

This is a subject that is needed in our lives as we approach the observance of the Feast of Tabernacles and all the Holy Days we're observing. It's a subject that's much needed in our lives at this time, something we need to focus upon. I marvel sometimes at how God inspires different things to follow; one thing follows another, and how He builds and how He works with us. It truly is an awesome thing when you begin to understand because when I came up to this point in time I had no idea where we were going after the sermon series on peace and then it was there and again I just marvel at those things, how God brings all those things together. And this subject here, again, is something we deeply need to take a strong look at; the subject is *Thankfulness – Part 1*.

This sermon has led to inspiration to add something to the Feast that should prove to be exciting, challenging and maybe even a bit of an intimidation along the way; but nevertheless that which will prove to be uplifting at the Feast this year as well. I had no inkling of where things were going but I find this exciting of where we're headed and what we're going to be doing – adding something else to the Feast of Tabernacles this year. We'll see how quick some of you are, how fast on the draw you are as we go through this.

There is so much said about this subject in scripture. It isn't something that tends to be natural in human nature; and actually in today's world it is fiercely lacking – a spirit of gratitude, a spirit of thankfulness, and again, this sermon here will help to magnify that even more, the contrast of the way the world is today and what we need to fight for in our lives, what we need to strive to have in our lives and to examine ourselves to make certain that it's there. We went through this particular area here recently in the subject of peace and this is a tie in to that.

Colossians 3:12 – Put on therefore, as the elect of God, it's something you have to put on, it's what we're getting ready to talk about here of something you have to work at. It isn't something that's just natural. It's something you have to think about, focus upon and pray about. ...**as the elect of God**, those whom God has called and working with, moulding and fashioning. As it says here, **holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, bowels of mercies...** an attitude of mind and how we work with and deal with other people.

Putting on therefore as the elect of God; something you have to work at, something you have to focus upon, **holy and beloved, bowels of mercies**, that spirit and that attitude that we need to have toward one another, toward others in the world around us. If you understand God's plan and God's purpose and God's calling; for us within the Body we should be able to be merciful to one another – that should be an automatic response in our life about how we think toward one another; as much as we'd hope others would be merciful to us – always. And then toward the world especially because we understand they don't know, they don't understand what we know, they don't grasp what we grasp; so this thing of mercy should be an automatic thing. ...**kindness, humbleness of mind**, an attitude and spirit here that God desires within us, **meekness, longsuffering**; willing to suffer long. That's what love is about, a willingness to suffer for the benefit of others; **forbearing one another, and forgiving one another**, the ability to put the past in the past and not hold things against others.

...and if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, **so also do the same**. That's what it's saying here; do the same thing. That's a pretty tall order, isn't it?

Verse 14 - And above all these things put on agape, Godly love; that's what this is 'charity', it's the word for agape. **Above all these things put that on**, which means that you have to be close to God, that you have to cry out to God for His spirit to be dwelling within you because you can't work it up. It's something about a relationship with God, that's what it's about. It's about that relationship and if that relationship is there then it's something you pray about, focus upon and ask God for help to live; **which is the bond of perfection**. That which brings about perfection in our life. **And let the peace of God rule in your hearts; rule**, that desire we have to indeed rule our lives; the way of God, that's what we're talking about. It's said in so many different ways. **And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which you are called in one Body; and be you thankful**. *Thankful!* Thankful for what God has given you, thankful for this way of life, thankful for what you have. We are so incredibly blessed and so often we really don't grasp the magnitude of our blessings.

The ability to see what we see is so incredibly awesome! And the longer we're around, the longer we're in the Body the easier it is to lose that understanding, to lose that inspiration of what we have – the gratitude and thankfulness because we're so in awe of what God has given us. You can't go out in the world and find it; it's only in God's Church. How blessed are we? And to be so small! I think of the scattering that took place. How many people out there who don't have what you have because they haven't been awakened from their sleep – those of you who've been around longer... So a lot is said about thankfulness throughout the Bible, and in the Psalms there's a lot said and we're going to spend a little bit of time in some of the Psalms and go some other places as well, and then next week we're going to look at some Psalms again. Right now you can turn over to Psalm 97.

A lot is said about thankfulness in the Psalms and although I would address some of this in the Psalms, I'm going to address it later in the sermon. I wanted to start here today. It's important that I cover at least one Psalm at the beginning of the sermon since we don't have long before the Feast and I want to introduce this immediately to you of something that's going to be a little different in the Feast this year. As I said, in some cases it might be a little intimidating to some; hopefully it isn't, but again here, nevertheless that which will prove to be very uplifting at the Feast this year.

Psalm 97:1 - The LORD/Lord Eternal reigns; it's about Yahweh. Now, just that expression alone ought to tell you something if you've been around for some time. 'The Lord Eternal reigns', **let the earth rejoice; let the multitude**, 'let all the multitudes of earth be glad...' **let the multitudes of isles be glad**, in the Hebrew 'isles, shores, regions' that's what it's talking about. Let people rejoice, let people be glad. **Clouds and darkness are round about Him: righteousness and judgment are the habitation of His throne**. It's the way God is and He's blessing us and desiring that we learn and become filled with that way of life, with that mind. **A fire goes before Him, and burns up His enemies round about**. That which God is going to do as He takes to Himself His great power in time; and we're approaching more of that time right now in history. **His lightning enlighten the world: the earth saw, and trembled. The hills melted like wax at the presence of the Eternal**, not literal, physical – these are prophetic things. The Psalms are *filled* with prophecy. The things that God gave David; David was *a prophet*. He was a king, but he was a prophet as well and God worked with him very *powerfully* as a prophet to inspire Psalms that he wrote over and over and over again. And much is there, prophecies about Jesus Christ that are recorded in scripture.

And so again here, talking about things in the future, about nations and so forth that are used in different ways to describe that which will not stand against God. ...**at the presence of the Eternal of the whole earth. The heavens declare His righteousness and all the people see His glory. Let them be**

confounded who serve graven images, that boast themselves in idols; it's what God's going to do in time. They are going to be confounded, the world *is* going to be turned upside down and either come to repentance or...

Then it goes on to say, **that boast themselves of idols: worship Him all you gods. Zion heard, and was glad; the daughters of Judah rejoiced because of Your judgments,** again, it's about God's plan. Zion, Jerusalem, holy Jerusalem, the holy City, the Temple of God, the Kingdom of God – all the different kinds of expressions that are used to talk about God's plan and what God is building and what God purposes. **Zion heard and was glad; and the daughters of Judah rejoiced because of Your judgements O Eternal. For you, Eternal, are high above all the earth: You are exalted above all gods.** There are no other Gods! That's why it says in Exodus 20 'you're to have no other Elohim before God.' And there are no other gods. Most gods through time are families. You think of that which is counterfeit that Satan has done through time and you look at the things in history and the particular word that was used and this is what God is talking about here, this is what God is inspiring to be written.

You who love the Eternal, hate evil: this ties in very powerfully with the Feast. **You who love the Eternal** – we have to come to where we hate evil or we won't latch onto and desire and cry out with all of our being for what God has for us, the way of peace. The opposite is the way of evil; and sometimes we don't understand. We do things, we tolerate, we allow things in our life to exist that are just downright evil! But we don't *call* it evil! We *justify* differences with people; we justify getting into a conversation with someone and saying something cutting to them, or nasty to them, or without respect to them – even within the Body, within the Church.

There isn't a week that goes by that I don't hear of people's problems within the Church; disputes and not getting along. And I think, *"Give me a break!" I can't give this to anyone! It's up to you to want it! It's up to you to latch on to it and to understand that if we don't get along with each other, if we don't have peace and if we say something contrary to somebody else in the Body let alone... it doesn't matter - the sin that's involved! The EVIL that's there! It's sick, it's perverted! It's the MIND OF SATAN! If we can see that, that's the mind of that being to not live the way of peace, to live some other way, to think it's justified; that we can think something bad toward someone else or say something nasty or cutting. If we could just grasp that and hold on to it! You've got to hate evil before you'll stop doing it! Don't we? We've got to hate it! We've got to HATE how it hurts people, how it causes people after it happens to them to go away in PAIN. WHY WOULD YOU DO THAT TO ANYONE ELSE IN GOD'S CHURCH? I DON'T GET IT!* And yet I do get it. Please understand; I do get it. But *I'm crying aloud for a purpose that we understand that more deeply so that we can come to where we HATE EVIL! God is going to give to us at the Feast this year more understanding about HATING EVIL and the BEING who has PERPETUATED this through time!*

Do we not grasp what it is to be an ally of him? Do we not grasp what it is to yield ourselves to *him*? *...to that perverted being? ...to that sick mind?* And that's what we do every time we cut someone down. Every time we say something nasty to anyone else, every time we say something that's hurting to someone else you're not loving God, you're not embracing God, you're not hating evil, you're embracing it. You're doing the thing that God wants to deliver you from. And so we might think that something little said to someone else isn't hurtful or painful or sin... We *have* to deceive ourselves that way or we wouldn't do it. The very thing we need to go before God and pray, "Holy Father, *forgive me* for being like him! ...the one who's been your *adversary* for millions and billions of years! *Don't* let me be like him, *don't* let me embrace *his* ways; help me to loathe them, to hate them, to repent of them, to *hate evil* and to love good... to love You."

Every time we do something like that we're showing hatred and murder; evil, the worst of it too. Because God's Family is about relationships. How many sermons can I give on peace? I could give a lot more. How many sermons can I give about agape, God's love? I can give a whole lot more; but it's up to us to hear, to listen, to repent, to change, to understand where we are in time, to understand the battles that have been fought for centuries, for ages within the angelic realm and here on earth – to bring us Jerusalem. Can't we hear? Can't we hear the message? Can't we hear and embrace what God wants us to have? Do we grasp the longing God has to give us Jerusalem; peace? He *longs* for that and we have to hate evil. We have to hate evil! They're not just words; it's a spirit, it's a mind, it's a way of life.

You who love the Eternal, hate evil: He preserves the soul of His saints; those who desire Him, those who want Him, those who want to embrace Him, God will preserve your life and bless you. **He delivers them out of the hand of the wicked.** God fights our battles! We have to fight too – Trumpets sermon. **Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart.** A way of life that God wants us to have; fullness, happiness, gladness, rejoicing, light – that which reflects everything that's of God, that comes from God, that which shines. It comes forth from God through Jesus Christ to us.

Rejoice in the Eternal, rejoice in God. It's a beautiful thing; beautiful scriptures here. **Rejoice in the Eternal you righteous; and give thanks,** see, if we see these things, if we love these things that God is showing to us – it's about a relationship. Giving thanks is about a relationship that is made stronger, that *binds*, because it's about a response to what we grasp that God has given to us, this thing of gratitude, this thing of thankfulness, because we see His blessings, we embrace them, we love them! We love God because of that! ...because of how He works with us. Because God is merciful to us it endears us more to God and we're *thankful for His mercy*; and we then want to be more merciful to others.

I have received so much mercy from God Almighty it's helped me to become more merciful. I've received so much forgiveness from God it's helped me to become more forgiving. That's what it's about! Truly! **Rejoice in the Eternal you righteous; and give thanks at the remembrance,** and this means 'as you think upon' **His holiness,** His blessings...as you think about those things, as you pray. Think about your prayers – what are they like? "Oh I had this trial today God and please take this away from me and please take that away from me and life is hard and life is difficult and *oh woe is me...*" Or do we begin to think about God in heaven and, "Thank You for what You've given to me! Thank You for the blessings that I have, that You're there to help me through these battles!" Because that's the only way you can grow. If He just takes it all away you just become a spoiled brat, worthless in life, of no value to the God Family. But as human beings we are very selfish and we want God just to take away any kind of hardship, any kind of suffering, any kind of trial we have. Doesn't work that way, does it?

God is revealing to us that we need to focus more upon a right spirit of thankfulness to Him. This goes with this thing of peace. It's building upon that. It's building upon a response then we have toward God in our thinking as we think about God, as we think about what He's given to us and so forth. It's about a focus that He desires us to have of a right spirit of thankfulness to Him, toward Him for His great plan and everything that's working out here, of what He's doing, our blessing of being a part in it, especially as we're about to take a quantum leap forward here. We are at a most exciting time! God is immensely excited – He truly is. He is so immensely excited! Have you ever been so immensely excited it's hard to contain yourself? It's just hard to hold back, but you do; just hard to hold back because you're so excited about where we are and what's getting ready to take place. The closer we get to where we're

going; the closer to a fulfillment for all that God has worked with for so long...it's exciting, awesomely exciting and inspiring!

And so God wants to share that with us and I marvel at where we are. But how much, how confident, how bold are we about where we are? It's just exciting and it's hard to contain yourself. It's becoming harder for me to contain myself in the excitement about where we are and what's getting ready to take place on the earth and how God is working all this out. It is an absolute *marvel* to be blessed by God to see what we see, to be given what He's given to us.

We've grown a lot in the last three years and God has now brought us up to a great place in time – truly has. A lot of things has happened over the last three years. If you want to look at different time periods – I marvel as we go back in time and I think about the time of the apostasy and then I think about how God began to strengthen us and bring us up to a time where finally we were moving fully forward as a Church, as a Body once again. And then what God has given to us in that process of time. And then I think to a short length of time just in the last three years of what's happened; just makes your head swim, if you see it – truly does. With all that's going on. And the more we see that the more *inspired* we'll be, the more excited we'll be about what God is doing, the more we'll want to be a part of it and hold onto this way of life and fight for it with all of our being. It's hard for human nature sometimes to be able to do that, isn't it, because there's that battle that goes on inside us.

And so the growth He's given to us to share in, to share in what He's blessed us to have is so incredible, it truly is. Opportunities for greater fellowship within the Body; sharing this with more people now...and that's nothing compared to where we're just about at now.

As I was thinking upon this particular sermon series and all the things we have to be thankful to God about, I was moved, inspired if you will, with the desire that as a Church we respond more to God's many blessings in a way that we haven't been able to do for a long time for many reasons. This year we're going to sing one song before each sermon that I give at the Feast this year. We haven't been able to do that for a long time and primarily because of the way we're structured, primarily because of the way I have to travel around and so forth and some things don't carry over very well on the internet as well; but we're going to do it this year at all the sites. So we're going to sing one song before each sermon that I give at the Feast. You're going to have to put up with my voice, if my voice is up to par. So we're going to thank God in a united manner with the tool and power contained in singing that will make the Feast that much more meaningful and inspiring; because it is a powerful tool, it really is. And I marvel too that we haven't done it for a long time.

Within the Church of God we came to a point in time where we knew the songs so well, those of you who've been around for a long time, that so often they were just sung as a matter of repetition and not with meaning. And it's kind of like prayers that I've mentioned. We have learned more of a right balance in prayers; that sometimes we can do certain prayers... that's why we've talked about some things that it's better to pull back away from certain kinds. And then in time to have more balance in that, which I'll say more about later on; but I hope you understand what I'm talking about here. That sometimes they just become repetitive and they don't have the feeling inside, the desire inside that they should have, that they need to have. We don't want things to take on a repetitious type of tone or way about them because then it loses the meaning and the genuineness and the honesty before God.

So again, to be able to do that this year, I believe with all my being that it's going to make these songs far more meaningful, far more inspiring. With a heart and spirit of thankfulness and rejoicing before God it's going to be very moving to God as His Church does this – truly.

I mention this now so that we can begin preparing. Most of you have never had songs like this. They're on the internet, but not everybody has listened and gone through them. Maybe some of you do, hopefully you do. Right now I think a lot of you are going to be doing a whole lot more of that; at least with seven particular songs I'm going to give to you in a moment. So most of you don't really know those songs well, but I know it's in your heart to thank God, to do so, to praise God – especially at this Feast of Tabernacles. We're almost there... *almost there* to the time when God's Kingdom is brought to this earth, when a Millennial period is established. What a time to be thankful to God for where we are in time.

So those of you who have computers can look these songs up on the Church website. They're located in the audio section. You've probably seen it; right underneath the live webcast section it shows the hymns. You can click onto that. The lyrics are there, you can click onto the lyrics and you can click onto the song which has the melody to it. And I would *highly recommend* that you do that, that you download seven particular songs and you start listening to them. Copy them onto a cd if you have a cd player in your car, put them on your mp3 player; listen to them as you go back and forth from work. Take the lyrics along, think about the words, let it become a part of you.

Once these are a part of you, they're a part of you. I don't care what songs we've sang in the past, it doesn't matter what period of time you can go back there and they're there, they're in your mind, they're in your being. But we haven't had the opportunity of doing this for a long time; but we're going to do it at the Feast of Tabernacles and only at the Feast of Tabernacles. Maybe at some other High Days later on, but right now, just the Feast of Tabernacles this year.

So again, the lyrics are there, the music is there and you can learn these songs because it's your opportunity to thank God in a unique way and a special way at the Feast. It's an opportunity for you to rejoice before God even more so at the Feast. Maybe you can't carry a tune, sing softly, that's okay. There's a song about making a joyful noise. Hey, if that's what we do, that's what we do – it's the heart, it's what comes out of you that God looks at, the spirit, the attitude, the mind. But especially this year as we think about those words and what God gives us at the Feast this year. They go so well together. And you can learn these too, it's not that hard.

I think back to a time when back in Houston, Audra could have only been about 4-5 by the time we moved out toward Lubbock. Laura's father would give us different kinds of music sometimes and he gave us some Jewish music. A lot of us are familiar with 'Halva Nagila', some of those kinds of songs. But there were a lot of songs on there. We listened to that so much on the radio... the music is so uplifting and filled with life. I think of king David and he was noted for being so filled with life, energetic with life and so much of that culture and their music reminds me of that kind of thing, where the music is just filled with peppy life. We learned those songs – didn't know what they meant. A few words we could pick out because they were about God and so forth, but didn't know what they all were, but after a while, different language, but you knew it, it was in your mind to go with the music. And music is a very powerful tool that way. And so I *know* that in the short time we have between now and the Feast if you'll apply yourself to it you can learn these songs and you can participate at your Feast site, wherever you are, at the same time. So if you read music you might ask a friend. I can't. I used to lead songs, but I can't read music; certain things I can by certain timing and so forth and the bars and where they are,

but as far as reading music and the notes, I have to go by what I hear. And some of you, if you can't read music, maybe you can talk to some friends who have the old song books and maybe they can print them off for you if you'd rather have it that way. Whatever. Learn the songs.

And I do want to make mention here that the lyrics we will use, because there are different lyrics flying around out there on different songs and so it is in the case of some of these songs, but we're using the lyrics that are on the website. So, please, that's the uniformity we'll have in the Church.

Learn the songs:

1. O Come and Let Us Worship Him

Now, these aren't numbered on the site and I don't know what page they are and what book you have, but you can find them in the index there. Just scroll down through there and you'll find it.

2. How Excellent is Thy Name

I'm giving this to you now so you can start this week. You can start tonight; you can start tomorrow preparing for the Feast; to thank God, to rejoice before God in a very special way.

3. The Lord Eternal Reigns

4. Joyfully Sing and Praise God

5. I will Praise Thee O Eternal

All these songs, these Psalms... they're so powerful, they mean so much. And to be able to sing them out before God this year at the Feast is an exciting thing – truly is; because it has everything to do with being thankful to God for giving us everything we have, for where we're going.

6. Praise The Eternal with a Psalm

7. O Give Thanks and Praise the Eternal

There's a bit of a theme running through all this. 'O Give Thanks and Praise the Eternal' – that's what we're wanting to do throughout the Feast, throughout our lives indeed. This will add more meaning to the Feast, add a little bit more, a little bit extra. To think that we're going to have four new truths at one Feast this year to me is astounding! Truly astounding what God is giving to us. And the opportunity then to sing to God, to praise God...I don't care what our voice is like, I don't care whether we can't carry a tune or whatever... we're going to make a joyful noise before God, we truly are. It's about our heart and about our spirit before God and it'll be a very pleasing thing to God I can tell you for sure.

Let's turn over to I Chronicles 16. We're going to shift gears right now at this time as we begin to focus more on the subject at hand here in the matter of thankfulness. There's so many stories in the Bible that are so good about this subject, and so many ways the words are used here as well. I marvel sometimes how some of them are translated because some people have never understood God and obviously they can't unless they've been a part of the Church. Let's start in **I Chronicles 16:1** – this is the occasion when the ark was being brought. You know the story about David here... it says, **So they brought the ark of God, and set it up in the midst of the tent that David had pitched for it: and they offered burnt sacrifice and peace offerings before God.** Peace offerings; it's interesting some of the kinds of offerings and what they were called.

And when David had made an end of offering, and it has to do with a relationship with God, doesn't it? Amazing!

Verse 2 – And when David had made an end of offering the burnt offerings and the peace offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the Eternal. And he dealt to every one of Israel, both man and woman, to everyone a loaf of bread, and a good piece of meat and a flagon of wine. It was a joyous time, it was an exciting time. David was excited for what they were able to do and he desired that all the rest be as excited; and added to the festivities by things of feasting, food, to add to it. **And he appointed certain of the Levites to minister before the ark of the Eternal, and to record, and to thank and praise the Eternal God of Israel:** Very organized here in his approach and what he desired to do and what was in his heart. David was a unique man, truly was. God says, 'He's a man after My own heart.'¹ And when you study and read things about David it becomes easier to see how and why; some incredible stories here about David and his attitude and his response to God. Very powerful!

Verse 7 - Then on that day David delivered first this psalm to thank the Eternal in the hand of Asaph and his brethren. A psalm inspired by God. Psalms were inspired by God. Things that David wrote and the blessings that were there? It's an incredible thing to understand the process of how it works. And so here it is; **Give thanks unto the Eternal**, that's what they were doing. They were thankful because of what was taking place. And I think of where we are in time and what we're getting ready to go into. How much *more thankful*; because what is taking place is so much *greater* than what David was going through in his life at that time and what Israel was experiencing. Jesus Christ, God's Son is about to come to this earth after *so long a time*, to bring about a different world, a different age for people to live in, for children to grow up in and to become old in. We have been so blessed! *We are* so blessed! We're at a time that is so hard to grasp and comprehend how great it is.

Give thanks unto the Eternal, call upon His name, make known His deeds among the people. Sing unto Him, sing psalms unto Him, talk of all His wondrous works. The world is getting ready to do that. It hasn't accepted God. We haven't had leadership that's geared toward God. They did in king David. They had truths of God, the ways of God. They didn't understand it fully obviously but because of a leader like David they were incredibly blessed as a nation.

Verse 10 - Glory in His holy name: let the heart of them rejoice who seek the Eternal. It's about a spirit, it's about an attitude, it's about a response to God because of what we see, because of what we *believe*, it's about faith. What you *believe* that can be so deeply imbedded in you that as God lightens that more in your life, gives you greater understanding of it- that there is that response that should just *ooze* out of us – truly. Just pour out of us to God in response and the way we think and the way we feel, the excitement that's genuine and true and honest in our being in a response to God. It's about a relationship with our Father, with God Almighty.

Sing unto Him and sing psalms unto Him, talk of His wondrous works. Glory in His holy name; and let the heart of them rejoice who seek the Eternal. Seek the Eternal and His strength, that's what we should do; should be our minds, our lives, our thinking. **Seek the Eternal and His strength**, do we do that? How much do we do that? How much do we cry out for help, "Father, I need Your spirit in my life. I know that I need it! When I don't rely on You I fall flat on my face!" That's what we do! **Seek the Eternal and His strength, seek His face continually.** By going before Him in a relationship with Him.

¹ Acts 13:22

Remember His marvellous works that He has done, God wants us to remember. How often I've talked about and how thankful I am when I hear people talking about how they remember how God called them; that they'll never forget it, how God worked with them and began to draw them. Things that are so momentous in time when God began to first open up your mind to the truth. How incredible is that? ...was that? What is our response to that? How often do we think about those things and the marvel of that? To be inspired by it because we see God in it and it gives us encouragement and strength! The world doesn't have that kind of boldness and confidence and strength because it's not real in the world. They work certain things up, but it's not of the truth, it's not because it has God's spirit in it. We're blessed to have that in us. And not only that... I can't help it! What I've lived through; to be able to look back on a continuing basis and be in *awe* of where we are today, from where we were at a time when we were scattered! ...at a time when everything was upside down! ...at a time when it was as if the Holy Days and the Sabbath and everything had been taken from you! ...and how *awesome* it was to be able to meet together with a few, to be able to strive to hold onto what God had given to us...but traumatized because we saw what had happened to those 'we walked to God's house with side by side and council blended sweet'. And to think what God has brought us through...those of you who've lived through this... We don't have very many. We have a few here in Detroit that have lived through the entire process. It's amazing what you're a witness of.

I think about the first few times we came to Detroit, first couple of meetings we had – Ina's place, Helen's place, some faces here that were there on those occasions. Incredible beginning! I'll never forget Terry standing up behind an ice chest, the cooler, leading songs. Was that your first time leading songs? Yes. I know what he felt like! It was a horrible feeling but we were able to, in one respect, because of what had happened to us. We were truly traumatized because of what we'd experienced. But we were able to be together. It was that day that I gave the sermon which was the only sermon I've ever given that if I hadn't had my notes I wasn't sure what I said because of the emotion that was there, because of the trauma on a spiritual plane. And I think where God has brought us. I think of every battle we've gone through along the way and because of those battles of what God gave to us and moulded and fashioned within us to bring us to where we are and who we are. It's been an incredible process. And how can you but thank God. How can you but rejoice in what He's done? How could we but be so incredibly moved by seeing where we are now, by knowing where we are now, by what He's given to us now to this point in time?

Remember His marvellous works that He has done, His wonders, and the judgments of His mouth; because God has done it all and He's blessed us to share in it, to be with Him in it – what took place. It's an incredible thing; but *God did it all*. It's by God's power that everything has happened that has taken place that is right and good, that's true and just and so forth. All comes from God.

Dropping on down here, keeping in mind that this was an occasion when the ark was being brought back to be in the presence of the people once again. **Verse 34 - O give thanks unto the Eternal; for He is good;** I'll tell you, to think about all that God does, the goodness of God, His desire to share it with us, what we're blessed to participate in – it's more than the human mind can truly grasp and comprehend. **He is good; His mercy endures forever. And say, Save us, O God of our salvation, and gather us together, and deliver us from the heathen, that we may give thanks to Your holy name,** that's what God has done, been doing with His people over time; **and glory in Your praise.**

Verse 36 - Blessed be the Eternal God of Israel forever and ever. And all the people said, Amen, so be it, I agree. It's your agreement; that's what it's saying, "I am in agreement. I say the same thing. So be

it.” **and praised the Eternal.** So that’s what they did and they **praised the Eternal**, they thanked God, it came from their being. It’s something that is a response to God because we see something. And the more you see it the more that spirit is there. It’s just an automatic thing! And so if we think upon His name, think upon Him as we talked about earlier here, as you think upon God and what He has done and you see it more and more by the power of God’s spirit – because it’s something that God has to help you to see, to grasp spiritually on a spiritual plane, the more it’s in you. You can’t *help* but have that response.

How much is that in us? To what degree do we see where we are and what God has done and what God is doing? How thankful are we? ... *or* do we allow human nature to get in the way? Do we allow broadcasting that takes place out here to get us off course, to get us in a wrong direction and sometimes to lash out at one another and to not have the most basic of things that we should have there – peace in our relationships with one another? There should never, never, *never*, *Never*, *NEVER*... but it’s always there because we’re human beings. But there should *never* be a foul word that comes out of our mouth in anger, in bitterness toward other people, toward others. We have a big battle don’t we? Our own mind.

But the more we see what God’s given to us, the more that we can drink in of what He’s giving to us. I think especially right now before the Feast. I hope we’re beginning to see in a greater way what God is doing in our lives right now because it’s awesomely moving; it’s incredibly inspiring what He wants to share. As I said, it’s hard to contain ones self because the excitement is so great about where we are in time. We are so close to His Son coming; something that He has worked *so long* at that you can’t *begin to comprehend* that experience over such a *long* period of time because it goes all the way back to the first bit of planning that He did about a Family and about a Son that was necessary in order to have that Family – Jesus Christ, the Chief Cornerstone; and all those things that were planned so long ago. And now we’re almost there! To understand, to grasp the magnitude of the excitement of God Almighty, the Great Creator and Sustainer of everything that exists. He’s blessing us in our little weak frame to be able to share in this. And the more we’ll yield ourselves to what God is giving to us and hold onto and grab a hold of what God is giving to us and *desire* to apply ourselves to it, as an example - the thing of peace, as the example - the thing of obedience to God. As we strive to do the right things and get our lives right with God and repent where necessary... and the more we see then what God is giving to us; this thing of thankfulness and praise to God, a response to God because we get it, because we’re seeing it more. He wants to share this with you. The only thing that holds us back in not being able to share more is ourselves individually in our sins, in our not listening to God.

I would be so *fearful* right now, truly, after all we’ve been given, to have a conversation with someone else in the Body of Christ to where I would be so unthinking, un-thoughtful as to say something that would cause them to be stabbed in the heart because of the words that were spoken to them, to hurt them, to say something evil, to say something bad, to say something that is meant to cut and hurt. *Why* would we do something like that? And that’ll keep you from sharing in what God has; that He wants to share with us.

So yield yourself. That’s why we’re singing this year, because God desires a greater response. He wants to give us more excitement about where we are. He wants to share more of this excitement with each and every one of us. Yield yourself to this process, yield yourself to it, it’s a beautiful thing.

It’s interesting what we just read in Chronicles, that the word for ‘thanks’ is most often translated as the word ‘praise’, ‘to praise God’, because it’s the same spirit. To praise God, to have that coming out of our

being and have that be *genuine* and true and honest in a matter of gratitude, it's a matter of thankfulness to where you can't help it – that's what's going to come out of you; the praise, thanking God, esteeming God, glorifying God by our words. And so it's the same spirit, it's the same mind and it just comes out of us in different ways. So, to praise God, to thank God – they're words in the Hebrew that are really synonymous, they go together. And there are some others that are translated as well, different things that are translated sometimes because people haven't understood.

Let's turn over to 1 Kings 8. There's another way that the word is translated and I just wanted to look at this quickly as a part of a matter of understanding. There's so much to be learned in scripture by sometimes things that are done even mistakenly so. So first we need to get the context of what's going to follow later, learning as we go along about thanking God, the thanks, the attitude of mind, the spirit that should be within us; that we desire to have, that we want to have. We're going to read more of this context in the beginning since some of the story is going to be covered at the Feast.

1 Kings 8:10 - And it came to pass, when the priests had come out of the holy *place*, that the cloud filled the house of the Eternal, so our subject matter today, even though we're going to go through some of these things in a different manner at the Feast, today some of the context here – it's good to bring some of this out in the context of thankfulness to God. This is the story where it says, **the cloud filled the house of the Eternal so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud: for the glory of the Eternal had filled the house of the Eternal. Then Solomon spoke;** so here's an occasion of a building that had taken place; David had a desire to build it but Solomon was the one who actually built it. **Then Solomon spoke, The Eternal said that He would dwell in thick darkness. I have surely built You a house to dwell in, a settled place for You to abide in forever. And the king turned his face about, and blessed all the congregation of Israel: (and all the congregation of Israel stood;)** that respect. Here are people of a carnal mind, not led by God's spirit, but led by a righteous king who had... the predecessor David, the father of Solomon; and Solomon continuing on with so many of the things that he had learned from his father and striving to do things in a right way at this point in time in his life and how things were done, and went ahead and built this incredible structure. And so he's telling the story and he's sharing it.

...He blessed the congregation of Israel: (and all the congregation of Israel stood;) And he said, Blessed be the Eternal God of Israel, who spoke with his mouth to David my father, and has with His hand fulfilled it, saying, Since the day that I brought forth My people Israel out of Egypt, I chose no city out of all the tribes of Israel to build a house, that My name might be therein; but I chose David to be over My people Israel. And it was in the heart of David my father to build an house for the name of the Eternal God of Israel. It's a very powerful thing here. It's used several times in the Bible, this example of what's being spoken of and we're going to talk about it at the Feast in a unique way as well.

Verse 18 - And the Eternal said unto David my father, Whereas it was in your heart to build an house unto My name, you did well in that it was in your heart. Beautiful, beautiful story here as Solomon is repeating some of the history of things that were done and what God had said to his father David and that it was a good thing. He said, "I made you king and *your* desire then was to build me an house." And He said it was a good thing that it was in your heart to so love his God... remember he was a man after God's own heart and it's pictured so many places throughout the Bible. It's an awesome, awesome thing when you begin focusing on that aspect of David's life. You see an attitude that he had toward God that we should all strive to emulate, to learn from, to live. It's a good way of examining ourselves.

And the Eternal said to David my father, Whereas it was in your heart to build an house unto My name, you did well in that it was in your heart. Nevertheless you shall not build the house; but your son that shall come forth out of your loins, and He shall build a house unto My name. This went through a long period of time that this was in David's heart.

Verse 22 – dropping on down to where Solomon was continuing in part of this dedication - **And Solomon stood before the altar of the Eternal in the presence of the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands toward heaven: And he said, O Eternal God of Israel, *there is no* God like You, in heaven above, or on earth beneath, who keeps His covenant and mercy with Your servants who walk before You with all their heart:** he learned about David, his own father, an incredible example to him. He knew that this was the right way to do...and he said, this was his attitude then, his response of how you keep mercy. He knew of how God treated David and worked with David. He knew David's weaknesses, his own son did; he saw things in David's life, he was witness of certain things that happened in David's life, but he saw the mercy God had to someone whose *heart* was right toward God.

He says...**that you keep your covenant and mercy with Your servants who walk before You with all their heart:** and David did strive to do that with all of his heart, truly did – he had a great love for God Almighty, very powerful. Something we want to have indeed. Don't we *all* desire that?

Verse 24 - Who has kept with Your servant David my father that You promised him: you spoke also with Your mouth, and have fulfilled it with Your hand, as it is this day. What? That your son will build me the house; you can't, but your son can. And so he said, you fulfilled your promise to my father. He was very moved by that. It was an incredible thing taking place here. He remembered back. He remembered back to the things his father had told him over and over and over again about this, about his plans. Because the plans were made long before. It was in David's heart.

Then we come to the section where the word 'thanks' is translated in a different manner here, but it's an excellent story talking about thankfulness because there's certain responses that come out of us.

Verse 33 - When Your people Israel are smitten down before the enemy, because they have sinned against You, and then shall turn again to You, and confess Your name, that's very lacking. It isn't enough to confess God's name – that's a little Protestant. It's a little bit like the world. That's why they don't understand about what it means, because it has much more to do here. It's the same word 'thankfulness and praise' and if we have a right response to God indeed we're going to repent of our sins and there is going to be a thankfulness that God has granted us mercy so that we can do that, so that we can have a relationship with Him. It's far more than just confessing a name. It has to do with an attitude and response to God Almighty, doesn't it? ...a desire! Why would one desire to praise and thank God when they've gone through all this – and indeed they should! And until they do that will God work with them? Will God bless them?

So that's something we all have to come to in life. And so when people have sinned... Aren't you thankful? I think of different people out here this year that have been shown mercy, and they are thankful and responded accordingly because more mercy has been granted because of where we are in time about certain things that have existed in some of their lives...because of where we are in time and God's desire. But how we use that mercy that God has granted to us is so important; that we respond, repent of our sins and move forward! And *thank God* for the opportunity, because *we don't have a lot of time to go through a normal process within the Church* in certain things.

So God's granted a great deal of mercy; and that's what we're talking about here. Some understand that more deeply than others – depends on what you've gone through in your life, it depends on what you have done in your life and what God has forgiven you of in your life. *And do we grasp* how much God has forgiven us of in our life – because that says so much. The more you grasp who you are and *what* you are, 'O wretched man that I am...' ² and you believe that because you know it with all of your being, the spirit that's within you, the mind that's within you apart from God's spirit, like Paul talked about; that mind, that *carnal* mind that's filled with enmity against God, ³ that *fights* against God...is the mind that *you* choose to *fight against* and *that's what you fight against* when you receive this way of life. You choose to enter into a *battle*, to fight against *this mind* that's in you. And the more you see *that carnal human nature, that selfishness that you want to get rid of*, the more you thank God, the more you're grateful to God for the mercy and the more, candidly, that you can see others in the Family in a better way and have mercy upon them because you know the mercy God's had upon you. And we know we're in this boat together. No one is better than anyone else – never, never, never, never; we all have the same battles we're fighting – self; our mind. When you fight the world you're fighting your mind. You're not fighting the world, you're not going to change the world; you can only work to change yourself. So you fight against the pulls, the evil that's out there and you learn to loathe, to *hate* the evil that's there because of its influence, because of its drawing power, because of those things that work in the human mind, because of how it tears down. And if we're not careful will tear us down if we allow it to.

Satan and the demons? You have no power against them, to fight against them, to change them. They can't change; they don't want to change. And so your battle even with them is in your own mind, it's in yourself that we fight, isn't it? This mind, the desire to be different, the desire to fight against... on and on it goes.

Very powerful to learn something out of something that's been mistranslated, but to understand why and to understand there's more that goes to the story of being thankful to God; because we're thankful He's working with us. Why? To work with this?! I marvel sometimes, I am in awe...and that draws us closer to God in what? Thankfulness and gratitude and praise. Because you *should* be in awe that He'd work with you. I am talking about myself as well.

When Your people Israel were smitten down before the enemy, because they have sinned against You, because God will not bless in those cases. There are things in our life where God will not bless you. There are things in life at times where God will actually bring things against you, allow things to be brought against you, make sure that things come against you – because He's working with you. He's not working with the world yet. Things are going to start coming against them to bring them to a point where they can be worked with as well. But we're not like the world! We're different! God is working with us. That's why just like even with tithing, blessing or cursing. *You don't get by!* You don't get by.

When Your people Israel are smitten down before the enemy because they have sinned against You, and they shall turn again to You, because they *want* to...because they know they can...because they're reminded of the merciful God; that you can go before Him and pray for forgiveness of your sins and when you know that God has granted you that and is giving you that opportunity, that blessing – what does that do in your attitude and response toward God? Praise! "Thank you God! Thank you. Thank you for giving me another chance." ...**and pray, and make supplication unto You in this house:** We are able

² Romans 7:24

³ Romans 8:7

to go before God's very throne and do this. We know it's not a building. We're able to go before the very throne of God. How dumbfounding is that? To have that kind of knowledge, that kind of confidence, that kind of boldness to understand how we have a way into, on a continual basis, all the time we'd desire to; into the Holiest of Holies before God's very presence and He will hear us.

Then hear in heaven, and forgive the sin of Your people Israel, and bring them again in the land which You gave unto their fathers. And they experienced it over and over again. Their history was filled with this – back and forth, back and forth. Even in the time of the judges before they ever got to a point where they had the kings. And then finally the kings where one king would rise up and do what was right and another king would rise up and turn to idolatry...and back and forth. And they had this history of God forgiving them and God fighting their battles and giving them victory and putting them back on a right track again. It was their history...and yours is the same. And *yours* is the *same*! Back and forth, things of sin in your life; that you're able to go before God and say, "Father I've hurt someone again. I've done this or I've done that...forgive me, help me... help me to be different. Help me to love with Your love." And again, what is the response when we see God is working with us and gives us that? It should *always* be if we're doing it genuinely before God... the *heart* of gratitude, of thankfulness that grows deeper and deeper and deeper – which is a matter then of love to God.

When heaven is shut up and there is no rain because they've sinned against You, if they pray toward this place and confess Your name, give thanks to Your name, *praise Your name*. Because they won't do that unless they've gone through a particular process there and that causes the praise, it helps to stir up the praise and the thankfulness when they grasp, when they *see* what they've done and see the mercy and the grace and the love of God... and to thank God for it! ...**and turn from their sin when You have afflicted them: then hear in heaven and forgive the sin of your servants and of your people that you teach them the good way wherein they should walk,** to thank God that He does that, **and give rain upon Your land which You have given to Your people for an inheritance.** It is beautiful.

Verse 37 - And if there's famine in the land, if there be pestilence, blasting, mildew, locust, or if there'd be the caterpillar; if their enemy besiege them in the land of their cities; whatever plague, whatever sickness *there be*; whatever prayer and supplication is *made by any* man, by Your people Israel, who shall know every man the plague of his own heart, and spread forth his hands toward this house: Then hear in heaven Your dwelling place, and forgive, and do, and give to every man according to his ways, whose heart You know; what a beautiful thing here he's saying. He's saying, "You know the heart. You knew my father's heart. You know our hearts and when we'll repent and turn to You, You know our heart." He knew what God would do, but he prayed this before the people, cried out about this before the people. ...**whose heart You know (for You, *even* You only, know the hearts of all the children of men;)** **That they may fear You all the days that they live in the land which You gave unto their/our fathers.** So again, what an incredible story here: over and over again, the story, the life of David, the things that are there.

So we see where Solomon just spoke about God knowing the hearts of men, knowing what's in the heart, knows if the heart is genuine and thankful toward Him; and if not you know what? ...God calls us and works with us; if the heart is not genuine, if there's that which is lacking He'll work with us and sometimes that's not an easy process to go through because we have to go through some hard things sometimes to get to where we'll see ourselves so that we'll repent and recognize God's mercy and God's grace and God's love and have a right response then to Him of gratitude, of thankfulness as it should be. It's good here to look a little more closely at the kind of heart and spirit that David had here in an example of gratitude and thankfulness that He had toward God.

1 Chronicles 29:1 - Furthermore David the king said unto the congregation, Solomon my son, whom alone God has chosen, *is yet* young and tender, and the work *is* great: for the palace *is* not for man, but for the Eternal God. Now I have prepared with all my might for the house of my God the gold for the *things made* of gold, the silver - the *things* made of silver, and the brass for *things* made of brass, this was long planned out, long in the preparations of making these things that would be there for it; the iron for the *things* of iron, and wood for the *things* of wood; onyx stones, and stones to be set, glistening stones of different colours, and all manner of precious stones, and marble stones in abundance. This is reflecting even more so, over and over again in a very powerful way that heart, that desire and all this preparation that he was doing. It was an attitude toward God that he had.

Verse 3 - Moreover, because I have set my affection to the house of my God, I have of my own proper good, of gold and silver, *which* I have given to the house of my God, over and above all that I have prepared for the holy house, *even* three thousand talents of gold, the gold of Ophir, the seven thousand talents of refined silver to overlay the walls of the houses: The gold for *things* of gold, the silver for *things* of silver, and all manner of work to be made with the hands of artificers. ...those who do the work of art, whatever it was. **And who *then* is willing to consecrate his service this day unto the Eternal?** So he's asking this; he's telling them and saying, "Who is willing? Who has this desire?" And they were moved by David, they were moved by his leadership, they saw something unique in David, they truly did, and therefore their heart was unique in their response to God. He helped to stir that within them.

Then the chief of the fathers and princes of the tribes of Israel, and the captains of thousands and of hundreds, with the rulers of the king's work, offered willingly, there was just that natural desire. They wanted to respond, they were thankful, they saw, they understood what David was saying to a point.

Verse 7 - And gave for the service of the house of God of gold five thousand talents and ten thousand drams, and of silver ten thousand talents, and of brass eighteen thousand talents, and one hundred thousand talents of iron. As the people heard what David was doing in his heart and his desire, they wanted to be a part of it, they wanted to share in what was going to take place. Just as God is blessing us; our desire to want to share in what God has offered and placed before us. It's so incredible!

Verse 8 - And they with whom precious stones were found gave them to the treasure of the house of the Eternal by the hand of Jehiel the Gershonite. Then the people rejoiced, for that they offered willingly, there was that excitement of that spirit that they saw in one another that was infectious and it was very moving then to them; **because with perfect heart they offered willingly to the Eternal:** so this was written for them, about them, and that's what God looks for in every one of us, that heart, that desire, that love toward Him, to understand His blessings, to respond with gratitude, with thankfulness in spirit – not in physical things; but in spirit first and foremost. That's what it's about. It's about the mind, it's about the response that God desires to see from us. He works with us to bring us to that so that we can do that, which means a changing of our mind that takes place through time. ...**because with perfect heart they offered willingly to the Eternal: and David the king also rejoiced with great joy.** This stirred him up even more! He had great joy through all this by experiencing this.

Wherefore David blessed the Eternal before all the congregation: which is about an attitude of worship toward God, that's what it's discussing here, a reverence that was shown. **Wherefore David blessed the Eternal before all the congregation and David said, Blessed be You, O Eternal God of Israel our Father, forever and ever. Yours, O Eternal, *is* the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and**

the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is Yours; Yours is the Kingdom, O Eternal, and You are exalted head above all. It's an attitude of mind, it's the ability to see God, it's in the mind to be able to see the greatness of God in our lives and what God is doing because we *think upon* God, we think about the things that God is doing. It's good for us in prayer to be reminded of what we've come through, to be reminded of the kinds of battles we have been able to face and fight because of God's blessings, of the *knowledge* and the insight of those things that God has given to us that others cannot have until God's spirit works with their mind. How incredibly blessed we are! And then that gratitude and thankfulness toward God that's genuine from the heart, from inside of us... from our mind.

I mention this because one time there was a sermon that went out in the organization we left where one of the main individuals gave a sermon about how there are certain things that happen with the mind, but the heart is able to feel. And so if you get a transplant it's like they have different feelings because a different person had different feelings; it originates in the heart. (And I think...bang!) He's now the president or something? Amazing! It's sad, it's pathetic, it shows how far people go away from the truth when they're asleep and they get farther and farther away.

So I wanted to make that distinction when it uses heart here it's talking about the mind, it's talking about how our feelings are, the things we feel deep down inside – that's what it's discussing. Please never confuse the two.

Yours, O Eternal, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in heaven and the earth is Yours; Yours is the Kingdom, O Eternal, and You are exalted as Head above all. And so it's that knowledge that we have; everything we have because of what God has made possible for us and that response and that attitude then to God.

Verse 12 - Both riches and honour, it's an inspiring thing what David leads up to here, it truly is. It's a perception, it's an understanding that goes so deep in the being if we can grab a hold of that ourselves in our life and build upon that. **Both riches and honour *come forth from You,*** which we discuss when we went through the series about tithing because it's an *attitude* in thinking of mind of what we truly see. **Both riches and honour *come forth from You and You reign over all; and in Your hand is power and might; and in Your hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all.*** It all comes from God. I'll tell you, once we get through the Feast this year I hope you are *moved* by what God gives, in a greater way in your life and to grasp in a greater way what it means that *everything comes from God.* *Everything* is sustained by the Great God of the universe and what He desires to give to us; and what He is building is so phenomenal, so awesome, and it's so incredible to be a part of it.

Both riches and honour *come forth from You, and You reign over all; in Your hand is power and might; and in Your hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all. Now therefore, our God, we thank You, and praise Your glorious name.* As feeble as we are, we can do that, and we can do it more, we learn how to do it more. Thankfulness and praise comes out of here, it comes from deep inside your being because of what you see, because of what you grasp, because of what you believe.

Verse 14 - But who am I, and who are my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? He was so moved by everything that was being given. It was in his heart to build this to God; and then all the people gave what they did to make this possible. **...for all things come from You, and from Your own we have given to You.** Now *that* is a right heart; *that* is a very deeply understanding heart and mind toward God. *Everything* is God's and we have just given back to You what is Yours. What are we? Who are we? It's all Yours, Great God, anyway! That's what he's saying. Any wonder a man after

God's own heart because of what he saw, because of what God gave him to see through the power of His holy spirit; because God gave him the ability to see these things, but it was David's response as God worked with him through His power to mould and fashion him as David yielded himself to that process and the response he had toward God is incredible. Written over and over again throughout scripture here; and *this* is the epitome of so much of that.

Beautiful! I want to read it again... **But who *am* I, and who *are* my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? For all things come from You, and from Your own we have given to You. For we *are* strangers, it's a word that means 'like a temporary traveller'; we're here but a short time and we're gone. **We're as strangers/temporary travellers before You, and sojourners, as were all our fathers: our days on the earth *are* as a shadow, and *there is none* abiding. O Eternal our God, all this store that we have prepared to build You an house for Your holy name comes from Your hand, and is all Your own. There's a lot of understanding there that sometimes we struggle with, that takes time to grow in – that which we can see and grasp in the deepest part of our spirit that goes beyond knowledge.****

Verse 17 - I know also, my God, that You try the heart, and have pleasure in uprightness. As for me, in the uprightness of my heart I have willingly offered all these things: and now have I seen with joy Your people, who are present here, to offer willingly unto You. O Eternal God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, our fathers, keep this forever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of Your people, and prepare their heart unto You: It's a beautiful thing here, this is awesomely beautiful if we see it, if we understand it; to what degree we understand and see it. And what he's asking for...do you see what he's asking for here? ... **keep this forever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of Your people, and prepare their heart unto You: David was excited, David was moved by how God can work with the heart. David experienced in his own life...that's what he's just said, that's what he's just talked about. He says, "I know that You try the heart, You know what's inside of us." And he's asking then for God to work with, to mould and fashion, to prepare the heart of the people as well.**

And give unto Solomon my son a perfect heart, he wanted Solomon to have that kind of heart, **to keep Your commandments, Your testimonies, and Your statutes, to do all *these things*, and to build the palace, for which I have made provision.** To build this temple, which the provision was already there; it's just he wasn't going to be allowed to build it. **And David said to all the congregation, Now bless,** so again, it's like saying, 'acknowledging with honour' again, and 'great respect of worship' here; that's what's being told to the people. **Now bless the Eternal your God. And all the congregation blessed the Eternal God of their fathers, and bowed down their heads, and worshipped the Eternal, and the king.** They were thankful toward the king for what he had given to them. **...And they sacrificed sacrifices unto the Eternal,** see, all the things that are happening here on a physical plane, we're blessed that they're happening in our lives on a spiritual plane. We're given so much greater, we're given so much more, we have the opportunity to *do* so much more because it's something spiritual that we're blessed to be a part of and share in. They were fully involved in a response toward God, but very much in a physical plane because God was working with David and maybe just a few others, maybe... a few others, not very many. 2-3-4-5? Not very many. We don't know for sure, but there weren't many more than that.

And so what was happening there was a personal private thing between God and different ones He worked with for the first 4,000 years, that He individually worked with and gave of His spirit and moulded and fashioned things within them to prepare them to be part of the 144,000. Because the primary building took place in the last 2,000 years through the structure of the Church, and so if we can

grasp the magnitude of something beyond this that happened physically that's happening to us spiritually and how much more we've been given. It's night and day, it truly is.

And they sacrificed sacrifices unto the Eternal, and offered burnt offerings unto the Eternal, on the morrow after that day, *even* a thousand bullocks, a thousand rams, *and* a thousand lambs... and what is it God desires from us? Not the sacrifices. It's from what's inside of you, it's the battle, it's the fight that you're willing to engage in, that you're willing to go through day by day and keep at and cry out to God for help in the fight, to conquer self, to overcome.

And they did eat and drink before the Eternal on that day with great gladness. And they made Solomon the son of David king the second time, and anointed *him* unto the Eternal *to be* the chief governor, and Zadok *to be* priest. It's a beautiful picture. Very inspiring. If we can drink in everything that's there, we are awesomely blessed – we truly are.

So I want to encourage everyone, especially those of you who don't know the songs, to do all you can to learn them so that indeed we can make a joyful noise with melody before God at the Feast of Tabernacles this year.

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