

Moving Through the Wilderness

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2nd Feast of Tabernacles Sermon - 2012

This is, of course, my first sermon for the Feast. You know, God is taking us on a very unique journey, one that no one before has ever taken, and He's been doing so for several years now. I believe – we believe – that we are in the final “day” of the Lord' prophetically 'between the two evenings' of Pentecost, and as with a recent long sermon series by that name, 'Between the Two Evenings', we are moving forward toward the fulfillment of that prophetic period of time, to a far more meaningful promised land than that of old.

The promised land we are moving toward *powerfully encapsulates* the very meaning of this Feast of Tabernacles that we're observing. We're moving toward the Millennial reign of Jesus Christ and the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth. This first sermon I am giving is entitled, *Moving Through the Wilderness*, for we are traveling in similar manner to those Israelites who were physically moving through the wilderness toward the promised land, and we are, if you will, fulfilling that journey however on a spiritual plane, that which they fulfilled physically.

And in that recent sermon that we went through we discussed some of the similarities of those things that we can learn by some of the things that God has done with people of old. And that's the very purpose for those things being recorded, is so that we can learn lessons. And certainly we've been able to apply that to our journey, but we're going to begin this Feast of Tabernacles by focusing on some of that same sort of thing but in a unique way, again, as to how this is applied to our journey moving through the wilderness.

As we're reminded in that story of the Old Testament of the journey of the Israelites, once God had established His law with them He began to lead them farther into the wilderness away from Sinai and toward the promised land. We know their story and how they did not fare well *because they did not believe God*. They did not have God's spirit but *we do*, yet we too have had battles with the way, or in the way, that God has led us, in with the truths or the ways that He's given us, that He's revealed to us. So such battles are simply a matter of the way in which we can grow. We have God's spirit, we're different from the Israelites, we have a focus in a way that they couldn't have; so again, such battles are simply a matter of the way in which we can grow *if* we continue to seek God and yield to Him as we fight against our own human nature. We have that awesome advantage and blessing that God is working with us in a unique way.

So we need to remind ourselves of a little of the overview of that journey that they were taking, and consider how or where our journey through the wilderness corresponds spiritually to their journey, and then focus more on what we need to *see* and learn from all this at this time. Let's turn back to Exodus 3 and begin there. Interesting here how some of the things that we can learn and draw certain analogies from, and learn from them, all through the Old Testament, all through the Bible, of things that God can continually teach us, and to understand that as He gives us sermons that He is teaching us, that He is giving us what we need at this moment in time.

So back here in **Exodus 3:1 - Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father in law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb.** Now we recently went through some of these verses talking about how that this was in the true area of Mount Sinai *in Arabia*, not in Egypt.

Verse 2 - And the angel, it's important to understand here that this word is oftentimes used as 'messenger' or 'representative'. Now, we understand that God communicated with Moses and there are things that God has done through time in whatever fashion, in whatever means, that He has given them something that doesn't necessarily come through someone else, as an angelic being. He's sent angels, we know the accounts in the book of Daniel where certainly over and over again we have seen where Gabriel has been sent and given messages to people. But in this account here this is something that God did, that God gave to Moses, and so the word here is used as a representative or a messenger, in other words, it's showing here a way of communicating with Moses.

And so it says, **And the angel of the Eternal appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of the bush**: so whatever that means fully. There might have been at that time that which communicated, that which spoke to Moses – we don't fully understand, we don't fully know. There's not a whole lot written about it but it says here, concerning Moses, that **this representative of the Eternal appeared unto him in a flame of fire out in the midst of the bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire and the bush was not consumed**. So we don't know what that means fully, whether there was something in the image within the fire or whether it was just the fact that the sound came forth from the fire as though it was speaking there. But this is the representation, that's what it's showing here, not an angelic being by any measure, but a representation of something that God wanted to project to Moses physically so that Moses could have something to physically see to be in awe of as God began to work with him.

And it says here, **that the bush burned with fire and the bush was not consumed**; so again, this thing of considering the miraculous things that God works in our life to get our attention and strengthen our focus upon Him, and blessing us so that we can hear Him. So there are things that all of us have unique to us, certainly what happened to Moses was incredibly unique because of the time that had elapsed since various ones had been worked with, in that respect, through time there, the Israelites being in captivity for as long as they were. And God began to work with Moses to bring the children of Israel out of Egypt, from the very beginning, from his birth on and the awesome things that God worked out. Those things weren't just accident, that his family put him in this kind of reed type of construction of a boat and sent it down and it was in the area of the reeds, and then it was found and he was raised in royalty, in Pharaoh's court, growing up there as one of theirs, being an Israelite. An awesome story!

These things didn't just *happen* and then God say at some point in time there, "Well, I think I'm going to use Moses now." Things don't work that way. Sometimes people so limit God – but God is, again, He writes this, He writes things He's going to do, He purposes, He's the architect of everything, and then He molds and fashions lives and people and time and everything perfectly so, to teach, to lead, to bring in time, or to give opportunity at least, for everyone to become a part of His Family. And so this is an incredible story and we're to learn from this.

What happened to you that God got your attention? I know the things where God got my attention. You know, He can't just keep using the burning bush, there are different things that God has done at different times, otherwise everyone would have to be waiting for the bush and then all he'd have to say is, "Well, did you see the bush and did it speak to you." "Well, no." "Well, then you're not called." God works with us all differently, and especially when He begins to work with us spiritually in our lives and especially when there's an existing Church and that which we can be brought into.

God had to work with Mr. Armstrong in a unique way. The Church, Sardis, was dying out, and God had to challenge him. He knew him. He knew what would happen when his wife challenged him with the

Sabbath day. Incredible story of how God began to work with him and how God began to *speak* to him and reveal things to him in his mind to lead him. And so we experience different things that happen in our life; that's why we're told to never forget. We're to remember *how God called us* . We're to remember the beginning of our calling, of things that happened, circumstances that happened in our life and to never forget them. If you *know* ...if you *know* that God called you and you *see* something that you *never* saw before, if something comes into your mind that you grasp and see and you tried to share it with others and they couldn't see it and you learned that process of something that has worked in your life – that the only ability you have to be able to see the truth is that God give it to you.

And I think of people who have left and I think, "If they could have just held onto that!" What did God bring them to? When God performed that miracle in people's lives and began speaking to them, got their attention, began to reveal truth to them, then why would anyone go somewhere else? If this is where...and you're convicted that God revealed the truth to you, the Sabbath, the Holy Days...? Incredible how the human mind can think and leave that which is so basic and so foundational.

And so, God has so blessed us, by being able to get our attention so that we can *see* things about Him, His way of life, so that we can hear Him. And so we're to learn from that. So again, I think through a story like this and certainly how God spoke to Moses. I am no Moses, but spiritually I see how God began to work with me to be part of delivering His people at this time. For me, the burning bush was contained in His truth that was reinforced in me.

In the beginning God called me, we're all to remember that, He got my attention by things that happened in my life and brought me to a point where I was willing to listen. Because before that I wouldn't have been able to... I didn't have the humility to listen, I wouldn't have listened – I know my mind. And I've told the stories at different times, of how God worked with me and called me. But then with the Church, with responsibility to lead, to be in the position where I am at this time, I recognized what happened to me and what my burning bush was, if you will, spiritually. So for me the burning bush was contained in His truth that was reinforced *in* me quickly from the beginning. Those are the things that stirred me up. Those are the things that I realize in a very powerful way, I didn't have this before, I didn't know this before, I didn't *see* this before. It wasn't in the Church. It wasn't a matter of going back and recapturing and re-establishing and becoming more firmly grounded in that which was already given, these were things above and beyond – the burning bush for me – and so I began to see those things, they were reinforced in me and strengthened powerfully, quickly from the beginning with the ability to *see* the apostasy. The ability to see it, and that which was burning and on fire but not being destroyed or fully consumed.

So again, things that I began to see, that I began to grasp that God began to give to me about the Church and what was happening to us and why; something that was burning, the destruction that was there, of something that was on fire – but not destroyed either. For me, the spiritual analogy of some of that, something not fully consumed, especially in that which was scattered and what happened to us. It reminds me of the example back there in Ezekiel where it says to take a certain amount of hair and throw it into the fire. You know, cut off your beard and then divide it into three parts, and again here, some of those things that were consumed but we have learned in time that there are those things that God is going to save. What an awesome, awesome thing.

Going on here a few verses down, **verse 7 – The Eternal said, I have surely seen the affliction of My people who are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters**; slave drivers, that's what it means. And I think of Satan and a demonic spirit world whenever I see something like that –

Egypt, Pharaoh, the taskmasters, those who are driving them, keeping them in bondage. And so, you know, God looks down upon us and His people and a plan that He has of freeing His people – all of mankind eventually – first the Church and then the rest of mankind that are to be delivered at this time, the rest later on. He says; **for I know their sorrows**; and so again here, I think of the powerful messages and things that God gave, and our focus for so long, for so many years was about the scattered Church, and so many of the things, ‘Time is Running Out’, ‘News Watch’, ‘Time Has Run Out’, all those things, all the battles that were fought from the very beginning having to do with people that were confused and filled with sorrow and hurt and pain and suffering...and then later not understanding some of the sorrow or the reasons why some of those things existed in their life or why they didn’t have the kinds of answers and help that they truly wanted, that they wanted to experience, that they knew they had in times past.

Going on in **verse 8 - And I have come down to deliver them out of the land of the Egyptians, and to bring them...** and I think of the scattered Church first, and then the world to follow – that’s the order. **...and to bring them up out of the land into a good land and a large, unto land flowing with milk and honey**; productive, fertile, healthy, primarily spiritually. That’s what this Feast is all about. This Feast of Tabernacles that we are observing at this time is about that time that’s about to come – *finally* about to come to this earth! ...a time indeed that’s going to be so strong spiritually, where everyone is going to have opportunity to learn about God, to have God dwell in them. So again, both physical blessings but primarily that which is spiritual because it is the spiritual that gives meaning to all else, otherwise it’s just life, its existence. Only when God comes does family truly have the kind of meaning that everyone truly wants to have in the first place, when His way is given and purpose is given. Then things have meaning and purpose into life eternal.

Going on down here let’s go on to the next chapter. **Exodus 4:19 - And the Eternal said unto Moses in Midian**; interesting here. Now, we haven’t focused on some of these words in the past like we’re going to today because of the focus we have, of our specific journey from the beginning, from the time of the apostasy. Because it *was* at the beginning of the apostasy that a specific countdown began that is leading right up to the second coming, the return of Jesus Christ, this time as King of kings, in what this Feast season pictures, the establishment of the Millennium, the Kingdom of God here on earth.

And the Eternal said unto Moses in ‘Midian’; it’s a word that means, ‘of strife’, ‘of contention’, ‘of/from discord’; and so it says here that this is where he was **and He said unto him, return unto Egypt**: so he found himself, we found ourselves, at a time of strife, of contention, of/from (as it means in Hebrew here) discord. There had never been a time like it in the Church, in God’s Church, and there will never be a time like it again. And God said this would be the sign, in essence, of the coming of Jesus Christ; that He could not come, would not come until this occurrence of an apostasy took place. And so indeed, this is when I was drawn and others of you began to be drawn, to begin to be worked with in a very unique and special way to prepare as we finally even incorporated the name – which God inspired us to do – ‘Preparing for the Kingdom of God’. The final, if you will, preparation leading right up to the Kingdom of God being established on this earth.

And so the Eternal said unto Moses in Midian, Go, return unto Egypt, for all the men who sought your life are dead. And so I think of the short space of time following the apostasy, during a time of strife and contention in the Church, from great discord that had struck us all God began calling me and others out of that, and we were thrust into a task of going after those who were in Egypt. That was the job, from the very moment, from the very beginning. It was sluggish in the beginning and it took time for God to establish me amongst other brethren so that they could become stronger in belief of who it was with

whom God would now be working. We didn't do this quickly, we had to go through some things first within an organization, within some experiences amongst ourselves locally up there in the Toledo area, and then with Cincinnati; Toledo, Detroit and then with Cincinnati a little bit later here. There was a process whereby God helped us to become more and more grounded, helping people to become more and more grounded, helping people come to understand that, yes, this is the way we're to go and there is no other way.

And I think of the power for us being in the truth that God began to give to lead people out of Egypt. I marvel at how God has molded and fashioned us to have a focus at different times on different things. And I think of when we went through Revelation and talking about some of those things having to do with the very end, of that which led up to May 26th and talking about the end of 1260 days and going through some various sermons there and talking specifically about two witnesses and talking about power that was given. Sometimes people just want that which is physical and they don't get it, they don't understand what God is saying. And sometimes we don't even understand until we look back and then we see the evidence, we realize what God did with us as He was leading us, and then we come to the ability to say, "Now I understand." Because that's how God reveals things to us; He helps us to learn, to see.

I think of the verse, **Revelation 11:6 - These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and they have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with plagues as often as they will.** I've already given sermons on that. There are people who are still confused though sometimes and they just want to see physical things, they don't understand the job, they don't understand what was happening, they don't understand the power, that the power being spoken of – one of the *primary* things that was brought out in the midst of those sermons there as we approached May 26th was that *power* that God gave to us in the Church, that *power* that *we have* is the truth, and it's *all the truths* that God gave through that period of time. First 50 leading all the way up to - of course, all those that God had given to Mr. Armstrong, and then all those that God began to give to the Church leading us all the way up to the 50th Truth – and then what an *awesome* thing – seven more given during that period of time that followed during the 1260 days – *seven more* to give us strength and power and courage and boldness. Awesome, it truly is! No other way to describe it – power! Power that is here and *nowhere else*...nowhere else. This is where it is...because it comes from God and the truth is power.

Power – the truth – is what will lead people out of Egypt. It wasn't the frogs. It wasn't the lice. It wasn't all the plagues that took place that we have to have that we sometimes in the back of our mind have to take place, for various things to happen at the end of an age – not understanding what the witness was all about but learning about it, and even more about it after it's over, after the 1260 days are past. We have things that we have been learning and more things that we will learn as God molds and fashions us. Power – the truth to lead out of Egypt.

And so that's what will happen through time. That's what will continue to happen as individuals are brought to the ability to *see* the truth, to *see* those things, the power that was given. And when they see those things, when their mind is opened up to those things, the ability to leave Egypt, the desire to get out of Egypt and to embrace what God is offering, it's powerful, it truly is.

Going on to the next chapter, **Exodus 6:2 - And God spoke unto Moses, and said to him, I am the Eternal: I am Yahweh/the Self-Existing One. And I appeared unto Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, by the name of God Almighty, El Shaddai; 'El' for God, 'Shaddai', the Almighty.** And so He says, **I revealed**

Myself to them as El Shaddai/God Almighty; but by My name The Eternal/Yawheh/The Self-Existing One I was not known to them. Amazing! You know, I love this thing of understanding of how God helps us to see that there is a progressive revelation of His way of life; over the past 6,000 years there has been progressive revelation of truth, something we continue to grow in, something God has blessed us mightily in. I think of the 57 Truths, progressive revelation. So often one thing leading to another. The more clear something becomes of a particular truth, so often leading to another. It's just an incredible, incredible journey.

And so again, something to strengthen Moses by, to encourage Moses by, that God would speak to him in this manner and reveal such things to him.

Then it goes on to say in **verse 4 - And I have also established My covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land of their dwelling place, wherein they were strangers. And I have also heard the groaning of the children of Israel, whom the Egyptians keep in bondage; and I have remembered My covenant.** Now, it's not that He didn't know it. These are awkward English terms for us to use in one respect, but it's like looking at a matter and saying, "Now is the time." In other words, "Now I'm bringing this to remembrance, to bring this out to give to you Moses, for you to give to the Israelites, to remind them of who they are and what I told to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob that I would give to them. And now you're at that time. These things are now brought to remembrance so that you can focus upon them, so that you can see what I'm doing with you." And I think of our lives and where we are and what God gives to us.

Verse 6 - Therefore say to the children of Israel, I am the Eternal, Yahweh, the Self-Existing One, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage: What a beautiful message! I think of even the Feast of Tabernacles, especially last year's Feast, the message over and over again was coming out of bondage, and all that God has given to us to see, to be excited about where we're going and where we are and what has taken place and what this means for the Church and for the world and how beautiful it is – that those who cause the bondage, those first and foremost responsible for that are going to be removed, are going to be themselves put into bondage so they can't harm anyone, so they can't communicate with anyone for a thousand years, for over a thousand years – because it says, 'after the thousand years are finished'.

And it says, **and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments:** in other words, things that are going to be poured out in judgment upon others, to bring things about. Just like God's going to do in this world, especially when we're at the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th Trumpets and then finally the 7th – great judgments that have been written and pronounced so long ago, of things that God is going to do to free the world from Egypt, to free people themselves in their own minds, from bondage. Because people are held in bondage.

People who have ideas and believe that their government is the answer to their problems – whether it be Chinese, Russians, Europeans, a company of nations, a group of nations of ten, a united Europe that they think they're going to be the answer, a United States of America...it doesn't matter who it is, *no one* has the answers, *no one* can solve the problems, *no one* can give the earth peace. It's our history! The United Nations can't do it – it's a joke, it's a folly, it's a *shame*! And yet people hold onto these things. Wall Street, the system of the petro-dollar that's gone down the tubes, all those things are going by the wayside – powerful things – as God pronounces great judgments on this earth, that there is *nothing* that can save man. And so man has to be freed from that in his own mind and the only way for that to happen is to come to realize, to come to see, "It's failed me."

Their religions, I don't care whose religion is out here, they don't have the answers and it's not going to save them. It doesn't matter what kind of economic system they rely on, it's going to backfire on them. I think of something I heard just the other day here, of an individual who has an incredible grasp on geopolitics and things about the petro-dollar and things that are happening in this world and talking about what he believes is going to happen by the latter half of September. Whether it does or doesn't at that time, they see things, and they're betting against the dollar. They believe they can make *incredible wealth* on the dollar going under. Things like that just sicken me, that people make money off of others, off of others hardships and calamities, and almost to the point they rejoice in it, they look forward to it happening. Sick, sick world!

But even them, they're going to have to come to see that what they *thought* was going to be their greater salvation – that too will fail. Everything will fail.

Verse 7 - And I will receive you to Myself for a people, we don't get there easy, especially during this time for the world, and even for the scattered Church, for them to be shaken – earthquake - for them to be shaken to the core of their being, to wake them up, to bring about thousands to repentance – it's so incredible. **And I will receive you unto Myself for a people and I will be your God: and you shall know that I am the Eternal your God, who brings you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.** Well, they didn't then, as a whole. You know, the Israelites never really knew that, that He was the Eternal? Now there are certain things about Him that they came to understand, but to believe Him for what God was saying, for what God told them would take place in time... won't happen until the Great White Throne. Incredible!

Verse 8 - And I will bring you into the land, for them they didn't make it there, and God knew, God had a plan. God already had a plan. He didn't decide that once they got into the Sinai that all of a sudden He was going to change His plan and all of a sudden keep them there for nearly forty...thirty-nine, whatever it is more years at that point in time. Hardly! Hardly, hardly! God had a plan. But He spoke to them after a manner of something that is still going to be fulfilled. **And I will bring you unto the land, concerning that which I promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and I will give it you for an inheritance:** you know, if somebody looked at that and they believed that indeed God had a plan, that they were all going to die as a whole in the wilderness – say, “Well, that's a lie.” No, it isn't. We're going to have some sermons here as we go forward that to me are so powerful and so exciting to understand – how God works in our life. And in this particular matter here what God said is true; He will do that. He *will do that* in the Great White Throne – *that* is what He promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The Millennium that's coming up – *that* is what He promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. It's not just about a physical land it's about the opportunity for salvation, to become a part of the God Family. *That* – that's what God had promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, through that one Seed, through Jesus Christ, that was given as well as a part of that promise.

And then it goes on to say: **I am the Eternal. And Moses spoke so unto the children of Israel, but they did not listen to Moses for anguish**, that word in the Hebrew means, 'for short', or, 'for shortness' **of spirit**. I think of the very beginning, began to tell the truth of what had happened to us as God helped us, helped me to see, helped us to begin to see, those who were together, that we had had an apostasy, that we were scattered, that it happened to us as God said it would happen in Laodicea, that God would spew us out of His mouth, that that was the reason we were scattered and made so weak and scattered all over the place – because we were 'short of spirit'. Indeed, we had fallen asleep, we didn't have what we needed to have to be able to see before it happened, before it occurred, to be able to stand...and so it happened to us.

The inability to hear is because of that which is in the mind, and so those, even though they experienced the apostasy, who couldn't hear, *still* were not stirred to the point, were not awakened to the point to be able to acknowledge sin, to be able to take personal responsibility for what had happened, to acknowledge the man of sin, to acknowledge that we're all stones of the Temple, to acknowledge that we had all indeed been spewed out of His mouth, that we all got sluggish and became lukewarm and fell asleep spiritually. They couldn't believe that, couldn't see that.

...and so they did not listen to Moses because of shortness of spirit, an attitude; there's attitude that goes with that. **...and for cruel/hard bondage**. In other words, held so strongly in bondage that they could not hear. Held so strongly in bondage. Powerful! Something that had, candidly, been taking place before the apostasy that continued on – that attitude and a spirit with which God could not work, that's why He spewed the entirety of the Church out of His mouth and began to work with a remnant.

So, as God worked to establish those whom He would immediately begin leading out of Egypt, the vast majority *would not listen* nor follow God at that time. God had firmly established us by Pentecost of 1998, as we've talked about, when we were fully on our way through the Red Sea and out of Egypt, away from the power to enslave that was in Egypt. You know, we were still there, still in that which was not right, still in that which we had to be freed from. We weren't all the way out until we were brought together finally by Pentecost of 1998. And that's akin to, for us, to having gone through, if you will, the Red Sea. So we began a spiritual journey for this end-time, one that would lead us ever moving toward the Millennial reign of Jesus Christ and the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth.

Our spiritual journey continued to parallel that of the Israelites, but it needs to be *deeply understood*, again here, that theirs was a physical journey highlighted by *unbelieving carnal responses* over and over again. And this part, to me, is encouraging. When we went through 'Between the Two Evenings' I hope that we were all able to make that distinction. Sometimes we go through things and we indeed need to receive correction and change and respond to God, but sometimes to not follow the distinction of something that lifts us up with strength and excitement and boldness because of a special relationship that we see that God has given to us.

So our journey has been one with *spiritual* struggles that work toward that which has been highlighted with deeper and deeper spiritual growth and *belief*. See, that's what makes the difference! We go through trials. We go through hardships. And *IF* we address them in the way and we continue to follow God as He leads us – and so if we address them in the way that God shows us that we should, and if then we choose to follow Him, which means we repent and just move forward, what a beautiful thing that is – because that's where spiritual growth comes from and *belief*, strength, confidence, boldness, is made stronger, faith – what we see and believe is made stronger.

So, let's continue the parallels of that journey: **Exodus 13:3 - And Moses said to the people, Remember this day, in which you came out from Egypt, out of the house of bondage; for by strength of hand the Eternal brought you out from this place: there shall no leavened bread be eaten.** You know, our journey has always included a great struggle of dealing with two minds when leaving Egypt – those who have continued to yield themselves to being molded by God and those who came to resist, to refuse God leading them.

God lead us, as He says, brings us out with *power*. He says, **for by strength of hand the Eternal brought you out.** Again, we need to recognize what that power is. That's why we have been so often told it's about the *truth*! It's about the *truth*; it's not about a *date*. Those things will come, and we'll have more

about that in this Feast as well. But it's about what we live, it's about the *conviction* of what we have toward the truth that God gives to us as He leads us into deeper and deeper, greater and greater truth, and our receiving of that. That is our strength!

But I marvel how it's been. I think of what happened early on here in the beginning, even as we were going through the sermon about 'Between the Two Evenings' and talking about that journey and talking about some of the attitudes of those who wanted leaders. They wanted to stone and kill Caleb and Joshua. They wanted to stone Aaron and Moses. And they wanted to choose a leader to go back into *Egypt*... And even in the midst of that sermon an individual did that very thing, led others, a few others that followed, to go back into Egypt, to leave the truth. Astounding! To go back to believing that there is a ...what, a place of safety? To go back to believing that... I just can't comprehend (I do), but to me it's astounding to follow that, to literally go and follow that which is diametrically opposite to everything that God has revealed since we left Egypt – in this analogy, in this story here of what we're talking about – when God brought us together as a group in Pentecost of 1998 and all the truths that God gave to us as a whole and strengthened us in, all of the understanding that we were given – and how anyone could leave all of that and follow that which teaches opposite, different, from these things? Astounding! But it has happened, we have seen evidence of it.

Going on here in Exodus 16. And so we have to make choices all along the way, and if we repent and if we choose to continue to follow God, He just gives us greater and greater strength and determination and boldness and help to learn lessons and we grow spiritually in ways that we couldn't before. We have to be brought to those moments in time to help us to even grow in character and stronger in spirit. And if you're not one of those who is growing stronger in character you need to examine yourself and ask, "Why not?" Have you become stronger in the past few months? Have you become more determined? ...or are you coasting? ...have you let up? ...do you have doubts? Because if those things exist you are in *very bad shape* and need to address those things in your life and cry out for the mercy and help of God.

Exodus 16:1 - And they took their journey from 'Elim', it's that which means, 'a place of support and strength', as from God. And so **they took their journey from Elim, and all the congregation of the children of Israel came into the Wilderness of Sin,** to the Wilderness of Clay. Amazing what words mean sometimes. **...which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after their departing out of the land of Egypt. And the whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness:**

Verse 4 - Then the Eternal said to Moses, Behold, I will rain bread, what does that mean for us? Bread – Jesus Christ talked about the living bread that we're to take into our life, that which is unleavened, the bread of life, the Word of God, the truth that God gives to us. That's our bread; it's spiritual. **And the Eternal said to Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in My law, or not.** And I think of the system, of how God has worked to reveal truths and how those who continue to follow, as they come to each new truth, they address it, they listen, they grow, and if there is that which they don't fully grasp, they wait – at least as a whole – with a desire to learn so that they can see it and can grasp it. And then in God's time and their time in that relationship that so often happens at times in people's lives, finally it's there. It's personal; it's about a personal relationship between that person and God.

And yet, each one of these is given along the way too – some of these things test people. We come to a point in time when we talk about that which God is giving to women that wasn't meant from the beginning, of something that became a *curse* at the beginning, and God is going to remove all curses. And for some to hold onto, to believe, which some have now done, that they've gone back to and they don't believe that anymore, that women are to be freed in the Millennium from the curse of what began with Adam and Eve. Incredible! Astounding! Incredible to me that a woman would follow a man who was willing to throw that away... almost leaves me speechless – but it's happened several times now.

And so He says **that I may prove them whether they will walk in My law or not;** and so God gives us truth and He continues to give truth – and then people make choices. And at different points along the way some have quit following. I think of 2005 – thankfully there weren't many - but at different stages there have been people that have quit and they say that's the reason.

Verse 5 - And it came to pass that on the sixth day they shall prepare that which they bring in; and it shall be twice as much as they gather daily. And Moses and Aaron said unto the children of Israel, At even, then you shall know that the Eternal has brought you up out of the land of Egypt: And this is where we spoke in that past sermon – How many truths does God have to give to us to convict someone, or to give to someone, to convict someone that they are being led by Him through His chosen servant? What does it take? Well, those are the things that try us and test us, and those are the very things whereby God proves us as to what's inside of us. In other words, it will come out, that which will yield itself to God, that desires to be led by God, which will hold onto the truth of God even through hard times and then learn great lessons through the battles. And others who determine else-wise and go elsewhere.

You know, some cannot go forward, while others yield to the process of being more fully convicted in faith. There has always been that twofold portion throughout the Church: that which gets to a point where it can't continue to go forward, will not continue to go forward. There is that which it will resist and refuse and strive to justify while others continue to move forward.

So, before going to Sinai, I think of the analogies again of more of those things for us, God was proving the Church as to who would continue to follow Him. Some would not receive it and spiritually returned to Egypt. I think of those times early on. We went through some of this initial process from Pentecost 1998 up through Pentecost 2000. The workable clay with which God would work was refined and strengthened; other left and went back to Egypt.

I think of 'Elim'; I think of the story here, even just the words and the power that's contained therein. 'Elim' – the place of support and strength as from God. You know, when we began to leave in 1998 there were those things that God gave us strength in in the following months there. 'News Watch' was out there and people were being strengthened and more were coming along, more of some that were scattered in different areas, and people were continuing to come along in different areas, and people were being strengthened.

And so again here, that which happened very early on and then went up to the Wilderness of Sin, of Clay, and camped there for a time. And I think of that period of time. Would we continue to yield ourselves to be molded and fashioned by God? ...the place of Clay? And it was there in the very beginning in early stages right around 2000 that there is that which became evident that it would not yield itself, would not be moldable, pliable by God, and that which would. Awesome!

Then God had us move forward just a little bit more and He continued to lead us to Mount Sinai spiritually. **Exodus 17:1** – again, these analogies of things we can see and learn from in our journeys and things that have happened to us, literally, on a spiritual plane. **And all the congregation of the children of Israel journeyed from the Wilderness of Sin, or from Clay, after their journeys, according to the commandment of the Eternal, and pitched in**, notice this area here now; **‘Rephidim’**: It is a word that means ‘rest’ or ‘resting place’. And so again here, a part of this journey – here is some more of it. Here is an area now where it says here is the place of rest, a resting place, **and there was no water for the people to drink. Therefore the people chided**, in other words, ‘made complaint’ or ‘to strive against in opposition’ **with Moses, and said, Give us water that we may drink.** And so there were still some, even with us... after what happened in 2000 there was a group that left. There was a group that did not want to expand beyond Toledo and Detroit. They didn’t want us to go to other areas to work with Georgia or any of the other areas in Texas, or Missouri, or Mississippi, and on and on it went. Did not have the vision of what God had called us to do as a work and were fighting and resisting what God was giving us to do as our charge, as a commission...and so God took care of that in 2000.

And so we continued on and we pitched in an area of ‘Rephidim’, if you will, spiritually, a time of rest and a time of a resting place and had relative rest and peace, because in one fell swoop in 2000 God got rid of many who were in a sense leaders, a large portion of those who were there from the very beginning who were resisting God. And rather than just let them be weeded out as we went along the way He got it taken care of all at one time, one fell swoop. But there were still a few...*still a few* who complained and didn’t like some of the ‘little things’ that were going on. It’s not... when it talks here about **‘give us water that we may drink.’** It’s spiritually an expression of, “I want something else to satisfy me. I don’t want just this, I want something else. I don’t want to change in some of these things that are being given to us, I want something else! I want what I consider refreshing to me, not what you’re giving to me.” And they didn’t see God in the picture of what God was giving to them. So, a few more were removed from the journey during this time of relative peace and rest, during this period of around mid-year 2000 up to the end of 2002: God was settling us so that we could then be moved forward and He could then take us to a time that would reflect the encampment around Mount Sinai.

So again here, we went through different things at different stages and it was during this time that the last publication, ‘News Watch’ was published in the fourth quarter of 2002. And I want to read the last paragraph of that issue, of that last issue, and that was all the way up to the end of 2002 and just reading that last paragraph because it really says so much about where we were going, what we were doing:

If only it could sober each of us to the core of our being—the Kingdom of God is upon us!

‘PKG’ - The Kingdom of God; this is where we’re going! Little did we know that a specific timeline had started from the time of the apostasy. Now, we knew that there were things involved in timing there and we were learning from that but to understand it all? We haven’t understood it until shortly before the end here in the sense of that which led up to May 26th before the final ‘day’ prophetically. So, again here, going on....

We are so very close to the opening of the [final] seventh seal. We are rapidly approaching the blowing of the first four trumpets that bring great [physical] tribulation on this earth.

I'm going to talk a little more about that during this Feast. Awesome lessons of things that God helps us to see and to learn. Going on in what is said here....

Remember—it will last but a short time, although it will be the worst of times upon all the history of mankind's 6,000 years on this earth—it will be followed by a new world. That gospel message [the good news] means more now than ever before. The Kingdom of God follows this great tribulation. It is our hope and the only true hope of all mankind!

It's always been our focus, hasn't it? And the closer we have gotten to the end the more focused God has blessed us to become on where we are and where we're going. And I can't help but think of some of this that was written here, of what we're going to be hearing in other sermons in the Feast here, but talking about some of this, of terms we have used, of that which God gave us to a point in time that we have looked to. Term like, 'great tribulation' and what does that mean? Questions that some have had and even asked, that as time goes on God will show us more and more. And really we should be coming to the point we understand that even a little more clearly more and more.

Then it came time for God to move us forward in our journey to a time reflective of being encamped around Mount Sinai. Now, again here, hopefully everyone remembering some of that story, going back 'Between the Two Evenings' and thinking about how that God led them; they were around Elim, as we talked about, and began to move forward there, moved to the area of clay; and for whatever reason that term just flat slipped my mind... the Wilderness of sin, to the area of Clay, and then to Rephidim, and now up to Mount Sinai. Happening relatively fast because now we're coming up to Pentecost. So this is the journeying. By the time they left, started to leave after Passover and they began to move forward through Egypt to get down to where they could cross the Red Sea; and they were camped at the Red Sea there then and God took them through on that last day there. And then after the Feast of Unleavened Bread, of course the three areas of encampment. Finally to Mount Sinai here by the time of Pentecost, and that's what we come up to, and so that's what it's talking about here then when we read in Exodus 19. They're now coming up to the period of Pentecost. So they'd been travelling a little bit, not real long distances, but for a people walking and that many, at least 2.5 million plus people.

Exodus 19:1 - In the third month, so it's almost Pentecost, after the children of Israel had left the land of Egypt, the same day they came into the wilderness of Sinai. For they had departed from Rephidim, from the area of rest and the resting place that God had given them, and now it was time to settle in around Sinai, and had come to the desert of Sinai and pitched in the wilderness; and there Israel camped before the mount. And Moses went up unto God, and the Eternal called unto him out of the mountain, saying, Thus shall you say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel; You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I carried you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto Myself.

I love that term there about being 'carried on eagles' wings'. I think of Revelation, what it says when it talks about that similar sort of expression there, when it talks about the history of the Church through time and what happened all the way up to toward the end-time. **Revelation 12:14 - And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.** So we know what that meant to us, for us, and a period of time that God had given to us to live and to experience.

And so again here, this period of time, talking about when they were brought up here, and it says, **I carried you on eagles' wings;** and so it's about protection, it's about nourishment, it's about that which

God does to take care of His people. And He says, **and I brought you unto Myself**; and I think of our journey. God brought us through those early years, strengthened us with truths, helped us to become stronger and stronger and stronger, and finally brought us to where He was really going to mold and fashion us now in His ways and reveal even more to us while encamped around Sinai. So spiritually for us, you know, this is the largest, the longest time of encampment. This is the area where more is given. This is what they're brought to to be strengthened by the most, indeed.

And so He says, **verse 5 - Now therefore, if you will obey My voice and keep My covenant**: 'obey My voice' – and so for us as we went through time those are choices we made all along the way to obey God, to rejoice in the truths that He gave to us, to learn from them and to become stronger, and every time we yielded to and learned truths we became stronger and stronger and stronger. He says, **then you shall be a peculiar/special**, as it is, **treasure unto Me above all the people: for all the earth is Mine**: And especially for God's Church – so special to Him. That's why I am so thankful, so thankful when I finally came to the point that God gave to me understanding about the 63,000. What an *awesome* thing! What a beautiful thing, of that which reflects the power of God's mercy, the power of God's love, the power of His purpose for His people, His great care, even though there are so many things that people have done wrong in life - and we all have, and we all do – and yet the incredible mercy of God as He works with us, when He lives in us, when we are, indeed, *special* before Him.

So again, this area of Sinai would be a place where we would stay encamped for nearly six more years – from 2002 toward the end of 2008. Now, the reason I'm talking about these particular periods in time, because that's what's reflective of some of their travelling; that is what has reflected our spiritual journey - is indeed reflected by some of that physical journey. We can learn lessons about various segments of that journey. So as we were to encamp in the wilderness God would work to make us grounded in His word and truth that He would give us during this period of time – as from Mount Sinai – to build upon what He had been given...when you speak of Moses and what had been given to him, to fortify and strengthen us for the final continuing journey that lie ahead. And so God did that. You know, there weren't a lot of people beginning to be added until about 2008 and afterwards, but up to that period of time those of us who had been on this journey were being *deeply grounded* to be able to go through the rest of the journey, to be able to be a strength and a help to others who were going to go through that journey, whom God was going to call, and teach us even more through those whom He would call.

And the numbers that He gave...and how He began to work with us, and *forced us*, because of our response and our desire to follow Him and to finally have a vision of certain things that God was going to do in the future, He helped us to see a potential. He helped us to see those things that *we* needed to do to change, to become far more organized to deal with that which was coming. And now we're very organized to accomplish a lot – we've had the training and experience – and the application of that training will come.

But what an incredible thing that God has done. And so we've been grounded. And so again here, very much like this. So by Pentecost – I thought I'd just mention here, going back through this you look at it, going from that period of time forward, 2002 to the end of 2008, as I said there, nearly six more years by the end of that one year. So by Pentecost of 2003 we were given the booklet, 'Time Has Run Out'. Pentecost 2003; that was the focus for it, that was the time. You know, we try to get things done at certain times on certain Holy Days, like Pentecost, and then later on toward the Feast of Tabernacles, to have various things ready.

And so in this case here it was by Pentecost the booklet was out. Then the book 'The Prophesied End-Time' was written as God gave it, and it was being published a year later around Pentecost 2004. I think of Moses being given the things He was up on Mount Sinai and then bringing them back and the struggles some of the Israelites had and then Moses going back up a second time and God giving him much more to organize and prepare them for the rest of the journey and for the life that would follow in the promised land. And I think of how He's worked with us, giving the things He has to us, to those who have been around for so, so long, indeed, through this journey.

And so again here, finally 'The Prophesied End-Time' was written, again, as God gave it, and it was being published a year later around Pentecost 2004. And then by the latter part of 2005 God was giving *more*. He was giving yet more that was to be written in '2008 – God's Final Witness'. And through these years God continued to strengthen His word to His Church in many more truths that He gave – all the way up to into 2008, the 50 Truths that finally we were established in. Twenty-one before, and then all the rest all the way up to fifty. *Awesome* what God was giving us; very reflective of, if you will, their stay around Mount Sinai. God grounding us, strengthening us and preparing us for the journey ahead and what we were yet to go through and what we were yet to learn, be molded and fashioned into.

So let's continue here in **Exodus 19:6 - And you shall be unto Me a Kingdom of priests, and a holy nation. These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel.** And I think of the *words* that God has given to us through this period of time, to lead us, to guide us, to direct us, to strengthen us.

Verse 7 - And Moses came and called to the elders of the people, and laid before their faces all these words which the Eternal commanded him. In other words in Hebrew here meaning, 'gave him charge'. **And all the people answered together, and said, All that the Eternal has spoken we will do.** So again, those who encamped in the wilderness said this to God as He continued to give more and more of His truth to the Church, however, not all continued in the wilderness and would not agree to what God was giving from spiritual Sinai. And we have seen that, *every year* someone chooses to go by the wayside, chooses to go back into Egypt.

The word 'Sinai' here means...it's basically a word that comes from 'thorny; thorns'. You know, when I think about the truth that God gave, was 'thorny' to some and beautiful to others. And isn't that the way it works? 'Thorny' to some, except those who receive it; and those who receive it there are no thorns at all. It depends on the attitude; it depends on the spirit. It reflects a spirit. Sinai reflects a spirit. Spiritually Sinai, for the Church and what God gave it during that period of time, from the 22nd truth all the way through the 50th truth reflected a spirit and attitude in people because there were those who could not continue and would not continue to receive what God was giving.

So again, the word 'Sinai' and what it means. And so for those who would receive it it was *not* thorny, but it was *power* that would strengthen them so they could continue the journey in the wilderness moving forward to complete the journey when God would again begin moving them forward.

Then it came time to move forward once again. God had taken us to the 50th Truth before we could move forward again. So this is right at the point of time there of finally leaving Mount Sinai, and the point that this particular truth was given, but it was given ahead of time to help us so that we could leave Mount Sinai. Let me read this in Numbers 10:11. So, in reality everything that *definitely* was given to us, that was intended to be given to us, in large part was from truth 22 through 49, because that 50th Truth had a little more detail with it that affected the Church, that we had a battle to deal with in some

respects, but it was beautiful as people came through it, people who chose to follow God and continue forward – blessed mightily in their lives. Blessed mightily! Others, other few, thankfully... that's why I love the distinction between the Israelites and the Church; we can repent and move forward, we can grow. It's a process of growth. To continue to move forward, to follow God means we have to repent in life, we have to see things in our life so that we can change and we can continue to follow God and embrace God's way of life and love His ways. We learn to grow in that.

So then it came time to move forward again and God had taken us to the 50th Truth before we could move forward again. **Numbers 10:11 – And it came to pass on the twentieth day of the second month in the second year;** so now here it is, they have already been there a year in the sense of coming out of Egypt and almost a year in Sinai itself. It says, **that the cloud was taken up from off the tabernacle of the testimony and the children of Israel took their journeys out of the Wilderness of Sinai; and the cloud rested in the Wilderness of 'Paran'.** It's a word that means, 'a place to beautify, to glorify'. 'A place to beautify, a place to glorify' – Paran.

For us this movement from Sinai began on the Feast of Trumpets 2008, though God gave us that truth ahead of time out of mercy for the Church and blessed us so that something different would happen at the Feast of Trumpets of 2008 that would thrust us forward, give us great understanding and give us great focus. And so again, for us the movement from Sinai began on the Feast of Trumpets of 2008. The count that began the next 1335 days, and we were taken to the count from which God will reveal so very much to us. We found ourselves in the spiritual wilderness of Paran, a place to beautify, to glorify. We found ourselves in the spiritual wilderness of Paran with 1260 days in which we were to reflect by our lives, and all that God had given to us, a final witness of man's past 6,000 years. And so we began the journey at the 1335 days at the Feast of Trumpets and we came to this area then of Paran and we settled there and we began that process of something we were to reflect – *all* of man's history.

We still don't grasp the magnitude of what God has had us do, as time goes on and depending on where we are in that part of our lives in our relationship with God as to that part of our growth. Because everyone is at different places and even in different subjects and different things that God has given. And so I think of this one here and I think of that 1260 days, of what we lived through, and it's going to be written about in an awesome way. You're going to be astounded when you look back and when things are said by others who are brought along, by others who come back – 63,000 – by others who are new who have had no knowledge and then they come along and read the history of these things and things that are spoken of and things that are said. And that 3½ years and what you lived through and what you looked forward to throughout that 1260 days and how people treated you, how mankind treated you, how the world treated you and that which you carried, the truth of God in your life, a witness of how God has worked with us and yet how the world has responded to us because God is in it. It's incredible what's taken place and what we learn during this period of time...and we're still learning about *that* period of time.

And so again here, a place to glorify, a place to beautify God, to stand, to stand in the truth He has given to us and not only that but He would give us more truths that would glorify Him even more of His plan and purpose for us and for the world and for the Millennial period of time.

And so indeed, this was the time of, that was the spiritual place of Paran, the place where we were to beautify, to glorify the way of God to this world, of a final end-time witness of light and salt to a dying world, a dying age. And this way, again, was magnified farther by *seven more truths* that God gave to us

during this time – truths leading into His new world that vastly change this world in order to beautify and glorify the ways of God in the beautiful Millennial reign of His Son on earth.

That's where we've been. That's what we've been going through. That's what we've lived through. And now we're in a unique state too, in this final 'day', but let's continue on.

So we know the next great story of the journey of the children of Israel; it was one that delivered judgment that they were to stay in the wilderness forty years. Spies were sent to search out the land that God had promised to give them.

Numbers 13:1 - And the Eternal spoke unto Moses, saying, Send men that they may search the land of Canaan, now, I know we've gone through some of this story but let's apply it to this phase of our journey, to things we're to learn and build upon, things that God wants us to see even more deeply, more fully, to be inspired by, to understand. So, send men that they may search out the land of Canaan which I give unto the children of Israel: out of every tribe of their fathers you shall send a man, and every one is to be a ruler among them. And Moses, by the commandment of the Eternal, sent them from the Wilderness of Paran, of all those men who were heads of the children of Israel.

And then farther down in **verse 16 - These are the names of the men whom Moses sent to spy out/search out/seek out the land. And Moses called Oshea the son of Nun Jehoshua.** 'Yahweh is salvation' – Jehoshua, or Joshua as he became known. **And Moses sent them to spy out/search out/seek out the land of Canaan,** interesting word again, 'the land of Canaan', the place to be humbled... *the place* to be humbled. This is where God brought us to at the end of the 1260 days. How each of us would now respond to this moment in time at the end of the 1260 days, would fully reflect what each of us could truly *see* by this moment in time. What did *you* see in all the journeying in the way that God had led us to come to this moment? Did we have the faith to move forward because we could see the promises of God, knowing that God was with us and *would not leave nor abandon us*? Well, we were now being defined as to how we would seek out, how we would search out God's promised land, and it had to be a time, a place defined by humility. Incredible. Incredible the things that God shows us, the things that God teaches us. Not all chose. Not all saw. Not all spied out the same thing, did they?

Let's go on, **verse 18 - And see the land, what it is; and the people who dwell in it, whether they be strong or weak, few or many;** Do we see anything that obstructs our way? Did we at that point in time, as we look back? Does anything or did anything cause us to fear where we were going? Did anything cause us to be uncertain of where God was leading us? ...or did we humbly follow God just as He has always led us from the beginning out of Egypt?

And so we were tried in those things and we addressed those in various ways. Some came through it with incredible flying colors, others of us had to go through various things where we had to do some repenting and changing – but we were blessed to be able to repent and got our minds right. And that's what's important to God – that we repent and move forward so we can all be together and all be at one, and God continue to bless us all *as one*! That's what's important – we can move forward! Some didn't choose to move forward – kind of really had been scheming long before, *long before* this moment in time. This just became a convenient escape to go back into Egypt, to do what was wanted to be done anyway.

Verse 19 - And what the land is like that they dwell in, whether it be good or bad; and what cities are like that they dwell in, whether in tents, or in strong holds; It's like, what do we see around us? Are we able to see through it all to see what God has promised us? What do we see in what God has promised us? Do we embrace it? ...or is there fear, are there other things that are bigger, that are greater, that are obstacles, that as we've talked about in the past, are giants in the land and cause us to stumble and not continue forward.

Verse 20 - And whether the land is fat, in other words, 'rich', 'plentiful', **or lean,** sparse and poor, **whether there are trees,** in other words, **for wood/for lumber/for timber in it, or not. And be of good courage, and bring of the fruit of the land.** And so I think here of this being 'of good courage' because that comes from God. You know, we can receive the help from God if we cry out to God for help, and He'll give us the strength to go through what we need to go through.

So, some have seen giants and others have seen God in all this. To see God is spiritual, but to see giants is carnal, selfish, and void of God's indwelling spirit. And some became void of that, fell asleep, or just flat cut off and went back into Egypt, became false spies, if you will, deceitful spies, not telling the truth, not reflecting the truth, not upholding the truth of what God had placed before them.

So how May 26th and 27th was dealt with then at that moment in time, and in the few weeks that followed, determined whether we could or would proceed forward on this final 'day' of our journey to Christ's return and the establishment of all that this Feast of Tabernacles pictures. In the recent five part sermon series 'Between the Two Evenings' we ended with the story of the spies being sent into the promised land. It was each individual's moment in time to make a judgment, a decision, to draw a final conclusion from all their experience of what they could *see*. We know that the overwhelming majority could only *see* giants, obstacles, now fearful of where they were going, of where they were being led – but with all of us who are observing this Feast of Tabernacles, God has blessed indeed the overwhelming majority with a different spirit, a spirit of those who have yielded themselves to being molded as clay, in *humility* of spirit and have embraced that spirit reflected in Caleb.

I love this, in what he said there in **verse 30 – And Caleb silenced the people before Moses,** those who were complaining, fearful, saw giants, reflecting on the wrong things, not looking ahead, not believing what God said, He'd led them all this way to lead them into the promised land. Caleb held onto that. Joshua held onto that. But others, they didn't see it. And so that tested people. What did we *see* by this moment in time? Where were we *spiritually*? It tried us to *see*, in that respect, where we were spiritually and to get rid of that which was deceitful and not spiritual.

Its one thing I've seen in God's Church through time, though it hurt, and I hate to see people when they do it. I'm glad that God takes care of it because we are to be unified. We are to have one spirit, because when we don't, if there is not unity of spirit, it causes nothing but hardship and pain and suffering and divisiveness and evil within the Body. Its better that the Body is clean and cleansed indeed, purified and made at one and made stronger and made unified; a Body that *loves* each other, a Body that is not deceitful, but a Body of individuals who have each others' care and concern, and in their heart and in their desire toward them individuals who will not tolerate sin but address sin in their own lives and in the lives of others' because they love them, will not pamper sin.

Sometimes people pamper sin! ...for whatever reason; out of a relationship, or because it's a little too hard. You know, in God's Church we've got to do what is right for the benefit of one another because we love one another, because we have the love of God, because we see the greater picture of what God

is doing and the need for us to have harmony and unity and oneness throughout the Body. So again, with all of us who are observing this Feast of Tabernacles, God has blessed the overwhelming majority with a different spirit, a spirit of those who have yielded themselves to be molded as clay in a spirit of humility, and as Caleb said here in **Numbers 13:30 – He silenced the people before Moses and said, Let us go up at once and take possession of it, for we are more than able to overcome it/to prevail over it.** God has promised it to us. He has led us all along the way. How many truths? Well, sometimes we find out.

How many truths? How many miracles does He have to perform before we believe Him and what He's told us is ours? I think of those who have left; they can't believe that Jesus Christ is returning soon, they believe something different. They can't *believe* that we're already in a period of time that the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th Seals have been opened by Jesus Christ. They don't believe that because they're following that which teaches different...and that *boggles* my mind. They don't *see* where God is leading us, they see something else. *Astounding* that any could become like that, and yet those are the very things that should sober us, because we have witnessed that! I have witnessed these things over and over and over again through time in God's Church by people at all levels in the Church. Though it hurts it doesn't surprise.

And so this attitude of Joshua and Caleb is a beautiful spirit, and it's a spirit that I know that those of you here at this Feast of Tabernacles, *as a whole*, as a Body, has, that you're moving forward, you're pressing forward. This is the way of life that God has given to us and we know that no matter what the obstacles that God will continue to lead, because He's been leading us through the wilderness and He'll lead us to where we're going, that we *will* get there, that we *will* come to that moment in time, that we *will* rejoice because we *see*, because we believe, because we know what He's called us to, and that new age is fast approaching when Jesus Christ does return and what we're picturing here at this Feast of Tabernacles.

Numbers 14:2 - And all the children of Israel murmured/complained/grumbled against Moses and against Aaron: and the whole congregation said unto them, Would to God that we had died in the land of Egypt! ...or would to God we had died in this wilderness! And why has the Eternal brought us up to this land to fall by the sword, that our wives and our children should be a prey, a spoil? A physical example that is so appalling, but the spiritual one is more appalling because we have access to God's spirit, but what a blessing for those of us who are able to continue to go forward. Thank God for it and be sobered!

It goes on to say; **Wouldn't it have been better for us to return unto Egypt? And they said one to another, Let us make a captain and let's return to Egypt.** You know, to pick someone to follow and thereby return to Egypt. And sadly, that's exactly what people have done! Even at the very end here, even in this last 'day'! It *astounds* me - and even within the ministry – how anyone can do this, but it's happened and it's to be a sobering thing to all of us to understand. We press forward and we must embrace the spiritual attitude and mind of Caleb and Joshua, to grab hold of what God has offered us, to *rejoice* in this Feast of Tabernacles, to *rejoice* in the fact that we're able to be here, that we're able to have what we have together in truth and the understanding of those things that God has given to us and blessed us to embrace, to hold onto.

Verse 5 – Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before the assembly of the congregation of the children of Israel, in other words, immediately they saw how evil and how serious this was, **and Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, who were of them that searched out the land, rent/tore their clothes;** as we talked about in that one sermon series, again, being a sign of grief and

grieving. But for us I think of that prophecy in **Joel 2:13** as we mentioned back then where God says **'Rend your hearts and not your garments.'** It's about that which is appalling to us in this world and the ways of this world and to end up going against God, to fight against God, to not be faithful to God, to not be truthful to God, to steal from God, to lie to God. How can anyone do that, and yet those things have happened.

And so again here, we're blessed; we're blessed to embrace a different spirit but we are to be sober minded and to, as it says there in **Joel 2:13** – **'Rend your hearts and not your garments.'** Not just to see things that are done that are bad around us, but to be so appalled by them that we run from them, that we don't want to be guilty of those kinds of things, that we want to make certain that that doesn't happen, that we don't want such shame in our life, that we don't want to be known like that – on the contrary, we're going to fight and move forward and prevail all the more so to fight this fight because we're going to be different, because we cry out to God to be different, to give us the heart of being able to have humility and repentance.

Numbers 14:7 – **And they spoke to all the company of the children of Israel saying, The land which we passed through to search out is an exceeding good land;** you know, where God is leading us and to where we've almost arrived, is an exceedingly good and beautiful land. It isn't that much farther! It isn't that much farther forward, and regardless of what we go through between now and then, or what we might be already going through by the time you hear this, it's getting closer. The world is so stirred up! The world is on the brink of a *world war* and God will give us the strength to grasp hold of what these days picture indeed. *We're almost there!*

Verse 8 – **And if the Eternal is pleased with us...**and brethren, that's one thing that has hit me over and over again since that sermon series that we went through, 'Between the Two Evenings', that God is *so pleased* with the attitude of Joshua and Caleb, of those who have pressed forward, of those who have addressed things in their life and sought to become stronger and in many cases become more deeply convicted.

Sometimes people can go through something and because they didn't have a trial in it, didn't have a battle with it, some things in them they haven't fully understood yet and haven't addressed and therefore went through a battle that others might have in a different manner, because they haven't as yet come to that point of having to address certain qualities or characteristics in their nature. But when we're blessed to indeed have to address some of those characteristics that must be repented of, to make us stronger, to help us to become stronger and we do so through a spirit of repentance and we become bolder and stronger in every way, that is a beautiful thing before God. It is what it is all about. The ability to change, the ability for our minds to be *transformed* – that is such a beautiful thing and so *well pleasing* in God's sight because we yield ourselves to His spirit and *change!* The beauty is in the changing and the changing of spirit that takes place. And God has blessed us with that.

And all of us who have come to *this* moment in time, we've gone through a lot of that over the years, ever how long your period of time has been, you've had to go through different things at different times, and it's when you've come to those moments in time that refine you and help you to grow in character that this way of life becomes more and more beautiful, that the mercy and love of God becomes greater and greater in your spirit and your mind and your being and you embrace Him all the more so and grow in a greater fondness and love and care and concern for your Father and for your Elder Brother, and for your brothers and sisters in the Body.

...the Eternal is well pleased then He will bring us into this land and give it to us, which is a land flowing with milk and honey. Indeed, God is well pleased with *all* who have come to *this day*, this first day of the Feast of Tabernacles *in God's Church*, the *true* Church of God, indeed *His*, for there is only one.

Verse 9 – Only do not rebel against the Eternal and neither fear the people of the land; for they are bread for us, and their defense/their strength has departed from them for the Eternal is with us – so do not fear them. We're going to go through some fearful things before all this is over; things we thought were going to go through clear back at the beginning, toward the beginning of 2008, and God has taught us along the way and is still teaching us during this Feast of Tabernacles, lessons and things we're to learn and grow in and come to deeper understanding. But troubled times *are* coming and the closer we draw to the end the worse those troubled times will be on this earth...and they won't be all bundled up in one hour of time to make it so easy indeed.

So God has blessed the vast majority of people to come through the time of bad or evil reports, of those who only saw giants, obstacles, and were fearful of continuing to follow where they were being led. Spiritual Israel, all who are observing this Feast in this fellowship are as those spoken of in Joshua.

Joshua 1:7 – It says here: **Only be strong and very courageous**, again, our power is in the truths that God has given to us. Our strength comes from those things. You want to be stronger? There are things that each one of us has to do to make sure that we're deeply *grounded* in those things. When is the last time you reviewed them? When is the last time you've gone through and read about them all? ...and *checked* your conviction? You know, we need to *do* that on a regular basis, just go through and read them and say, "Yes! Yes! YES!" It's spiritually needful that you be strengthened indeed with the power that God has made available to you. It's of His spirit but His spirit works in His word – that's what gives His word power and the truth power. His spirit does, indeed! But those words come alive and those truths come alive to give us strength when we do our part too.

Only be strong and very courageous; that's the very thing that will give you greater courage and *conviction* when you go back and you see those things and you say, "Yes – yes – yes," – *look* at what we've been given! *Look* at the power that's there...and *nothing* else is moving in that direction whatsoever. God has so blessed us to lead us where we are, to give us what we have. Has it been an easy journey? Absolutely not! It wasn't *meant* to be easy! Have you had struggles? You better have or you're not growing! And sometimes the struggles, people don't yield to the process and still don't grow, because they ignore or escape or don't address these matters. We *must* address these things and move forward and obey God and seek to be with one another and seek to sacrifice within the Church, indeed!

Only be strong and very courageous so that you observe to do according to all the law; strong and courageous to do all that God directs and leads you to do, to not pull back, to not let down, to not coast but to move forward with greater determination than ever before.

...to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you, and do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, so that you might prosper wheresoever you go. Prosper! Not physically! You know, sometimes we have the physical blessings as well in our life – sometimes we don't. Sometimes it's through the things we struggle through that we learn things as well about ourselves and about God. This is spiritual! God will bless us – that's where the riches are. If we recognize and understand this is where the value is, this is where the pearls are, the pearl of great price, if you will. The value is in the word of God and the truth of God. **...that you may prosper wherever you go.**

Verse 8 – This book of the law shall not depart out of your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night. When's the last time we've gone back through and looked at some of the 57 Truths? Are those things not about the law's of God, the truths of God, the ways of God, the things that God is changing in this world that mankind is going to be able to receive in the Millennium so they can be freed of Egypt? Absolutely! Is it what's freeing you and been freeing you? Absolutely!

This book of the law shall not depart out of your mouth, but on it you shall meditate day and night, so that you might observe to do all that is written therein, according to what is written therein, for then... says, for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. Spiritual! Physical things will be there in our lives as well, but primarily this is all about that which is spiritual, that which counts, that which we take with us. If this body dies we still have that with us, don't we? Incredible! It's the mind; the most valuable, the most important thing.

Verse 9 – Haven't I commanded you to be strong and of good courage? God says, "I command it!" That means that there is a relationship we're to have with Him in order to be strong and of good courage. It's not something you just go work up. It's like agape, it's like other things that this way of life... you don't just work them up and all of a sudden decide, "Today I'm going to have God's love in me." No, you have to *do* to have that. There are things that have to live through you. There is a relationship with God! There is that which has to do with prayer! There is that which has to do with meditating upon and thinking about those things that God gives and what we hear in sermons, that we change and see what we have to change in our life...and on and on it goes.

So he says, **haven't I commanded you to be strong and of good courage?** To go back from time to time and go through the 57, just to read them quickly...and sometimes to meditate on certain parts, to make sure we really understand them.

...do not be afraid, neither be dismayed; you know in anything out here, of something that begins to talk to you and chirp to you – flee! Flee from some of those things that tear you apart and tear you down and want you to quit or want you to give up or want you to pull by the wayside, who don't want you to be in fellowship with others in the Church. Why do you stay in that environment? Why do you stay around some? Why don't you stand up to certain people? I don't care whether it be in the job, your best friend, your mate, your children, your parents – whomever it is that would stand against you and God, that would stand against you living this way of life. Why would you listen? We're to obey God, indeed, and stand in this way of life and stand firm in it and be with God's people and be where we can to grow.

...do not be afraid, and neither be dismayed; in other words, of that which is around you. *Fight* for what God has given to you. You have to fight for this way of life and God will be there to give you more power and more strength. **...for the Eternal your God is with you wherever you go;** and that's going back to the 'if you do these things'. We, of all people, must do them.

And so at this Feast of Tabernacles let's be *determined* as we have an opportunity for eight days to receive strength and help and rejuvenation from God, to hold onto it, because candidly, since the last Feast of Tabernacles we haven't done a real good job of doing that and we let down and some began coasting way too much. I think far too many did as they approached May 26th, and so many have repented of that and commented that they have repented. Repent *more*! Cry out to God *more*! Be *determined*! Seek strength and courage and boldness, to become stronger during this Feast of Tabernacles, to utilize the opportunity to draw closer to God at this time and to His Family.

Verse 10 – Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, saying, Pass through the host and command the people saying, Prepare your food, for within three days you'll pass over into Jordan to go in to possess the land which the Eternal your God is giving you to possess. Prepare your food! I just told you that – you know, I didn't even think about that. *I just told you that*; 'prepare your food', we've got a little bit to go and we'll be there, but we must *fight* for it. We must be strong and of good courage and by definition that means we must put *more* into it and cry out to God *more* for strength and help and to *desire* to hear and *desire* to grow and to study and to pray and to draw closer to God in these things and to be with His people, indeed. And those who stand in the way – stand up to them and stand for this way of life! You only have a little way to go!

So the journey has not been an easy one but it's almost over. What God has led us to, what we're about to receive is what this Holy Day is all about, the beginning of the Millennium with the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth.

Psalm 114, I want to read this. It's a song that some of you know. It is unique in what it has to say but it's a Psalm, inspired by God, inspired and given to us. It's a beautiful song and it's a beautiful Psalm.

Psalm 114, this is where we're going to end today. **When Israel came up out of Egypt, Jacob from a people from a foreign tongue; Judah became God's sanctuary**, holy, set apart, **Israel His domain**, His rule. **The sea looked and fled; the Jordan turned back.** All the journey... **The mountains leaped like rams, and the hills like lambs.** It's beautiful if you understand what these things picture and what it's all about, and the joy of nations, countries large and small, because of deliverance that God gives. When everything else that stands in His way, in order for Him to deliver His people...and He *will* deliver His people out of Egypt and bring them into the promised land.

Verse 1 – When Israel came out of Egypt, Jacob from a people of a foreign tongue; Judah became God's sanctuary, where God dwelt, holy, set apart, **Israel His domain**, the place of His rule, **the sea looked and fled, the Jordan turned back. The mountains leap like rams and the hills like lambs.**

Verse 5 - Why was it, sea, that you fled? Why, Jordan, did you turn back? Why, mountains, did you leap like rams and you hills like little lambs. Tremble, earth, at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob; Who turned the rock into a pool, and the hard rock into springs of water, all to prosper and to produce abundance. That which is physical that reflects those things that are spiritual as God lead us into the fulfillment of this Feast of Tabernacles.

We're almost there! We've been moving through the wilderness to the fulfillment of this very Holy Day, *and we are there*, camped by Jordan and ready to cross.

~~~end