him. There was only Yahweh Elohim. **I am the Eternal, and there is none else/there is no-one else.**

Dropping down to **verse 18 - For thus says the Eternal who created the heavens;** makes it very clear that Yahweh created the heavens, its God Almighty. **God himself,** it says in this case here, it's **Elohim Himself,** because there's only one in the family. He's the one who did it; **who formed the earth and made it; He has established it, He created it not in vain,** this word here, a unique word because its 'tohu' in the Hebrew. **He created it not in confusion, and without form.** It had purpose and form in the beginning. There was life upon this earth and God, from the very beginning, created the earth in a unique way, that's what led to the understanding God gave Mr. Armstrong in time to realize that there had been a great war and what Satan had done and the rebellion that took place and the earth that was destroyed and then when we come on the scene in Genesis, it says, this is how the earth was, and then God began to remould and refashion things so that life could be put on the earth again. So it says in the beginning that God didn't create it that way. It wasn't created in tohu. **He formed it to be inhabited: I am Yahweh, the Eternal; and there is none else.**

Let's notice another one as well, **Isaiah 40:28** – and it says, **Have you not known? Have you not heard that the everlasting God, the Eternal, Yahweh the Creator of the ends of the earth; faints not, neither is weary?** There's no tiring with God. He's not like man. **There is no searching of His understanding.** Even with the Bible, people cannot search out and understand God! They can't understand the purpose of God, that's why there are so many religions out here. That's so awesome to understand. Thousands of ideas and beliefs about God in this world, out of this book, out of the Old Testament and the New Testament, and they can't come to understand unless God communicates it to the mind and reveals it because it's spiritual; the understanding is something that has to come as a result of God's spirit that reveals it. So it says, **There is no searching of His understanding,** to know the ways of God, the mind of God, the being of God unless God just reveals things to you and even then we're only able to grasp a small measure. That's why I'm so in awe and dumbfounded by a truth and a reality that within the God family, once the God family has been established – not just the 144,000, not just those who are going to be added later on that come as a result of the millennium, not just because of those who come as a result of the Great White Throne – the billions that are going to be there – but after the entire God family has been established, the family is going to continue to be learning throughout all eternity. God is so great and so mighty and so vast, truly, that we're going to continue to learn into eternity. We cannot grasp that, we truly can't.

And so, as we enter the Feast season we need to reflect on the beauty of those things that are around us that we tend to take for granted. As human beings, we take for granted the beauty that exists around us, that we're able to drink in of that which God just physically created to give us a greater fullness of life. Colour... colour that our eyes are able to take in, beauty around us of things that so often after a time we just take for granted and we don't think about God...that God gave us that ability! Everything we have out here God has given it to us, but as human beings, as time goes on, we tend to take things for granted. That's why I love some of the architecture around here in Arizona. Every place we travel we see so many things in the world that are unique and different and I love the way they've captured certain things. I'm amazed by the freeways here and some of the rock and how they keep it so nice... some of the different colours they've used to create some of the Indian designs and so forth that are out there, of architecture from some of the tribes and the like in the region and the huge cactus... what are those? Saguaro? They have these along the freeway and they've blended them in that are unique because it fits this part of the world. And if you live in this area, it'd be easy to begin to take for

granted. I know people do that all of the time out here, but we shouldn't. We should appreciate. I have seen more things out here blooming than I ever have when we've traveled to this area and some of the beauty and some of the kinds of plants and flowers that are out there, gifts that God has given to us to drink in, that are absolutely beautiful. And whatever we do, we need to think in those terms – to thank God every day for those things that, as human beings, if we're not careful we begin to take for granted. It is so easy to do that in human life, to take things for granted.

Especially during the Feast season we need to think upon and we're going to hear a sermon on the first day that Terry Wrozek has given that's already recorded for the welcome at the Feast, and he is talking about certain things regarding rejoicing at the Feast and so forth and it's awesome to think about some of the things that God has given to us and that sermon is going to point us back to this again – the importance of being thankful, of recognizing what we have that God has given to us. It's so vast, it truly is. And that will just make your Feast much richer and much more enjoyable.

Let's go back to **Genesis 1** and look at some of this beginning and some of the things that are connected here with Isaiah that we've just read. In **Genesis 1:1** – things that we understand that the world does not. The world doesn't grasp that the world didn't begin 6000 years ago. There are people that are in such religious confusion who fight science and science fights them because science thinks they're a bunch of idiots for thinking that the world has only been here for 6000 years! And they ARE! To think the world has only been here for 6000 years... all you have to do is go out and look around a little bit. I think of one minister who went so far in his thinking and talking because his mind was kind of that way and it was like – “well, God could have created the things in those fossils and stuff just to cause people problems, so they could believe what they want to believe.” And I think... DUH! I hope you understand what I'm saying. He would go out here and see some of these formations and think well, that's the way God created it so that man would stumble purposely. Not so that man could learn from it, that the reality is that there used to be oceans covering some areas of the world that are far inland today. That's why as a child I could go out in Kansas and find sharks teeth. It was once covered in water. You could see the shoreline by the topography of the land! We could go down after it would rain in these chalky areas and the rain would wash it away and you could see these shining sharks teeth. They find dinosaurs in that area, they found some different bones that they've taken to Universities and stuff from some of those areas along that same shelf – all the way through Kansas, because up on the land part there were land animals and in the water? Guess what? There were fish! I think of this one fish at Hays college in Kansas. There's this huge fish on a wall and there's a small fish inside of it – a fish in a fish, the bones being there. Prehistoric. And so science doesn't understand the truth of it and religion in the world doesn't understand the truth of it so they get in these huge arguments sometimes – and religious people try to prove that the earth was created by God 6,000 years ago and you think, how sad, pathetic that is, because science and the truth of God compliment each other, if man only knew that but they don't. But you can understand it because you understand what it says in Genesis 1.

**In a beginning**, it's A beginning, not THE beginning, **In a beginning God, Elohim created the heaven and the earth. And the earth**, so it's talking about a particular beginning and that in the very beginning God created it all. And then, **verse 2, and the earth was without form, and void**; we just read in Isaiah where He didn't create it that way, because that word is tohu and bohu in Hebrew, and it says back in Isaiah that God didn't create it that way, that He created it to be inhabited. Something happened., In Genesis you have a few chapters that cover huge periods of time – even by the time you get to Moses – huge periods of time have been covered and people don't understand because a lot of the story is left out. And so people just interject their own thoughts and ideas and they don't understand that something happened, millions of years – where the earth was out of it's orbit – the sun was there and had been

there for millions of years but the light couldn't even come through to the earth's surface. There was no life on the earth anymore, because like a nuclear winter, there was that which was in the atmosphere and prevented those things from coming through. That's why in the very beginning it talks about some of the things that God did and why He separated certain things as He did and the land mass like He did so that the earth could be inhabited again. He did that over a period and He rested then on the 7<sup>th</sup> day, so then 6 days He did certain things, but the earth was already here. It was already here, **and the earth was without form and void; or as it is more perfectly translated, became without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the spirit of Elohim, of God, moved upon the face of the waters.** So everything you read here about God in the beginning – it's Elohim. Isaiah said there's only one, there's none else – there's just Yahweh Elohim – we know that. Amazing the ideas and confusion that come out of this though.

**And the spirit of Elohim moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.** It wasn't that there was no light beyond the earth. I think of some of the places they're finding now, I can't comprehend it – 14 billion light years away – something that could have been created out there billions and billions of years ago where the light could just now be arriving to the earth from the time it was created. I can't comprehend that, that there is light that has left certain places that the Hubble Telescope is seeing – that the light, from the time it originated, because of a sun, or a galaxy and the light from all those sun's in that galaxy of a hundred billion or however many billions of stars there might be and it has taken 14,000,000,000 years to reach the earth? I don't grasp that. Things that can endure and exist and be and continue to exist as long as God sustains it – incredible. The might of Almighty God, of the Eternal God and He says He calls them all by name. I gave a sermon one time at a Feast many, many years ago and talked about some of those things, that if you were able to spit out the names of stars and you did so many a second, of all the galaxies that they see out there now and the hundreds of billions of stars of each galaxy... it would take you trillions of years just to name them and God Almighty created them and He knows them by name. Whew! We can't grasp things like that. And He sustains it all by His power.

Going on **verse 4 - And God saw the light that it was good and God divided the light from the darkness and God called the light day and darkness He called night and the evening and the morning were the first day.** So it had things to do with the earth and the rotation of the earth and things of that matter that God was dividing and setting in time here that becomes very obvious by what He says as we go on and read more of the story. It is good to read **verse 14** here – but everything was meant for a great purpose because this is what it's all about, because it leads up to this. **And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night;** so the division of day and night and why He did it and the way that He did it in the cycle of time. And He said, **and let them be for signs;** that's why just last Sabbath we read a scripture in Psalms about blowing the Trumpet on the New Moon, and it speaks of it being a time of the year that the trumpet could be blown at that particular time – it's a High Day; it's the Feast of Trumpets, always the same year after year at a particular time. ...**and let them be for signs and for seasons,** we're going to hear more about this at the Feast on the Last Great Day. Mr. Wrozak refers to this as well, about this particular word in Leviticus and we'll go to that in a moment also, but it's important that we have this in our mind because God is going to reveal more to us and give more to us to be added to the 50<sup>th</sup> Truth as I mentioned. And so it says ....**and for seasons, and for days, and years:** This word for seasons is the words appointed times that's used in Leviticus where God shows us about the Sabbath and about the Holy Days, the annual Sabbaths and the counting of time that God has set things in motion in a very specific way so His people could always know when they're to come together in holy convocations; when they're to come before God and have fellowship with God first and foremost. And we do that as we're able to come together in fellowship when we

have the ability to do so with one another in those situations. Now more and more people are able to come together in various regions during Sabbaths and High Days in ways that we weren't been to do a few years ago because we've had a little growth here and there. And so that little bit of growth has enabled people to experience a greater fellowship on the Sabbath or on the High Days and so forth... and you all need to be taking advantage of those things as much as you can with one another – truly. That's what God commands us to do. We need to do that because I've heard different things in different areas across the board where people are not doing that, especially if you're new. Now, I understand there are some of you who are so far away that it's impractical and it costs too much and finances are the way they are – that's fine! But where you have the ability, or on occasion, strive to do those things and that's good, and that's right, and that's healthy spiritually for you. Understand that God says these things are set aside as *appointed times*. They're appointments that we're to keep with God. Appointments... just like an appointment book and there are certain days we have planned; we know when the Sabbath is; we know when the High Days are; We know when Atonement is; We know when the Feast of Tabernacles begins; we know when it ends; we know when the Last Great Day is and that's exactly what this means. That's why God established things the way He did from the very beginning so that we could have appointed times for years as it has in for days, specific days and times.

Let's turn over to **Leviticus 23** just to add to this because we need to have this in our minds for the Feast of Tabernacles at the very beginning, the very first sermon you hear mentions a little bit of this and the very last sermon you hear is going to add to all of this. **Leviticus 23** and beginning in **verse 1** – then we'll come back to Genesis and continue in the story. **And the Eternal spoke unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, Concerning the feasts**, that word is not feasts, because people don't understand when they translated the words they know that the context is going to be talking about God's Feasts, but this word is not the word for feasts, and yet they foolishly put in a word here that's not translated this way anywhere else in the Bible except here in Leviticus 23. Because man doesn't grasp and comprehend what it's all about so often he interjects his own ideas. This word is the word 'appointed times'. It is not the word used later on when it describes the Feast of Unleavened Bread and talks about various Feasts...and it uses the words for feasts and feasting. When you talk about feasting and feast, it is a specific word in the Hebrew language. This word here means 'appointed times', or it's used also as 'an assembly', coming together even as a location for God's people, because that's what it's all about – appointed times – for appointed meetings. **Concerning the feasts/the appointed times of the Eternal**, these are God's appointed times then. That's what God is saying here, **which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, even these are my, appointed times**. God says, these are my times that I've given to you. That's exactly what it's talking about back in Genesis 1. He said, everything in the heavens would be in a specific rotation of time so that we could have these moments of time with Him: appointed times, appointments with God where we come together before God.

And then it goes on to say, **Six days shall work be done: but the seventh day is a Sabbath of rest, a holy convocation; you shall do no work therein: it is a Sabbath of the Eternal in all your dwellings. These are the appointed times**, not feasts, **These ARE the appointed times of the Eternal, even holy convocations**, commanded assemblies where we're to come before God. And so if you're only able to because of a computer download or listening to it because it's sent to you on a CD or a tape and you're a week late or several weeks late, you still come before God and strive to glean what you can glean from whatever tools you have available in your hands. And if you have a congregation close by, you strive to be there to hear it there, to receive the added benefit of a congregation and the fellowship that goes with that. **Even holy convocations which you shall proclaim in their**, why didn't they use the word feasts there because they're the same word, **seasons**. Now they translate it as seasons, it's the same

word – appointed times. Because they couldn't use the word feasts, **proclaim in their feasts?** They knew it. ...**which you shall proclaim in their appointed times.** And that's what we do. On the Day of Atonement we talk about the meaning of the Day of Atonement. On the Last Great Day you'll hear a sermon about the Last Great Day and what it means. During the Feast of Tabernacles we'll hear about the meaning of the Feast of Tabernacles. During Pentecost we hear about the meaning of the Feast of Pentecost. Unleavened Bread – same thing – we hear about the meaning of what it's all about. That's what God tells us to do – in their appointed time, where to talk about those appointed seasons and so forth. And during the Sabbaths it's all about – totally open – the word of God and the plan of God, the purpose of God, all the things that God inspires to give to His people, to teach, to lead, to guide and direct His people.

Then it goes on to say: **In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the LORD'S Passover.** So, a beginning. This is not a high day, but it's an appointed time, an important beginning of it all because God's plan... I love the way God does it, does what He does. Everything He gives is in order. Everything is so clear with God's spirit and everything begins with the Passover – begins with Jesus Christ. It's a beginning. You can't enter into the plan of God without the Passover, without Jesus Christ. You can't start coming out of sin. You can't start addressing things about the Days of Unleavened Bread. You can't receive God's spirit. You can't receive the law. You can't receive the understanding of the Pentecost – all those things that are given... all the way through God's plan. It all starts with Passover.

**Verse 6 - And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the Feast,** now we have the word feast, not appointed times. It's amazing the things that God reveals to us and another thing to be thankful to God about – to think about the Great God who's given us the ability to see these things that others don't see. There's no religion out here, except those who are part of the scattering as a whole, or those who have received some of those things as a result of Mr. Armstrong, because there are different people out here who have studied Mr. Armstrong and things he's written and they've picked and chosen for themselves what they wanted to teach and what they didn't want to teach. They sure don't, as a whole, teach the Sabbath because then they wouldn't have a church to teach in anymore because those who meet on Sunday, they still meet on Sunday, but they pick and choose little things because they learn the truth, you know, there are certain things they begin to see and they begin to acknowledge them; but not all of it; but the truth that comes from God, some of the knowledge that's out there in the world, even the world has picked up some of that knowledge and has taught it – quite a bit actually in the scheme of things that's out there today – that wasn't there 50 years ago, or 60 years ago, or 80 years ago, or 100 years ago.

Things to be thankful to God for during this Feast season, to focus on even a little bit more, to be more attuned to and thankful to our Father in heaven. He's our God, but He's our Father and He wants us to understand that unique relationship that He desires to have with us – truly. Back in **Genesis 1**, let's jump on down to **verse 26 - And God said, Let us make man in our image**, here's the awkwardness of the translations that I think all of you as a whole more clearly see today than you did when some of this change was made. This was kind of tough because of what had been taught in the Church before and what God hadn't given to us yet. And here, because of the word 'our' it makes it sound like someone is talking to someone else. Who is talking with each other? Its like, **"let us make man in our image?"** Who? There's more than one involved here and that's where part of the concept came from and seemed to give more credibility to the fact that there were 2 beings in the God family and they were saying, **"lets make man in our image."** No, there was no conversation taking place between 2 beings in the God family. What it says in Isaiah is absolutely true – there's only Yahweh Elohim and there is none else. Through Eternity it's been that way. There is nothing else that existed – and we cannot begin to

comprehend and understand what any of that means until God began to create. And what He began to create He began to create first in the spirit realm, not in the physical realm. He didn't create physical things first. He created things of spirit, things that can be seen in a spirit world that I don't comprehend, concerning His majesty and His might and then He began to create living beings, in the spirit realm, in the spirit world – the angelic realm. And later on He began to create physical things and it says, 'and the angels shouted for joy' when they began to see things that God began to make physical in the Universe – that we can't comprehend. Where is the end of it? That's what the Hubble's trying to find out. It's about as stupid and about as narrow minded in human thinking as a long time ago when some were getting on ships and they were afraid they were going to fall off; all of a sudden the world is going to end, they're going to fall off; they were afraid! They were afraid to go sailing too far away from land, where you couldn't see land anymore – they were afraid at some point that you're just going to fall off and disappear and die. They had no concept of the earth being round, as a whole, there are a few through time who have – especially those who believe God. And so today it's like we want to find the end... like we're inside of this box, or this circle... it's like, maybe we're inside this great big circle and the universe is in it. What's on the other side? Oh, didn't think about that... we... we can't think... we can't understand what's on the other side.... if we're contained by something... things that man can't begin to register, comprehend or understand in any fashion or form, and if you try you're a fool: a fool before God – truly.

**let us make man in our image...** it's a uniplural word; and so if you're relating back to uniplural word because it means family and there's a family... its not just one – and that's what God's revealing from the very beginning. His family is not just one, but from the beginning it's been that way. He's the only one that's in it! Yahweh Elohim, He said, there's no one else and then He reveals to man the marvel, that's the purpose of man – to fill up the family with billions. But from the beginning and from eternity it's only been so that there's only 1 Yahweh Elohim – one Great Eternal God has always existed. That's a part of that... and only one. And so, He's saying that in this plan and purpose that He had for Elohim, a family, that they're going to look a certain way – be of a certain image and other scriptures make it very clear it's His. Jesus Christ was made after the image of God, the family of God is made after that same image. It's amazing. It's relating back to this, but we have to understand the whole story and understand this is an awkward translation in the English language. How do you describe that?

**...after our likeness:** it's after His likeness, **and let them have dominion,** so again, who said this? **...over the fish of the sea, over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.** In essence it says, **God/Elohim created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them.** Even that. He? God? Sex? They're words and language. There's that which He wants us to understand about Himself – that He's our Father. That's why He gives the Church as far as what is in the physical world there are things we can grasp and understand about God to a point, to a degree, because He is the Creator – all life comes from Him. He is the originator of life and He talks about the Church being the mother of us all. Things that we can learn that are in a physical world to understand God, to give us deeper understanding and appreciation.

Who did the creating? It makes it very clear. **Verse 2:4 - These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the Eternal God made the heavens and the earth,** makes it very clear – Yahweh Elohim made the heavens and the earth – only one being did. **Verse 7 - And the Eternal God formed man,** He said 'let us make man...' there aren't two talking – it's just Yahweh Elohim talking about that which is going to exist as a family – speaking of those things that are not as though they are – as that which is going to come to pass. He used the word Elohim from the

beginning to reveal to us what His plan and purpose is for mankind – why the creation. It's Elohim, that's why He used that word... **And the Eternal God, Yahweh Elohim, formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.**

Let's back up to **Genesis 2:1 - Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and the host of them.** When it uses the word heavens, it's not talking about the vastness of the universe – that's been out there for millions or billions of year... we have no comprehension how long, but He's focusing on things about the earth and the heavens. There are 3 heavens described by context, only by context, in scripture; there is that which is in the atmosphere around the earth, in the sense of what we can breathe. There is that which goes beyond the earth's atmosphere where you see the stars and the planets and everything else - the heavens...and then there is that which is God's heaven – the heaven where God's throne is. Which is not physical. I don't understand it but I believe it. I know it's there.

**Thus the heavens and the earth were made,** it's not referring to God's heaven; it's not referring to the heaven in the universe. It's referring to the heavens around the earth, everything that makes it up – the oxygen, the different gasses, the clouds, everything that is out there. In the beginning we don't even know if we had all of those things as something changed when the time of Noah came along.

**Verse 2 - And on the seventh day Elohim ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it:** He set it apart from the very beginning of time – that day. That's why it irritates me when I think about what Satan did later on, that perverted mind – to deceive mankind into thinking that you could change that day to another day. Here's something God sanctified, set apart as holy from the very beginning. He appointed times where man was to come before Him to learn about Him and yet Satan comes along with this concept and idea that No, it's supposed to be the first day. How... Incredible! It says God blessed that day, sanctified it, set it apart for holy use and purpose – that's what sanctified means – set apart for holy use and purpose – that's what this day is all about.

**These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created,** doesn't mean when they were brought into existence, it's just referring to what He did on the 6 days, and the 7<sup>th</sup>. **...in the day that Yahweh Elohim/that the Eternal God made the earth and the heavens,** again, just the heavens around the earth, separating it talks about, the firmament, letting the light come through once again, deleting that which was in the atmosphere, getting rid of those things that prevented light from touching the earth and so forth.

**Verse 7 - And the Eternal God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; as we read, and man became a living soul. And the Eternal God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put man whom He had formed. And out of the ground made the Eternal God to grow every tree that was pleasant to the sight, and good for food; and the tree of life in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.** And verse 15 finally in the story - **And the Eternal God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.** We're to learn from things like this as well, that God's desire for us is that we dress and keep what He gives to us; that we're to keep and maintain and beautify what He gives to us. We truly are. We're to keep it up – upkeep – keep up those things that God gives us, He puts in our charge, in our possession. I don't care if I knew tomorrow that, in essence something' going to happen to our yard, it's going to be devastated because of what happens in the atmosphere or something happens at some point and everything is burnt up... but until that day, I'm going to keep and beautify and maintain what God has given to me because God commands that of us. He truly does. That we're to keep up. It's a

pleasant thing when you see that. That's why driving down the freeway today, I was dumbfounded to see the upkeep and maintenance for the freeways around here: that you don't see a lot of litter. They must do an excellent job. That's why I think of large cities, one of the cleanest large cities I've ever been in – Sydney, Australia; and you walk around the streets and it's clean. You don't see trash like you do in some places.

People talk about how romantic Paris is. To me it's a cesspool; I'm just going to describe it for what I think it is... it stinks! It's horrible! And there's trash everywhere because of how people treat it, nothing romantic about it. You go on their subway systems, smells like urine everywhere, because that's what's there. They don't make any efforts to clean it and beautify it. Oh, maybe they do once a year, I don't know... I'm being a little facetious here but just to let you know if you ever have the chance to go there, don't bother until the millennium, okay? A lot of cities are just filthy dirty. United States, a lot of cities are just filthy – they truly are – and we don't keep them up. You pass the border into Canada – night and day difference, because they have more the mentality of the UK, of the British people, and the gardens, beautiful how they maintain and keep up things – planting flowers – doing things that we just don't bother to do in the States because it just takes too many tax dollars that too many people want to put in their pocket – in politics. Sick world. Different peoples have different ideas on some of these things and it's a beautiful thing when people try to take care of what God has given to them. That's why I have a greater respect now for one part of Europe that I drove through that stood out in my mind; of all the places I've driven through in Europe there's one place that stands out more in my mind than others... one that you probably wouldn't think of in the top of your head – Germany. It's beautiful. They keep things pretty. They keep things nice. They take care of what they have. It's amazing. It just stands out. It's like it slaps you in the face. It did to me anyway compared to some of the other countries and some of the things you drive through. Some places do better than others. I think of Holland/The Netherlands, they keep it up very, very nicely, they truly do. Beautiful countryside to drive through and so forth because they take a pride – there's a pride there, but those two countries stand out in my mind of all Europe. Get to Great Britain, well, it's not the same, especially around London – filthy, filthy dirty. I'm sorry, those of you who live there, but a lot of large cities are like that because people don't care, they just litter. I'm sorry I'm getting off on some of this, but you know, I think of mankind... What a beautiful world, the millennium, what we're getting ready to enter into, when people finally start keeping things up so that others can enjoy. It's not just about ourselves and what we have, it's so others can enjoy it, what a wonderful thing when people have that mentality for the next person who follows them in the bathroom and it's clean, not filthy like it is in some places you go into now a days. Because people don't care how filthy and dirty they can be. So God gives things to us to keep and tells us there's a certain way we're to take care of what He's given to us. Dress it and keep it – man's not good at that.

**Exodus 20**, God bringing the children of Israel into the wilderness after taking them out of Egypt – to give them His laws, to give them His way of life and this is the picture then of a part of that story and that's what we're going to jump into here. And it says, **And God**, this is the word for Elohim. Why did God use this word? ...working with, revealing certain things here around Mt. Sinai and giving the 10 commandments. **And God spoke all these words, saying, I am Yahweh your Elohim**, I am the Eternal, Self-Existing One, your Elohim, your God family. Now you have to again think about why this word is being used in the way that it is. Yes, from the very beginning God wanting us to understand that we're to be a family, and many things reveal that in the Bible, but here where He's even giving His law, some unique words that are being used. Let's go on here and notice this, **who brought you out of the land of Egypt**, it's important because it's connected with bringing them out of Egypt – why He's specifically using this word right now. **I am your God family**, I am your family, that's what He's saying very

powerfully so, **out of the house of bondage**. I am the one who did this. **You shall have no other Elohim?** Gods? That's what He's... **you shall have no other Elohim before you**. What do you mean? How can you have another Elohim? Because of what He's saying... **You shall have no other Gods**, so here they translated it as gods plural and yet the word is always the same word here that I've been reading over and over again, Elohim, Elohim, Elohim. He says, **you shall have no other God family**, in essence is what He's saying, **before you**. Why did He tell them this? I'm going to take a little time today to tell you why – because of the land they were taken out of after they'd been in there so long; their minds were polluted with the garbage that was in Egypt. Awesome to understand some of the religious ideas that came out of that culture and that background and that went into the world – because as you look at different religions, they have the same author – the perverted, distorted mind of Satan – he's the one who's deceived all nations and so as some things left one nation they went into another. There are things that came out of Egypt that went into, because they kind of changed certain things and did it after their own language and after their own culture and after some of their own ideas and so the Assyrians changed certain things, the Greeks changed certain things, and so you find these things in different cultures throughout the earth through time. But some of these ideas started in Egypt. So I want to read a few things here – you can go into almost any place on the internet looking up Egypt and the god's of Egypt and it's interesting to notice some of the things that are said. I want to read some of those to you today just to help make the impact even a little stronger.

Even the heading of this section in history of Egypt, says,

<sup>1</sup>**“The first Family”**

**The family from which all people in the world came was of the earth god Geb...**

And it's talking about Egyptian god's now...

**and his wife Nut, goddess of the sky. They had the twins...**

So, it's god's having members of this god family, and this is the beginning...

**And they had twins, Shu who was god of the cool dry air and his sister Tefnut, patroness of rain, warm dew and moisture. Before they had any children they were separated by command from the solar god Re...**

Or Ra... you know, the sun god Ra...

**...and Geb**

It says or Geb, different pronunciations here – things have been lost in time...

**...wept over the loss and his tears made all the seas and the oceans of the world.**

You think of the retarded ideas that Satan got people to believe from the beginning of time, rather than believing God. I think of the ones who came through the flood because Egypt came after that, the ideas of Egypt and those distorted sons who lived through some of that stuff and yet they never honoured God! They were on the ark! ...and they taught their children wrong things about God. Only Noah

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.nemo.nu/ibisportal/0egyptintro/1egypt/index.htm>

remained faithful until finally Abraham came along and God was working with him 10 generations down from Noah. And Noah's own sons did not honour God, did not teach his children to fear God for what happened! You think of *all things* they surely would have done that and they didn't do it. They didn't fear God. They weren't righteous men at all. Incredible to think it took 10 generations and God began to work with a man called Abram. Whew! Blows the mind, truly does. And so it goes on to say...

**One legend tells that Re for some reason (possibly jealousy) had become angry with Nut and laid a curse on her telling that none of her coming children could be born on any one day of the year. This was a big setback for Nut and Geb who were just planning to raise a family. In their agony they turned to the god of wisdom - Thoth, for advice. He went to his superior, the shadowy...**

...as it goes on to say here...

**... and not often depicted moon-god Aah who was in charge of the Egyptian moon-calendar. This old table of time consisted of 12 months of 30 days together making the moon-year of 360 days.**

**Thoth made Re a proposition to gamble about the matter and they started to play a game of dice resulting in a victory for Thoth.**

You know, you think of all the stupidity through time and yet this people believe these things and they pass these stories along.

**He thereby won the moonlight of five additional days of the true year (in this case July 14 to 18) and gave it to Geb and Nut who used them for the births of their children. Thus the curse of Re had no effect upon them because their children could all be born outside Aah's moon calendar. In the years to come Nut gave birth to five of the most prominent deities of Egypt:**

**Year 1 - Osiris. Year 2 - Horus (the Elder). Year 3 - Set. Year 4 - Isis. Year 5 – (I believe this is) Nephtys.**

And so, here is a god family. All this stupidity through time and Egypt that was filled with it by the time the Israelites were taken out of Egypt – they heard these things, this stuff was in their mind, things that they were, that they heard, and God's letting them know – **I'M YOUR GOD FAMILY.** That's why He used those words over and over again – not anything you received in Egypt... / alone am Yahweh Elohim and there is none else. Incredible. Give some more here just to show you this incredible web of things that are here.

**Osiris (god of the underworld) is an old and famous tale which in a way tells how Egypt came to be and points out the divine background of the rulers - the pharaohs. Among variations (it says) the main theme is as follows.**

**In the very beginning of time [Osiris](#) was king over Egypt and his queen (and sister) was the goddess [Isis](#).**

Family... family, family... it all started with this family and how these things began and then all these intertwined distorted perverted things – even in these gods... because Satan's desire is to pervert the mind of man. So here's a god that is a king and he marries his sister and they have these other gods.

**He was beloved by the people whom he had told how to worship the gods and grow their**

**crops {for their daily bread.} (and it goes on to say) His brother [Set](#) became jealous and tried to overthrow him and become king himself.**

Anyway, some of these things are amazing when you start reading through it. Another area of history about Egypt...

**<sup>2</sup>The mighty nation of Egypt was ruled by Pharaohs and the Pharaohs sat on the throne at the behest of the Egyptian Gods – or so the masses believed. This belief was so strong in ancient Egypt that throughout the nation's tumultuous history various pharaohs would stop at nothing to insure the public believed they had received the divine right to rule from the ancient *Egyptian gods* themselves.**

Different cultures did some of the same sort of things – Caesars and the way people looked to them like they were God's themselves. This is how they ruled, and you think of the perversion of the demons that were involved in all this, because they were. They wanted to live in human beings, they wanted to live through human beings because of what God had taken away, certain powers, and they had stripped themselves of certain things that they otherwise could have had and their minds became so perverted and distorted in how they worked with human beings then. Going on in Egyptian Mythology, it goes on to say...

**Egyptian mythology was so complex and interrelated that much attention was given to the Egyptian gods family tree**

Because it's a family tree, when you start reading all this garbage you can plan out the tree then and see how all these different ones came from each other and how it just grew into tonnes of gods. About 140 of them to start out with, with differing Egyptian god names. I don't want to read all this, but it shows different sons and daughters and who they came from... Isis, you know, I'm amazed at some of the ideas that come from Isis. You finally get different ideas – Ishtar, Astarte, Easter, some of them are very plain when you start reading through some of the history it makes it very clear the Catholic church took up some of these things and brought in pagan ideas and that's where they got different names and so forth because they incorporated them into their beliefs of Christianity.

Some of these things don't pull any punches when you read through some of these histories because you go through time and you find out and understand where certain things come from and yet the world doesn't understand – they don't comprehend, they don't know. I could go on and on reading about some of these crazy ideas... gods that were born and how they were born. One sneezed and one was born and then a little bit later his sister who is the twin I mentioned earlier, because he had to clear his throat after he sneezed... cough cough and out came another one. And so it's a brother and a sister and... crazy things! It just shows how mankind is. Egypt started very quickly. There may have been some of those things that existed before the flood, we don't know. There's some things that indicate that there may be some things that existed before the flood, so some of these ideas that they had when God destroyed the earth may well have existed before the flood actually took place – and so, these ideas that they had, they carried with them very likely into a new age, a new time and it didn't take very long when the population of the earth began to come up again and they would rather believe that stupidity and garbage than to believe Yahweh Elohim... that He's the one that took life from the earth, brought a family through it all, and started again repopulating the earth. They'd rather believe their

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.ancient-egypt-online.com/ancient-egyptian-gods.html>

stupid ideas and customs that they enjoyed more because they could twist and distort than to believe in God who created them and made them.

Awesome when you go through and you understand some of the history and why God said some of the things He did: and so He makes it very clear, **I am the one who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall have no other Elohim before me.** No other God's before Me, because they centered around families and so as you go through and you study some of the ideas of gods, so many of them, that's what they are. They are families. **You shall not make unto yourself any graven image, or any likeness of anything that's in heaven above, or that's in the earth beneath, and in the water under the earth:** for the purpose of religious worship. It's fine to have various things in your home and so forth, a statue or whatever or a picture of something, but if it's for religious purpose – God said no! The world uses crosses, or if they had poles, if Jesus Christ had been killed by the French, at one point in time with a guillotine, people would be wearing a guillotine around their head. That's how stupid people are – the world. They'd rather keep to some symbol that somehow is religious or pictures of a woman with a child – that go way back in history to Isis, Ishtar, Astarte, different nationalities of the world, and yet people would rather believe in that stupidity and garbage than to believe what God says.

He says, **You shall not bow down yourself to them, nor serve them:** so if anything is for religious purpose... that's why a long time ago I remember hearing a sermon... it just didn't hit us. We bought a chess set one time, I think it was in Mexico, and what figurines were there on it? Aztec gods... well, we went back home and got rid of them. Just got rid of them because, in culture, in times past that's where they came from. I didn't bow down and worship them, but there are people who did in times past and I'm not going to have anything like that in my home. Some people think little fat Buddha's are cute and pretty, they buy them as some memento of a place they perhaps visited. It's still represents something that people worship. We don't do those things in God's Church. We don't use various things. We don't use pictures on the wall. We don't have pictures of Christ because there are none and how he is pictured is false anyways. We know that Christ didn't have long hair because of what the scriptures say.

**You shall not bow yourself down to them, nor serve them: for I am the Eternal your Elohim am a jealous God/zealous God,** you know, in other words your, we're to serve God, to have one God before us and if people don't choose to do that then God's going to chasten that, He's going to correct it in time, in His time. He truly is. He does. **I am your,** and the word here is **El... I am your God,** making it very clear here **I am your GOD.** So it doesn't ever... all the way through here: Elohim, Yahweh Elohim and just the word for God – El...**visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; And showing mercy to thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments. You shall not take the name of the Eternal your God in vain; for the Eternal will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain.** And so generally in the Church when we first come along we learn to begin to change our language, our speech, the way we talk. We begin to learn not to use various spin offs of names for God... you know, like "gee whiz" – that's cursing – that's taking from Jesus Christ – Jesus Wizard. Various things like that, we don't do in God's Church. "Gosh - God", different things that are out there that are so prominent in the world let alone actual swearing and misusing God's name in the form of cursing, and on and on it goes. We don't do those things in God's Church, and then we begin to learn to clean up our language and try to get rid of other things that people might say when they are angry and such... and so we try to get rid of the garbage and the filth of a filthy mouth because we learn later on what it really means – in a deeper way, spiritually to not take God's name in vain. We bear the name of God! When you are baptized and you have your sins forgiven, and you have hands laid upon you and you're given the impregnation of God's holy spirit and a

life begins to grow within you that is from God, you bear the name of God from that point forward. You are a part of the Church of God. You bear God's name and God says we're not to take His name in vain. We are to reflect that we are a part of the body of Christ; we're to reflect that on our job and how we treat people and how we talk to people and if we do something wrong to somebody in the sense of speaking to them in a wrong way – even if it be on the job or wherever it is... it doesn't matter – we should apologize and say, "I was wrong for what I did." And they're going to know they've been treated differently than most other people that work together – co-workers. People respect when you live by right principles and right truths.

Just like within any nation, in God's Church we strive to be the best citizens we can be, to love our neighbours, to be kind to our neighbours, to do good to our neighbours, not to be bad neighbours, not to be selfish neighbours like the world. We strive to live God's way of life, we put God first. God is always first in all that – truly, above and beyond our own governments. That's why we don't do some things in court systems and so forth, we choose not to because, especially today, something gets caught on film and here the evidence gets tossed out, but here you've already seen something or you already know it exists, or you have knowledge – direct knowledge of it or whatever it might be and you know the guy is guilty and yet you can't use the evidence so the judge says, "you can't use this evidence." Well, in God's Church if you know the truth, you have to be faithful to the truth, putting God first and so you'd have to go against what they say, because you are going to do what is true. We tell them basically and in jury's and so forth that, you know, we desire not to be there because we put God first and if man's law conflicts with God's, we choose God. So, do you still want us? See? Now one side might want you, but the other side's not going to.

The 5<sup>th</sup> commandment - **verse 12 - Honour your father and your mother: that your days may be long upon the land which the Eternal God/your God gives you.** This is a transition commandment if you will. Because it takes us from the first 4 to the last 5 that are there. And the reason I mention it that way is because we begin to see it physically at first. **Honour your father and your mother.** Not a whole lot of that seen in the world today and sadly there are fathers and mothers that can't be honoured that well because of how the world is today. But anyway, but making it very clear here that as a whole, young people, that's your lot in life and it's a right mind and a right thinking – honour your parents. Parents that are striving to live a right way and do the right things in life toward their children – they're to obey, they're not to disobey – but that's not taught today in the world as a whole, but some do and some do a good job of that, just physically. But God shows the deeper part of that when we come along in the Church and we learn that we're to honour our Father – our God, our Great God first and foremost above all, and our Mother... the Church – the Mother of us all – to honour – that's where it starts. The greatest honour you will ever give in life – your own physical family, who right now, so many of you who are called out of the world, your family is against you right now – and sometimes people have been torn. We have a lot of young people today who we can't invite to Sabbath services because they're too young, but they believe what they're hearing: but because of the laws of the land we cannot do that because they're still at home and under their roofs and under they're jurisdiction of their family... and because of the perverted world we live in today anyway. There are certain things that we cannot do, and so we tell them you are in your home and you're under the jurisdiction of your father and mother and you are not free to do whatever you want to do, but as far as God and God's way of life, to strive to do it the best you can under the conditions you have. If you have opportunity to listen to sermons, then that's a good thing, listen to what you can, while you can and when the day comes that you're able to exercise your own freedom, your own ability to pursue what you've come to see and understand is true then so be it. God'll bless you, God'll be with you along the way. But the greatest honour they could show their parents, whether they be young or old... so I'm talking about young teens who are listening today that

can't be invited. We have some out there like that: your parents don't understand the truth – they can't help it. God has a purpose in revealing it to you in your mind. I think of times past when He worked with Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, David. He began to work with them as young teenagers. He began to give them things in their mind and in their being as young teenagers... and may well, obviously even before that, but the greatest things that began to happen in their minds were through their teenage years and God blessed them mightily. And I think of the world that we're about to enter into and God is going to bring many young people into that new world and He's already starting to work with young people, in the minds, because they're going to be the new generation through which the truth is going to be established on this earth in a very powerful way. Awesome to understand that, what God is getting ready to do: and so He's giving understanding. But the greatest honour that you could ever show to even your parents who don't understand, is to put God first, to obey God, to strive to live a high moral life, a right life: and that includes obeying your father and your mother.

Not against God. It's kind of like this nation, or any nation you might live in. If there's a conflict between God's law and the laws of a nation, God's first. God is first – see? That's the way we live our lives and that's the way everyone should live their life. But the overwhelming majority of laws as a whole are meant for our good and so we strive to live by them. God shows us that we should do that. It isn't that often that there is, in that sense, something that affects us personally, a conflict. Those things as a whole don't exist that much in the world. We can be good neighbours, we can live as good citizens wherever we are and children in a home... you know if you obey your parents, they're not going to tell you to do bad things, except maybe when it comes to something religious and they want you to go to services with them, and if you're able to, and not too many people even drive that unless you make it a point – you just keep your truth to yourself and they don't see it, they don't see it.

A person could even be in that environment and reject it. To obey your parents if you have to sit in services with them on a wrong day of the week – so be it. Your mind and your heart doesn't choose to be so, but because you honour God and because you're striving to show a certain honour in your family, there are certain things you can do and God'll protect you and God will be with you. It doesn't mean it's your conviction, but you're obeying your father and your mother, because you don't have the right to go against them – even in something like that.

**I Peter 1** – and so our Father continues to teach us through His word over and over and over again about a unique relationship that we're so blessed to be able to have with Him. **I Peter 1:15** it says - **But as He who has called you is holy, so be you holy in all manner of conversation;** and the word in the Greek language has to do with 'conduct' but so often it is translated with conversation because it's how the things that come out of our mouth so often reflect what we think anyway, what's in our mind and what's in our conduct because it goes back to the deepest part of our being in that one respect; it comes from our mind; our conversation comes from what's in our mind. Our actions come from what we believe and what we live and so forth and so it says **in all manner of conduct;** but so often people are able to understand by our conduct, or by our conversation what we think, where we are in life and so forth and God says, you're conduct, and that which you speak then, that comes out of your mouth. Your conduct should be right before God. **Because as it is written, it says, Be you holy; for I am holy.** Why? Because we're to become like God. We're to become at one with God. We're to come into unity and harmony with God, with our Father. To become like our Father, more and more like our Father - that's what the Day of Atonement's all about – becoming at one with God. That means getting rid of the things that resist God, that fight against God, that reject God and we have those things in our being. That's why I love what Paul had to say. If Paul hadn't written those things my battles would be much greater; your battles would be much greater, because God helps us to understand that there is a battle

in our being – that we have this carnality about us, we’re selfish by nature, but by choice, by our minds we choose God and we want to live that way, and we strive to live that way, but so often we find this war that’s going on in our members, in our being, in our minds and yet it’s our choice to fight that and to continue to fight it. And that doesn’t mean that there aren’t times and maybe a lot of times that you fail, that you falter, that you find yourself, as I mentioned a while ago, perhaps that word does fly out of your mouth because of the past. Maybe you’re on the roof and you hit your finger with a hammer while your pounding a nail and a word escapes that you hadn’t used for a while and you catch yourself and you have to repent. We’re carnal, we’re selfish by nature and sometimes the bad habits come right back out – doesn’t take too long, it isn’t too hard. Somebody pushes your button? Someone that kind of annoys you at work and you go there thinking you’re ready for the battle that day, and there are beings out there that know what buttons to push and they push it and sometimes you don’t always react the way you should and so we have to repent and strive to make things right then and fight against our carnality.

**Verse 17 - And if you call on the Father,** your Father. That’s why I love the beginning prayer that Jesus Christ gave us as an outline. I think about that oftentimes. He tells us how to pray. Doesn’t just say, Father in Heaven; “Our Father” it’s a family and there are more in the family and it’s not just about me – it’s not just about individuals – it’s not just about us when we pray. In the very beginning it’s to help us to begin to think in a broader way about the family. “Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be your name.” Our Father. So often in prayers when we get started it’s about my problems, me this, I this, this woe and that woe and after a while you got your violin out. Sometimes there is a right time for that, to lay down your woes and your problems before God because as you go through your prayer God helps you to get your mind right again, but it’s a good way to begin prayer in thinking, “Our Father.” It’s about a family. I have family members. I’m able to share this way of life with others.

**And if you call on the Father who without respect of persons judges according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear: Forasmuch as you know that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver and gold,** we weren’t purchased that way. We weren’t made right with God through wealth. There’s nothing you can do with wealth. It’s all God’s... **from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ,** that’s how we’re redeemed, purchased before God; by the blood of His son who was willing to die for all of us. Knew from the very beginning, from a very early age what His purpose was, who He was – that he had a Father that was God. Incredible... and you think about some of those things back in those Egyptian gods who had families and how Satan tried to pervert and distort and twist all those things because he hated God’s plan from the moment he heard it. That’s where Satan went off track because someone else was going to be given something greater than him. He was made the pinnacle of God’s creation. He was given more; from what it describes it as, He was given more than the other two, Michael and Gabriel. It sounds like he was given more than the two of them and in time God began to reveal more, because God doesn’t reveal everything all at once. Just like us in the Church, God doesn’t reveal everything all at once. He didn’t reveal everything all at once to Mr. Armstrong and He still doesn’t reveal everything about where we are even in time right now. We have some other things coming down the road and we’ll have other things come that are going to happen in a different manner, in a different way than sometimes we’ve expected them to – just like what happened with Laodicea when everything finally took place – the great scattering, the spewing out of God’s mouth – everything that transpired. Awesome... we’ll hear more about some of that at the Feast. What an incredible thing to understand this process we go through that God has given to us.

So again here, **with the blood of Christ**, from the very beginning of time He knew what His purpose was – Satan who hated that as I mentioned earlier – incredible to understand why he hated it, he became jealous in it. There are lessons in that. There always have been in God’s Church. God wants us to learn and so He tries us within the body that way sometimes. I have seen so many people go off track, go away from the trunk of the tree because of jealousies. Every time there was ever someone ordained in the Church one of the major things they were told and advised in is your life is about to change because some of your friends who were close to you before aren’t going to be close to you anymore because the ordination is going to get in the way. Sometimes the ordinations went to people’s heads; sometimes other people, when a person received it in humility – it went to people’s heads because they became jealous. I have known of so many situations out there where 2 people, close friends and one is picked for deacon, a deaconess, an elder, whatever it might be and all of a sudden that friend is not there anymore. And what happened in so many cases like that was because that other individual thought, “I have more ability than they do, I have served more than they have. Why??? Why did they get ordained?” That’s exactly what Satan did. “Why??? Why are you going to make something greater? Why are you going to have a family? Why are you going to do something above and beyond me?” Satan could have been a part of it. Lucifer could have been a part and shared in the great plan of God. I’ve known of so many people who’ve robbed themselves – Garner Ted Armstrong who robbed himself. His own father... he had everything he had because of what God did through his father and yet he began to take things to himself and argue with his own father toward the end before he had to be put out and separated from the Church. Argued with his father because he was on the telecast – it was his face, it was his voice that people were hearing and people were coming into the Church. Well, people were coming into the Church before that as well. God does the calling but he had the opportunity because of a charisma and a presence that he had but he took it to himself and he argued with his father that people are coming into the Church because of ME, because I’M the voice, because they’re seeing ME on TV – *not because of you old man!* That was his attitude and spirit. What a sick thing. It was the same spirit Lucifer had – sad, sad, sad.

So ever in life that people become jealous or envious of someone else, it’s because of pride – that which happened to Satan, to Lucifer – never let it happen to you. Don’t ever let it happen to you. It will destroy you, it will eat you inside out like a cancer. We are a family and a family is not jealous of other members of the family. It’s God’s prerogative and will and we are the most fulfilled when we yield to that – wherever we are in the body – truly.

**Verse 20: Who verily was foreordained**, speaking of Jesus Christ. Foreordained, that means pre-ordained – predetermined a long time ago, **before the foundation of the ages/the world, but was manifest in these last times for you**, Here 4000 years had passed and now he was made manifest to the world – to mankind. Incredible to understand what God is saying here. Here is His own son that was finally made manifest, but foreordained, predetermined by God a long time ago and if we truly understand it, God has given understanding that that was determined before the angelic realm was even created – that there would have to be... when He finally put man on the earth – there would be a son: His son, who would be born of Him and of a physical woman who would become our high priest, who would become the head of the Church on this earth, and on and on it goes – that all would be saved in and through him.

And so going on here, it says, **Who by**, or through, in other words it’s the channel of the act as I love the Greek word. It’s through this channel, through this act, through this means. **Who through him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead**, God that raised him up from the dead because he was dead. He wasn’t God. Jesus Christ wasn’t. He was dead, as happens to all human beings when they

die, they're dead and there's nothing there and as God gives life... and God did – give him life after being dead for 3 days and 3 nights in the tomb. ...**that raised him up from the dead**, he was actually dead longer than that, but because it was just he was in the tomb for 3 days and 3 nights. Very specific about that God gave... **and gave him glory; that your faith and hope, as it says here, might be in God.**

Going on in **verse 22 - Seeing you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the spirit**, it's through God's spirit that we can obey the truth. We can't do it on our own. Israelites couldn't do it on their own, they had to have God's help...**through the spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren**, again, sermons we've had before the Feast about preparing for the Feast and loving one another, caring for each other. Just to make it real strong here, really bold so we can all understand: If anyone in the body, within the Church, anywhere that's ever been baptized doesn't have love for everyone else in the body – that it's true and genuine. If your love isn't true and genuine for everyone else in the body, that belong to God, who is God's... we all are God's. If we're begotten of God. If we don't love everyone in the body – something is wrong with us!!! Something is wrong with our mind and we're NOT right with God and we can't play these games! See? And I know this exists in the Church of God. Sad. It's always been here because we're human beings. Different places, different parts of the world, in different congregations, I know it to be true. I know situations out there where people's minds aren't right toward all their brothers and sisters, and if your mind isn't right toward your brother or sister you know what you're supposed to do? *You're supposed to go to them alone and discuss it and bring it out in the open.* And sometimes that's a one way street. You can only do that to a point, because if your brother or sister won't receive you then that's on their part. But it's on *your* part that you love them and do what you're supposed to do toward one another – see? And if you don't, then my question is – are you really in the body? Or do you get cut off because of sin? And the latter is the case. We get cut off and so there's no reason why we shouldn't love everyone within the body – care for each other in the body. Do we have difficulties sometimes in dealing with different ones in the body because of difference in personalities and so forth, because there's some personalities that just rub me the wrong way... rub you the wrong way, if you look at your carnal nature. So is that a true thing or not a true thing? Well, it's a true thing and some of you who are new maybe (gasp)... I can't imagine anybody having a wrong feeling toward anyone else in the body... oh, give yourself time. Give yourself a big enough congregation, enough people, and you'll find people, just like in the world that sometimes... because their personalities are so different from yours – until you learn to savour the differences. Differences can be good, unless it's something opposing God and then in that we should have patience and still have love toward each other – wanting and praying for each other, praying that persons are able to conquer and overcome their battles and so forth.

I look at my own life and I think of the body in the Church and if my mind isn't right toward everyone, if I don't love everyone then I think... what a horrible thing that would be. Personality wise, are we all the same? No. Thank God we have differences. Thank God there's a lot of variety. If we were all alike... if everybody was just like me... whoooooee. Anyway, thank God it's not that way because there's a lot of things about me I don't like. And so, there'd be things in you I wouldn't like. I'd have to fight against that to have a right attitude and love you with God's love. So please, all of us understand that there are going to be situations in life where sometimes there are going to be differences in people that you're going to come in contact with and maybe some things will be said in a certain way that you don't but how do you judge that? How do you measure that? Does that change our love toward them? ... in any fashion or form? You need to be able to say – I love them. I love them. And if you don't love everyone, if you don't love being around everyone then you need to examine why not.

We all have people that are going to be different, but we can learn to enjoy the differences just as much as I do when I drive down a freeway, go to botanical garden, see something in construction, different areas, and I learn to enjoy the differences – except when it's not well maintained and kept up because even that's a principle that God gives to us, something of quality. I appreciate that from Mr. Armstrong – that he taught those things. There are things that God has given to us to keep and maintain and keep well what He's given to us. ...**seeing you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren**, unfeigned love of the brethren... it can't be put on, it can't be pretentious, it must be because it's genuine. It's something every one of you has to ask God for help in doing – to learn to appreciate that there are differences and appreciate what some of those differences are. I can put people together in different areas and I know they're going to have some battles because they've had battles in the past and I know what some of those battles are. And yet if God gives each individual the ability to see where they're coming from, why they are the way they are or why they have certain struggles in life, then it makes you appreciate those differences, it helps you to have compassion and mercy. Judgement, mercy and faith – we've gone through those sermons. So, does that mean we don't have some battles sometimes to fight, yes, but they're our battles and if we're not right in those battles and asking God for forgiveness so that we see things properly then something's wrong with us. But if you hold onto certain things against people then you're dead wrong! And you cut yourself off from the body of Christ.

**Seeing you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the spirit with unfeigned love of the brethren, see that you love one another with a pure heart fervently:** You have to work at it. You have to pray to God for help in it. If something's wrong, then it's wrong with you! If something's wrong with me and my thoughts toward someone else then the problem is not with *THEM*, *the problem is with ME!* You understand the difference there? So if you have an agitation toward someone – ask God for help to understand your agitation because it's not them that's the problem – it's you! See? And that's a great blessing when you're able to do that in life – so that no one does rub you the wrong way, because if they do – you're the one that's rubbing wrong. You're the one with the problem then. Yeah, you say, yeah, but they said this, or they did that, or.... oh really? And how did you respond to that, how are you dealing with that? How are you thinking because of that? Where can your thinking be altered and changed and made better and made right. Where is your mercy? Where is your compassion? I didn't know you were so good! I didn't know you were so perfect!! We all have problems. The more you can see yourself, the more you can understand how merciful and patient God has been with you... if you're really responding properly to that grace... the more you're going to respond in kind to everyone else – the more patient, the more mercy that's going to be shown, more understanding – all those qualities will be there and your life will be enhanced and enriched mightily because of it. It's a beautiful thing when done God's way, truly is.

It goes on to say, **born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word/by the logos of God**, I love that expression, I love this verse when it talks about how we're born again, begotten again by the word, the logos. God gives us understanding in the mind, the word that comes alive in our mind that begins to give us life, and that's what makes His word come alive and that fills our life then and gives us purpose and direction in every way...as it says back in James 1. We're begotten by the word, the logos. So again here, **not of corruptible...but by the word of God which lives and abides forever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower thereof falls off/falls away:** We're here and we're gone. Such a short time span in the scheme of things and yet we... it's hard for us to grasp that plan. It's hard for us to grasp 7000 years, it's hard for us to grasp 1000 years that's coming. **But the word of God endures forever. And this is the word by the**

**gospel that is preached unto you.** The ability we have to receive what God gives to us, that is preached to us.

Ah, there's so much more, I've so many more pages of things we can go through about our Father, about God Almighty because the Bible is filled with revealing the Great God of the universe, who is our Father and that relationship He wants us to have with Him as a father. And that's an awesome thing to grow in, to grow in your prayer life with God. To grow in that appreciation of that uniqueness and closeness of a fellowship you're blessed to have, far above and beyond any human relationship that God offers us, each and everyone of us individually that we're able to have with Him, and the more enriched that becomes, the stronger that becomes, the better that becomes, then all who are His, that relationship with everyone then becomes stronger and better and richer and purer – truly does. It's a beautiful thing. That's why at this Feast of Tabernacles it is good to understand a fellowship that we're able to have within the body; to understand what God is going to give to us at an unique environment where in 4 days, everyone as a whole, not in all areas, because people are so scattered and conditions and situations but as a whole, those who are able to come together – such a rich moment right now in time that we're able to experience and have together that you want to hold onto and keep close to you for all that's coming.

**Ephesians 1**, can't help it, there's so much here in the book – all of Ephesians really, but all the Bible as I said – but there's a certain section here I'd like to read. **Ephesians 1:3 - Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly in Christ:** heavenly places is an awkward translation but it's showing where it's coming from: God who is in heaven, Jesus Christ who is in heaven. On Atonement each year I think about those things out of Leviticus 16 where it shows that Jesus Christ went into the Holiest of Holies to do certain things and the work He was going to do and He wasn't going to come back out again until his whole household had been atoned... and that's what Jesus Christ is doing – atoning to God... for 2000 years, until He comes again and then there's a continual atoning process that will continue on, but for the firstfruits, for the first part of the family that is able to come along. And those things here then that it talks about, the blessings we have from God, in Christ, through Christ: **According as He has chosen us in Him**, in Jesus Christ. God chose us, had a plan for His family, **before the foundation of the world**, so for all of mankind – predetermined before time the God family and physical creation and physical mankind, **that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love:** in agape. So God predetermined before time how we could begin to have that kind of a mind in us where agape could actually come into our very being and we could begin to live it toward one another. Not just human love, not just philia, but beyond that - to have God's love be a part of us, where God's spirit could actually dwell in us. That's why Jesus Christ died... if everyone in the world could only understand that. If the protestant world could only grasp that, something they're so far away from because they just haven't been drawn. What an awesome thing when you come to understand that the reason Jesus Christ died... yes, so we could be forgiven of sin. But why? What is the greater purpose? So that God Almighty, God the Father and Jesus Christ could literally, spiritually dwell within us; dwell in human flesh: these temporary dwellings, these tabernacles... it's an awesome picture... in order to bring us into His kingdom. And so He died so that God the Father and Jesus Christ could dwell in us because God will not dwell in sin. We had to have a means whereby we could be forgiven of sin day after day after day through a covenant that He's made with us.

**Having predestinated**, that word means predetermined beforehand, **having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by/through Jesus Christ**, so again, all these things were predetermined before time, before even the angelic realm was created – that God had it all planned out, how we're going to be brought into His family. That's what it's talking about here. That in time we could be brought in

through the forgiveness of sin, through God dwelling in us. Again, **as children by/through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will.** Going on in **verse 6: to the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He has made us accepted in the beloved.** In or through the beloved, through Jesus Christ. That's how God makes us acceptable, able to live with us, to work with us. **In whom,** meaning us in Him and He in us. **In whom we have redemption through his blood,** in and through Jesus Christ, and God being able to dwell in God and God in us; **the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace; Wherein He has abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; Having made known unto us the mystery of His will,** so think about these things during the Feast. We can go on and on here but the ability we have brethren, and especially those of you who are new to understand those around you, those in your family perhaps, those of your friends, those that you work with as co-workers that don't understand the things that you understand – that in the very beginning that you want to share with them and you are anxious... you have a desire that they be excited about what you're excited about... and you come to learn a stark reality. They can't receive it yet. It isn't their time yet. What a beautiful thing to understand that so many of the things that are happening in your life, that is going to have an impact on some of those friends, and some of those relatives as we go forward because God is getting ready to open up the door in a very powerful way to so many people... to be drawn, to be able to come through this; what we're getting ready to go through; and live in a new age.

So again, as you enter the Feast of Tabernacles have your prayers from this point forward focusing more and more upon your Father. Think about Him, pray to Him, look to Him. Don't just let this be a physical Feast of Tabernacles but let it be a spiritual one.

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