

## Resurrected From Death

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I just about said, "Good morning." That wouldn't have worked too well. I guess that'd be okay for California, out that direction. It depends on where you are. That's right. Oregon, Washington, some of those areas out west. But anyway, "Good day," to everyone. That's a way to do it, "Good day."

I thought there was something I needed to mention here. The one thing that comes to mind, first of all, is a special hello today to all those of you meeting in Dallas. Quite a few of you are meeting in that particular area there; a special meeting of everyone coming together down there, so greetings to all of you on this Sabbath day.

We have focused enough at this point on some basic matters that will provide, or I should say, that will prove to be better preparing you for chapter 6, as I've been mentioning, all the things that we've been covering in the past sermons here. Today this particular section here doesn't do that in the same way, but it's something that struck me in a very unique way as I was going through writing the book. And hit me quite profoundly, candidly, the subject matter of what we're going to discuss. And I think I've come to, I know I've come to a deeper appreciation of a particular part of God's plan and purpose that I think will help us in a great way as well as we approach, especially, the end of this period of time that we're in now.

So, anyway, today we're going to take time to focus on another matter, or in this particular case, something that isn't covered in the book specifically, and that's regarding what will come in the terms of the kind of potential of destruction and death that can take place, and candidly, that will take place in the period that's coming. And when speaking of such things as death on such a massive scale, it's also good to consider how we are to be better equipped to see such things as God does. That's what God wants us to do and that's, really, what this sermon is about today. It's about our spirit and our attitude of striving to grasp and comprehend or see things in the way that God has given His plan. Because there's tremendous hope and fulfillment in that plan. And the more we grasp and comprehend what God is doing, how merciful He is, how He works with mankind, these things become far more important to us and will have a great deal to do with how we're able to cope with, deal with, address certain things that we experience, certain things that we see.

I have often thought about when I have discussed some of this kind of material in the sense of what's going to take place, especially toward the *end* of this period of time that we're in - because the worst and the most happens toward the end. It doesn't happen now. I don't foresee it happening. God isn't showing that it's going to happen in any fashion or form in that large scale in the following year. But after that things can begin to happen. But the vast majority of it doesn't happen until the end. And in doing so, and talking about those things I have had mixed feelings about speaking before a congregation in those things because of young people. I don't feel that way anymore because everyone, young and old, needs to grasp what we're going into. To be able to address things in reality

is important for young and old alike. And that's important for us to be able to address some of these things, to be better equipped to handle these things when the time comes. So, again, I don't feel the way I used to feel about some of that. It's a horrible thing. It's a very unpleasant thing. It hasn't been experienced like this since the days of Noah. And that was short-lived. This is going to be long-lived, in comparison. Because what they experienced they didn't experience it very long. The only ones that experienced it, in the sense of how to deal with it, and so forth, were those that were on the ark and those that lived on. And God has revealed, shown that, basically, just Noah, just Noah remained faithful to Him through this whole period of time. But even Noah went through a very difficult phase. If you go back and read his story it wasn't easy for what he had to see, what he had to go through, what he had to experience, what he had to deal with concerning the things in his family, because his family, even though they experienced what they did, they were not happy campers. They were very unhappy. It's easy to blame God for things and find God to be the one at fault for your problems and difficulties and taking things away from you in life, but they didn't grasp the purpose of God and what God was accomplishing and what God was fulfilling in God's future plan for mankind and why God intervened in the first place to end it all, to stop it.

And so, I marvel at that period of time. One man. One man. One man that was left in all the earth with whom God could work. The rest of mankind had become so corrupted that God could not work with them. They would not respond to Him. They wouldn't listen to Him. That's an awesome thing to understand. And so God worked with one individual, prepared, molded, and fashioned him to do a specific job. And they did it for a long time. And then it all came to a crashing end, in that respect, a quick end. And yet it wasn't the end. It was a beginning of something new. And that was not easy.

Now, it's going to be much easier for us. It's going to be much better for us. What we're going to experience is on a totally different plane, but some of the things that happened back then are reasons why some things are going to happen and are happening again this time. And that's important for us to grasp and to understand.

So, again, death is not a pleasant thing to have to address in life, and yet, it's something that happens to everyone. Everyone, as a whole, dies. I say, "as a whole," because there are only a few (and we don't know how many), maybe a handful, maybe two handfuls, I don't know, maybe two or three or four who will still be alive at that point in time at the very end who are resurrected, who don't ever have to experience actual physical death. They're just changed quickly, in an instant. But it's not going to be very many. And there will be some in our midst who will be a part of that, who will have already died. That's just a reality of life, and because of some of the things that God is going to allow. God is going to allow some of those things to take place.

And so we need to understand and appreciate and grasp what God is doing, why God is doing it, and to grasp (if we can grow in that) that there is no better way. If your life is in God's hands, what more could you ask for? What more could you ask for even if you have to wait a thousand years? What more could you ask for, that you have what you have now and even if that were to happen, in that sense, the worst case scenario as far as when you might have life again, what would be *so bad* about being

resurrected at that time. Because I think sometimes if we're not careful we can tend to look down upon that period of time, that Hundred-years. And that is not a period to look down upon at all, especially from where you are, or if death were to happen, where you would be at that point in time, and how you'd be able to serve and help, in an awesome way, a future people.

So, sometimes we don't grasp and comprehend why God does what He does. But He knows where you'll be the most fulfilled in life. And if that's where you'd be the most fulfilled, don't fight it. See? If I'm the most fulfilled in doing what I've experienced in the last three years, accept it, receive it with thankfulness and gratitude, and understand this is a matter of something that's in God's hands, because God is doing a work for a purpose, a greater purpose. It isn't always what we want, and that we may like things in a certain way. It's what we go through in order to experience something for a greater purpose. And that's how God works with us. And we need to accept that and understand that. Where could your life be in better hands? It shouldn't even cross our mind to think that way, but sometimes we tend to think that way as human beings in the sense of not wanting what's happening to us, and we don't realize what we're saying or what we're doing.

If indeed we're called of God and God is working in us to transform our thinking and giving opportunity to young ones to have an opportunity in the future that is so awesome, beyond your comprehension of this.... You can't comprehend yet, can't even begin to, what God is offering to you way ahead of time! Way ahead of time! Awesome! And that doesn't even come close to grasping - there are no words to describe - what awaits you.

And so there's a purpose in how God deals with death with human beings, and it's an awesome plan. And, really, it's a beautiful plan. It's a beautiful plan when you see the big picture, when you grasp why God is dealing with us as human beings the way He is. I marvel! We have so much to digest of what's been given in posts! One day you're going to be able to look back and it's going to boggle your mind a whole lot more. It really is. Because we have been given so much that's helping us to grasp and receive more that God wants to give to us, a lot more. And a lot of it has to do with understanding this process of what God is doing with the human mind, of the transformation that's taking place in the human mind, the opportunity we have to be able to think differently, to be able to have the blessing of repentance and to go before God on a continual basis and repent of things that aren't in unity and harmony with His way of life. And as we go through that process then, for Him to be actually changing the spirit in our mind, the spirit essence in our mind, that's what He's doing, giving us a new mind, a new way of thinking that's in total unity and harmony with Him and getting rid of the old, getting rid of the bad, getting rid of that part that doesn't come together in unity and harmony and cooperation and oneness of the Great God of the universe. How awesome is that, truly? And we're just beginning to grasp and understand a lot of that. We might have knowledge of certain things, but to experience it and to begin to understand it is a whole different area. And that's where we are. That's what God is blessing us with. And frankly, the ability to understand some of the things we are now, that you'll read about later, that we'll be talking about in these sermons we've been going through, *why*, what happened during the days of Noah, *why* things are happening

the way they are now, *why* God is working with us in the manner that He is now as far as the world is concerned.

And so, again, this matter of dealing with death, because, you see, the reality is I've made comments here about death and destruction, to the scale it will be. No matter what happens, the minimal amount, just because of a third World War, when it finally... and the third World War when it begins, it isn't what it's going to end up being, because what it ends up being is what's discussed in the sixth, when you get down to the period of the 6<sup>th</sup> Trumpet. That's the part that destroys a third of all mankind, a third of the earth. You see, because, the third World War that goes on, it starts well ahead of time, well before that, and there's a lot of destruction that takes place. That's why they're called "Woe's," the First, Second, and Third Woe. And the First Woe has to do with what happens to this country, what happens to, basically, countries of Western Europe and others around the world as well, because war affects a lot of people, and a lot of people are going to suffer because of it. But it's nothing compared to what comes.

And that's a lot of people. And we can't grasp that. 2.3 billion people just in one Trumpet alone? I can't comprehend that. And yet, do we discuss it? Do we address it? Is it better not to discuss it? Is it better to keep our eyes away from what's coming and feel, "Well, why do anything?" There are people who give up when they see such things, or think about such things, and that's not what it's about. It's about going through. It's about what God is doing. It's about grasping something for a far greater purpose. And though it's not a pleasant thing that God allows mankind to do to himself, because that's what mankind is doing, that's why God has to intervene to stop it; otherwise, we would end up destroying ourselves. And so.... I don't want to get into next week's sermon. There's a portion of the book I do (chapter 6), I do want to read to you next week, because it will go into some of these things and why God is doing some of the things the way He is. But it's very much on my mind and I don't want to go into that yet.

Anyway, let's get back to this. The more you come to understand, the more you digest what is there, the more you digest what God is giving to us, the more we can deal with what's ahead of us, the more we can address it in a right way. I've had two times in my life where God's intervened to keep me from dying. I've had to address the reality of death both times. It's at the door. If it happens it happens. It's just a part of life. Now, if I'm dead I guess it's easier to deal with that way because I don't have any thinking about it anyway. If you're gone, you're gone. It's the others that are around. It's those who are still alive that have the battles and have to deal with certain things of death. But the more we understand God's plan the less difficult that really is. Sure, it's difficult when you have certain relationships and that's what you experience day to day, week to week, month by month, year by year, but life goes on. Isn't that an awesome thing? You think about how all the generations of mankind that have come and gone and life goes on. And sure, we have that hollow portion in our life that we feel for a time, but if we understand God's plan we're able to deal with it in a whole lot better way. We really are. And that's why it calls death an enemy, because of that, because it

interrupts the flow of life, it interrupts relationships. And that's what the fullness of life is all about; it's about relationships.

And yet we have all kinds of sermons to teach us to have right relationships because we struggle with it as human beings. And yet God is telling us that all the time; your fullness of life, your enjoyment of life is in your relationships. And sometimes we don't grasp that. I think of hearing a person today on a telephone talk to someone, and they were.... I could even hear the person on the other phone. It wasn't even on a speaker phone. I was uncomfortable in the same room there listening to them talk because they're chewing each other out, a husband and wife, you know, and it was terrible. I think, "It's sad. You don't even know what you have the potential for in your life to experience that's good. And instead, you battle with each other." Human beings just don't grasp! That's why I mentioned when I first got back, talking about if we think we have problems, if we ever have arguments, disruptions in our life and we get upset with someone else, we need help. We need God's help. Because there is no excuse for such a thing. There really is no excuse for such things in life. And yet we do it as human beings. We do it as human beings. But the more convicted we become of how foolish, how truly ignorant it is, how harmful, how destructive it is, how much it works against God's purpose and God's plan, how much it destroys our own potential for happiness, our own potential for a greater fullness of life, we just don't know what we're doing to ourselves sometimes when those things happen in life. We're robbing ourselves of life and we're robbing others of life around us if we do such things. It so absolutely works against anything that's productive. Then again, going off on some of these in a different direction.

But today's sermon is entitled, *Resurrected From Death*. It's an awesome thing that God has the power to do. But you know, in addressing some of this a unique pattern of what we're going to follow is what God has been showing us in many other things. Even the understanding of this has something that has been progressive through time. It's been progressive. Progressive. The truth has been progressive. You know, different things that God has revealed to us through time, it's all been progressive. You look at history, you look at time, at what God has revealed to different ones, even about Himself. And you look at what happened when God revealed Himself and talked to Moses and how He said He'd revealed Himself to Abraham and hadn't even told Abraham fully about Himself. He makes that very clear, that even by certain name that He wouldn't even, didn't even reveal Himself to Abraham. And by the time Moses came along, then He revealed more. When Jesus Christ came along He revealed more. So it's 6,000 years of revealing His plan to mankind, His purpose. You know what and why it's been this way too, in large part? To prepare for where we are now. It's to prepare for what we're getting ready to go into. A little bit at a time. A little bit at a time to teach, to lead, to guide, to give examples for mankind to learn from. And there is so much more.

Let's go back to Genesis, all the way back to Genesis where God began to reveal a little, a little about this subject. Genesis 2. When it comes to the subject of death the world tends to live in fear. And they don't know what's going to happen. They really don't have any understanding of what's going to happen. They talk about a resurrection at a funeral, as far as the world of traditional Christianity,

or they talk about going to heaven. Different religious groups or different religions, I should say, have different ideas of what happens. Some believe that you're going to be reincarnated - some as animals, some as human again later on in other family members. There are all kinds of ideas about life, that life... because our basic desire is that somehow, who wants to lose life? We want to continue on. But that's not God's purpose in the first life. God's purpose is that we all live and die once. But His purpose for a future life is very much a matter of coming into unity and harmony with Him in order to be able to receive it. But that's something that human beings want, but they want it their way. They want it their way. They have their own ideas of how they want to attain it, and so forth, and it isn't a matter of being faithful, loyal, obedient to the Great God who put them on this earth.

Genesis 2, right from the beginning notice who was there messing things up, stirring things up, creating confusion. And that confusion that started then has existed through time, even through Noah's family. Because they carried it on. Because by the time, by that time, people had all kinds of ideas. Even though Noah was there and told them various things about God they didn't follow it. They didn't believe it. They held on to other things that had been in their society that they didn't want to see destroyed.

**Genesis 2:15—The Eternal took the man and put him into the Garden of Eden to tend and keep it. And the Eternal God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat - for in the day that you eat thereof you shall surely die.** So from the very beginning God told them that if they partook of this particular tree here in the midst of the garden that they would surely die. They didn't understand what that meant. They didn't grasp what that meant. They didn't fully understand life and death and things that were going to take place and things that would happen. They didn't understand. They learned as time went along; they begin to experience various things.

You know, in the very beginning this matter of death and what death was, they saw animals that were put to death. They saw that animal's lives could come to an end. So they began to experience some of that, as far as death was concerned. They began to learn that they could get hurt, that they could suffer, that they could get cut, that they could bleed, that their life could drain from them. They began to see those things. Two of the children, Cain and Abel, it wasn't long down the line and the first death of a human being that took place is recorded. Cain and Abel. And you look what happened as far as Cain was concerned, killing his own brother, life taken away, physical life. It was man's first experience in the sense of death with another human being. They didn't really understand it. Not even on a physical plane. Not on a physical plane.

Let's jump ahead to [Genesis] 3:1—**Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Eternal God had made. And he said to the woman, Has God indeed said, you shall not eat of the trees of the garden? .... but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, You shall not eat it, neither shall you touch it, lest you die. And the serpent said to the woman, You shall not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it**

**your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.** You'll be able to decide for yourself. You'll be able to determine for yourself and be like God and choose your own course in life. You'll be like God. Now, we don't know fully what all that meant at that time and how they took it. We just get a snippet here and there. But very unique situation in life. The very beginning of life and here this "serpent" comes along, Satan comes along and begins to deceive them, begins to work with them. Because he never tells the whole story. He doesn't tell the whole truth about a matter. He tells a certain amount of truth. I mentioned that last week concerning an evangelist that I knew of - and that happened to a lot of people - but this one here in particular because he was very good at what he did. He was an extremely intellectual individual. Well noted for that because of the university he'd gone to and the kind of grades and so forth that he'd received and the things that had followed with him. But very intellectual individual. And he relied upon that a great deal in his life. But he would give a sermon and he would go right down the lines with things that had been taught to him at Ambassador College, but at the end, at the end there'd be like a.... the only way I've been able to describe it is like a fish hook, a baited hook. And something would be twisted just a little bit, like what Satan did. It doesn't take a lot, but just a little bit. But if you bite of it, if you take it in and you agree with him then it totally changes everything about the most basic things of God's plan. Totally gives a total different picture about what he was saying, a conclusion of something that shouldn't have been there by any means and totally opposite of what God would lead and guide and direct a person to.

He did that in sermon after sermon after sermon after sermon. That was his method of teaching. He had help. He had help. This individual, this being here is that kind of a being. Very cunning in what he presents and what he shows. And then just a little bit, just a little bit to get you hooked, to lead you off course. And so, that's what he was doing, very easily so, because this was an easy thing for him, a being of this ability and this kind of a mind to work with carnal human beings. God knew it was going to happen. God knew it was going to happen in time. That with that being He could have put him on Pluto! He didn't put him on Pluto, He put him on the earth. Okay? He could have put him in a different galaxy, a different anywhere but here. But His whole purpose was to leave him here. Why? Why would God leave such a destructive being, a being with such power, a being with such a mind on the earth, a mind that could so deceive mankind? Why would He leave them on the earth? "Surely, then, God isn't fair!" Some people would think that way. All for a purpose. And it all goes back to your mind, the most precious thing that God has given you; your mind and what goes into it, and what in time can be changed to become God-like, more like God, in agreement and unity with God by choice. But you have to experience the other in order to choose Him. For it to be a true conviction and a true choice you have to experience the other as well. If you haven't experienced it, you can't make that choice and go back to what happened in the very beginning with the angelic realm.

So, again, it's an awesome process, of what God takes human beings through. And the more we come to "see" of it and the more I marvel and the more I realize I don't know, the more I want to know.

There is so much more out there, so much more that God has to give to us, so much more that would be given during the Millennium. It's awesome! Truly is!

So, here from the very beginning the "serpent" was there, more cunning than any other creature (it's not a beast, but it's talking about a created being) in the area, in that environment where they were. Anyway, his desire here then to begin to start working with the subject of death. "You surely won't die. If you eat of that..." Well, the reality was they were going to die physically. It wasn't about their first physical death because God created them so that they would die. They didn't have to sin to die. They were going to die. Because your body runs out. It runs down and it runs out and God's purpose was, by making us physical, that sooner or later something's going to give. Sooner or later you're going to quit. Your hearts going to quit. Something's going to quit. Because it wasn't meant to be on the same plane of that which is spiritual that continues on, as God or sustained by God, by His spirit, that will not die unless God ends the life - which is another matter we've talked about already.

So he says, **You shall not eat of it, nor touch it**, in other words, asking the question, **lest you die**. **Then the serpent said to the woman, You shall not surely die: For God knows that your eyes will be opened**, in other words... And they didn't understand what that meant at all fully. She didn't grasp that.

Let's go on to chapter 4 and notice the next part here as we already mentioned, or I already mentioned. But, again here, it's just a snippet. There's not a whole lot there. But we realize they didn't have a whole lot of understanding. They didn't know about God's plan. They didn't know what God's purpose was for the next 6,000 years. They had no comprehension of those things that time was going to go on and on and on. They had no comprehension of the things that had to take place and fully why they were on the earth and what was going to happen through time, the billions of people that would eventually be on the earth.

**Genesis 4:8—Now Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him.** So again here, as I mentioned there, first time human death. **Then the Eternal said to Cain, Where is Abel your brother? And he said, I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?** What an attitude! Just look at his attitude. You can see why what he offered up before God, first of all, why he became jealous of Abel when they offered up the sacrifices to God and Cain's mind wasn't right in the first place. Abel's was. Abel's was received by God and that's discussed later. But again here, very jealous individual. He hated his brother out of jealousy. He hated the favor he had with God. Incredible! Different kind of mindset. Different kind of world at that time than what the world became later on. "Am I my brother's keeper?" Well, sadly, that's exactly what we all are. We are to be concerned for our brother. And if they're in our environment, to have that different attitude than what he had, obviously.

**And He said, What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground.** Isn't that an incredible thing, how then and now all human beings, no matter what, they don't grasp what God knows? They don't grasp the power of God. You'd think that the human mind

somehow would think, if you could make a body, if you could make the animals, if you could make nature, if you could make the earth, if you could make everything that's there and on and on you go, that somehow there would be more of a mindset of fear to lie to God, the one who made you? How hard is it to grasp that He knows what you're doing? That He sees what you're doing? That He knows what's going on? But the human mind, it thinks physically first and foremost, and it just doesn't grasp these things.

So here he lied to God. God knows what we do. God knows everything we do. He knows what every human being does. He knows what's in the mind of every human. That's why it's told God knows the number of hair... if He wants to know the number of your hairs on your head... It's just all knowing. And we can't comprehend that. We can't deal with that. Don't try. He is Almighty. It means what it says, far beyond what we can grasp.

He said, "Your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground." **So now you are cursed from the earth, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand.** Well, it goes on with a bit of a snippet of a story here of what took place, and we can't fully even grasp all that was discussed in that. A lot of things are going to have to be explained to us later on, of all that took place.

But the point of looking at these is just to realize that from the very beginning there wasn't a lot there about life and death and God's purpose for mankind and what was to take place and how mankind was to live. And so the world, before the time of Noah, had just progressed to get worse and worse. Murders became greater and greater in time. The evil of man and how people lived became worse and worse and farther and farther from God. And because people lived so long that evil was deep inside, deep, deep, deep inside. Hideous. Sick. To where God said it had to be brought to an end. Had to be brought to an end, otherwise there'd be no ability to save anyone, once their mind is set— irreversible— could never repent.

I am convinced I have met people now, in a way that I haven't in my past, that their minds are set. There are some whose minds are set, that they will *never* want what God offers. They will *never, never, never* want what God offers them. They want something different in life and it isn't God's way. No matter what they're shown, no matter what they see they will not want what God has to offer. There are others caught in the same environment that will want it, that can be brought to repentance. But the human mind can become set against God because it *wants* something different and will never want God. Never. And that's something that God is helping us to see more and more as we go forward in time here.

It has a great deal to do with what takes place during even the time in the Millennium. Do you realize there are going to be people during the Millennium who will not want what God offers them? Do we think... do *you* think that just because we're going to have the Millennium, a thousand years of human life on this earth, that all people are going to just be joyful to receive what God has to offer them? We can get this idea, some kind of, I don't know, not a utopia, but we've even had that, I

think, in times past. Some have had that idea, it's just a utopia, this blissful... I have to be careful of the words I use. But anyway, there are words I want to express it in, aren't coming to me so I'll just pass it up. But life goes on and human beings are human beings, and human beings have selfishness. And that doesn't disappear in the Millennium just because you have God's spirit, does it? Doesn't just disappear. And just because there are 144,000 on the earth, in the beginning people might be a little more careful because of what they experienced, but as time goes on that becomes your norm.

Just like what happened in the Church, what became our norm in Worldwide. We became used to that and after a while we got to the point in time where we were just rich and increased with goods. We were satisfied, spiritually, and thought more highly of ourselves than we should have thought.

Same thing's going to happen in the Millennium. The same thing is going to happen in the Millennium. The norm is going to be 144,000 on the earth. People are going to be born into that life. They're going to be born into a world that they have known no other. They haven't known what happened in the past. That's all history. Just as stories we're reading now; it's all history. Their world, their norm is Jesus Christ on the earth. Their norm is 144,000 who rule on the earth with Jesus Christ. Their norm are churches all over the world - just one Church. Their norm is the truth, is the Sabbath. They don't have a lot of different choices and stuff. But just because that's the norm of what they're born into doesn't mean they will choose it any more than the angels who were given a perfect environment and a perfect creation, and a perfect, well, yes, Garden of Eden, spiritual creation around them in the beginning, and then a physical creation around them as well. And they weren't all fully happy with that as time went along.

Human beings will be no different. Human beings are going to make choices against God. That's just the way it is! That's just the way it is! And that's the way it has to be. We all have to make choices. But I think if we're not careful we can think that just because it's the Millennium, and everyone born into the Millennium, that we're all going to come through this and be on the other side resurrected into God's Family. No, we're not! There are going to be people who refuse it, who reject it into time... into time, until it's all over with. And even at the end there are going to be those who will live on, past the Millennium, who will not be resurrected, who will live right on into another period of time later on. Well, not continuous life. Let me stop here. They will come to a point in time, but they will have a period of time where they will continue on in life. But that's another story.

And even during the Hundred-years it's going to be more so that way, because they did live in the first 6,000 years, and there are going to be battles. And then there are going to be others whose minds are so set that they won't be resurrected during that Hundred-years either.

So, anyway, the main point here is we have to be careful that we don't get in our minds, or get into a mindset where we think everybody in the Millennium is somehow going to be in God's Kingdom. It isn't going to happen that way because we have choice. So I hope we understand that. I hope we grasp that.

And so we go down the line in time here, 4,000 years up the road. I think of the time after the first 4,000 years. You think of the different ones written about in scripture who were resurrected, who had live and then were resurrected. There isn't that much there, is there? Can you think of any? Examples of people who lived life and then were resurrected to life again? Not much there. So people didn't really have a lot to go by. They didn't really have a lot to understand and grasp and comprehend about dying and what's going to happen afterwards because God didn't show it all yet. And we still don't fully grasp it all by any measure. We have more knowledge than ever before, but we don't grasp it fully.

I think of a particular time that Elijah had pronounced to King Ahab that there was going to be a drought in the region and he went and lived with this widow woman for a period of time. He was first taken care of by some birds, which I don't fully grasp and comprehend; they brought food to him. And then later on he was sent to live with a widow woman who had a son, and if you know the account here, the oil never ran out, the grain never ran out, the flour. It's just for all that period of time that the drought was going on and there was no rain in the land they were being taken care of, as well as that family. And then the son became sick. He became ill and he died. And Elijah went out and prayed to God and he was resurrected. The boy was dead and then he was resurrected. So a big example that's used in scripture is a story that people are familiar with then as time went on and they remembered this story of what took place there, this story that was told over and over again.

And it's hard to find stories like this - 4,000 years until you come to the story of Christ. Let's look at one that's there - awesome story. John 11. So, again, it's amazing when you look at things in a progressive manner. I don't care whether it's prophecy, whether it's things about God's plan, there is so much in the beginning; God revealed Himself, His power, His might, He told people how to live (very few listened). It's that same old story we have today. But very little was given to them, in that respect. They were just allowed to live on the earth, to multiply on the earth, and God intervened at different periods of time with different individuals, but didn't work with a lot of people. There aren't a lot of people that you can read about that lived God's way of life for the first 4,000 years. All for a purpose. God was training specific ones for specific places in His government that was going to come later - in some of the most primary areas of His government later. (John 11:1) Otherwise, He just allowed life to continue on, for there to be thousands, millions, and billions to live and die on the earth. Because, you see, the important part is what happens later - it's after death - and they're resurrected into a different age, a different time. That's their purpose. Their purpose wasn't fully in their physical life, except to experience it and to experience the kind of nature that man has, the kind of oppression that man lives by, the way they were treated by others, the way people treat one another, and so forth, the way mankind lived and has lived age after age after age after age. The fruit of living wrong in life.

**John 11:1.** This is an *awesome* story when you think of the timing and what was taking place. Now a certain man was sick, Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha. (It was that Mary who anointed the Lord with fragrant oil, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother

**Lazarus was sick.) Therefore, the sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom you love is sick.** Now this is in a time toward the end of Christ's ministry as Christ was en route, on his way to fulfill his part in God's plan as a Passover. And this is a part of that process. So much of what took place that's written in scripture took place in the last three weeks. There's so much that just happened in three weeks that's written in here, in this book, as far as his life was concerned. The rest of it is just snippets here and there, not a lot. But the vast majority, the eventful things that took place happened toward the end, and the things that he taught.

**Verse 3—Therefore, the sisters sent to him, saying, Lord, behold, the man whom you love is sick.** And when Jesus heard that, he said, **This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it.** Now, we can read through this and, "What do you mean?" What do you mean this is, "not unto death?" There are things that Christ spoke about that had to do with the vision, the understanding he had, of him looking forward, and always with God's purpose and God's plan in his mind, of where things... It was the outcome. It was the big picture. It wasn't what was happening right then. And so there are some snippets here of things that he gives to explain just a portion of what is there, and it's an awesome story, an incredible story here of what took place. And, again, he wasn't that far away from where they were, because he was on his way, but he was in another town, in another area, and so they, the sisters had sent to him, knowing he was there, about their brother, and said that he was sick. And so Christ made this statement, "**This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God.**" See, that's not going to be, in other words, the outcome of it all. They didn't know that yet, but he knew what was going to take place. He knew what was going to take place. God had already revealed it to him. He just knew. It was in his mind. God gave it to him to know that this was for the glory of God, that God was going to do something very unique here, in that respect, to glorify God ever more so, of a thing having to do with a death and a resurrection, the power to resurrect. Because, again, 4,000 years before this, how often do you see it? And now this awesome event's going to take place by the one whom God has sent (His own son), to do what he's going to have to do for all of mankind so that he can have a life that is into age-lasting life.

And so he says, "It's not unto death." That's not what it's about. It's not about him dying. He's, in essence, he's going to be resurrected. But he didn't tell that part here. But, "**This is to the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it.**" It was for a purpose. It had great purpose, now, for this to take place, for this to be shown, the power that God was giving in and through His Son, through the Christ, through the Messiah, of things that were intended for the future, of things to look to, to understand.

**Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus. So when he had heard that he was sick, he stayed two more days in the place where he was.** He didn't leave right away. You know, people can look at certain things that happen sometimes and they can judge it. And there was some judgment that took place here. It took place a little bit later, especially. But the point being here is sometimes if we don't keep our focus what it needs to be - especially for us with God's spirit - we will come up

with the wrong conclusions and we can find fault in things. And yet if we understand how God works we'll have confidence in that.

So again here, he stayed there two more days. Because something had to be fulfilled. Now, the others didn't know it. They didn't grasp it. They didn't even know what was going on. The disciples that were with him, they didn't even know what was going on. And here Lazarus died. He's buried - buried for several days. And Christ is waiting before he ever came to them. He was waiting for that time to pass - giving time for Lazarus to die and be several days in the tomb, or in the grave before he showed up. Okay? In the tomb. All for a purpose. But they didn't grasp what that purpose was. They didn't know what God was getting ready to do. A lot of lessons in this - truly are.

**And the disciples said to him, Rabbi, lately the Jews have sought to stone you; and you're going there again?** So this, where he was going to (I think it tells it in a moment here), but a couple miles out of Jerusalem. It was just right next to Jerusalem there, so an easy walk. The point being is the disciples are saying, "You're going to go up there now? You're going to go on up to Jerusalem," in essence, "to where they want to stone you? Because they've been talking about this." **And Jesus answered**—notice his answer—**Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. But if one walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him.** Now, why would he give an answer like that right here in the midst of a question like that? Why would he say something like this as they're asking him, "Are you going up to Jerusalem now? They want to stone you. They want to put you to death." This is a matter of something, "they want to stone you." That's what it was all about. It was about, "They want to put you to death and you're going to go up there now? When we've heard this is what they're wanting to do? It's already going out here, that they're wanting to get a hold of you and stone you and put you to death?!"

And then he says this, "Aren't there twelve hours in the day?" Basically, he's telling them about their focus. He's telling about *his* focus. He's different. His mind is different. His vision is different. What he's looking at is different. They're looking at something physical. He's not! He knows what has to happen. He knows in the timing of matters he's going to go there for that very purpose because he knows he's going to die. He knows that's why he's there. He knows that's why he has to go up there. It's no mystery with him because he's walking in the day. He's walking with God. God's giving him the ability to see and to have the vision he needs to have to do what needs to be accomplished. But if you rely on your human reasoning and "you live in the night," and you're not looking to what God is doing, "you're going to stumble." That's the message. And it is for us, as well. We have to keep our eyes and our focus on God and what God is leading and guiding and directing us in. If we begin to use human reasoning, it always gets in the way. If we begin to think with our own thinking, of something that's different than what we're being told, you're guaranteed you're going to stumble. You're going to have a fall, spiritually, in your life. And that's the message that Jesus Christ was giving here to the disciples. A message that we need to learn from as well, to understand the importance of having a right vision, of keeping in unity and oneness with God, and not getting in the way with our own

human reasoning. And God has taken us through a lot to grasp that in a far deeper way than we ever have as His Church. Truly.

**Verse 11—These things he said. After that he said to them, Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go that I might wake him up.** I love things like this, because they didn't have God's spirit yet, and we understand that. But even sometimes with God's spirit we don't always understand things Christ was saying and doing with them. But here he says, "We're going to go. He sleeps now and we're going to wake him up." Now, what they were thinking, to think he might be asleep and that Christ is going to go wake him up, that he knew this - because death wasn't in their mind. That wasn't in their mind at all. **So then his disciples said, Lord, if he sleeps, he'll get well.** "This is good for him." You know, "If you're sick and you're having a difficult time and you're able to sleep and rest than it's far better for you that you're going to be able to get well." And they didn't grasp what he was saying here. **However Jesus spoke of his death. But they thought he was speaking about taking rest in sleep.** Then Jesus said to them plainly, **Lazarus is dead.** That's why I love this book of John. A lot of the theme of John, from the very beginning, is going through this process of talking and showing how we tend to think as human beings, even with God's spirit. We think first physically. That's just the way we tend to think. We have gone through that even within the Church from the time of Philadelphia on. As God raised us up, strengthened us, truths were restored to the Church, our first tendency is to deal with things more on a physical plane.

Even as the example I just talked about here a minute ago about the Millennium, we tend to think more on a physical plane and not more fully grasp the full story of what really is going to take place during the Millennium. It's going to be an awesome time, beautiful time, great justice on the earth, great unity on the earth, great oneness on the earth, great blessings on the earth, great production on the earth, great fruit in the earth. But people are... There are still going to be people that are not going to choose it, when it's all said and done. That isn't really what they want. Incredible to understand.

And so he went on to say here.... Oh yeah, as I was saying, John 3, I was going to go through this. John 3, when it was Nicodemus. You remember the story there about Nicodemus and he came up to Christ and Christ was trying to explain to him, or was explaining to him in spiritual terms, but Nicodemus was only able to understand it (talking about being born again), and Nicodemus said to him, "How can I be born a second time? How could I be in the womb of my mother again, or a mother again and be born again? How..." That just seemed totally absurd.

Then chapter 6, totally absurd with all the Jews, the different ones that quit following Christ at that time. It says, "Many quit following him at that time," when he said, "You're going to have to eat of my flesh and drink of my blood." This was foreign to a Jew. You don't drink blood. You don't drink human blood. You don't drink blood, period, let alone human blood. And you sure don't eat human flesh. That's unclean. So it says many quit following him at that time. You go back and read the story in chapter 6 there. Incredible, because they took it in a physical way. They didn't grasp what he was talking about. And the woman at the well? The woman at the well, what chapter was that in?

Anyway, it might have been before that; I might have mixed up my chapters. Anyway, wherever it was, the woman at the well when she... Christ talked about the living water and all she could think about, she didn't have to keep going to that well everyday to get water. That's going to relieve a great deal of her time and hardship and work if she could have this living water and never have to go fetch water again. And Christ wasn't talking about that.

So here's another story, chapter 11. Over and over and over again in John, the theme of John so often here, is about how we, as human beings, tend to take things physically first. And in time we can begin to understand the spiritual.

So he said to them, **Jesus said to them plainly**, not a matter of him taking rest and sleep, **Lazarus is dead**. He just outright told them, "Lazarus is dead." **And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that you may believe. Nevertheless, let's go to him.** Then Thomas, who is called the twin, **said to his fellow disciples, Let us also go, that we may die with him.** They're still not seeing everything that's taking place here. "Because he is going up to Jerusalem to be stoned; they're going to stone him. They're going to kill him. Let's go up there and die with him. If we're going to do this thing, let's do it together." So, in other words, they were ready to give their life and be there with Christ at that particular time, to go through whatever they needed to go through with him if he's set on going.

**So when Jesus came, he found that he had already been in the tomb for four days.** So by the time they got there four days had already passed. **Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles away, and many of the Jews had joined the women with Martha and Mary (around Martha and Mary), to comfort them concerning their brother.** Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went out and met him. But Mary was sitting in the house. **Then Martha said to Jesus, Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.** "You could have prevented this. You could have stopped him." In other words, "We sent word to you to come and you didn't come." And it was... She was distraught, she was speaking in a manner that found some fault. She was in great sorrow and she was trying to understand "Why? You love us. You loved him. Why didn't you come? Because you could have stopped..." She had a confidence and a faith, to a level, that she believed that Christ could have healed him. Because they already saw, they already knew of how God had worked through him to heal others. But to bring him back from the dead? That didn't cross her mind. This is something newer to them, this thing of being resurrected from the dead, of the power that God was giving through His Son.

And that's the exact reason it was happening, to glorify that example, to magnify that in their eyes and for everyone afterwards. And even as we're reading it now, it's an awesome story. But to realize that there aren't many experiences like this in life, are there? Of something that's been written about - but it happened here - that we're to hold on to.

So again, a progressive revelation about the power of God to resurrect from the dead, which we should grasp anyway. People should have grasped through time but they had a different picture of

things. And even as she responds here in a moment, it shows how she thought, because she responded in a manner of something that had been taught to her, of something that she had hope in for a future time - but not for now, not for here.

I believe there are those, not a lot, but even when Christ returns there are those things that Christ can do at that time to glorify God, to glorify the occasion, that God can resurrect some if He so chooses at that time. Whether He will or whether He doesn't, it's not owed to anyone. But to grasp the power of God to do so and not improper to pray for such things when those times come. But it won't be to a lot in this world, like, obviously. So I won't say anything more there. But again, we need to realize that things are in the power of God Almighty to do as He wills for a purpose and a reason, and to look to Him, to beseech Him, and whatever answer He gives, just like Christ did - he wanted something different and he said, "Nevertheless, not my will but Yours be done." Because that's what's best.

And so she went on to say, **he would not have died. But even now, I know that whatever you ask of God, God will give you.** And Jesus said to her, **Your brother will rise again.** And **Martha said to him** - see her response— **I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.** See? And **Jesus said to her, I am the resurrection, and the life.** This is a profound thing that sends chills up my spine. This is where it's revealed in the most powerful way, at this moment in time, where this is told, "I am the resurrection to life, and the life." So again, life, eternal life, or life into eternity, life-everlasting, age-lasting may be a better way of expressing it because it's not eternal life, because that's going from the time of God and He's the only one eternal. But to have life into time, age-lasting, everlasting life is something that can come through Christ, and those things are revealed then as time goes on, through the ability to be baptized, receive the laying on of hands, the impregnation of God's spirit, and the process, as we were talking about there with, that Jesus Christ was speaking to Nicodemus about, about being born again, of being born a spirit being. And so again here, very powerful, what was being revealed, that this power rested in him. And he was using this occasion, God was using this occasion to give an example of something to have a greater hope in, a greater resting of our hope, of their hope, of that time and the disciples that followed later and the apostles and people in God's Church. And they had these hopes of these examples of things that were there and something that pointed to the future in a far greater way as more truth was revealed later on.

**And Jesus said to her, I am the resurrection, and the life. And he who believes in me, though he may die, he shall live.** So it doesn't happen instantaneously. It doesn't happen right away. In this particular case here he was given life, but he died again. But he was given life, physical life again, not a spirit life, so he still died again. But, again here, this example being, as it goes on to say, it says **he shall live, though he may die, he will live.** So again, looking into the future, a particular time. And those things are discussed later on. We'll go to some of those verses. And it says, **And whosoever lives and believes in me shall never die.** So, "Whosoever believes in me shall never die." So, again here, "never die a second death." It's not talking about a physical death, in that respect,

just as in the very beginning with what Satan tried to tell Adam and Eve. And certainly it can also be referring to one living in spirit, obviously will never die, because they'll live on for eternity, or all into age-lasting life once they're resurrected into God's Family.

And so he says, **Do you believe this? And she said to him, Yes, Lord. I believe that you are the Christ, the Messiah, the Son of God, who has come into the world.** And so they were already believing of those things. They were already convicted of those things. And even though Christ said this, doubtful it still sunk into her mind fully what was about to take place.

**And when she had said these things, she went her way, and secretly called Mary, her sister, saying, The Teacher has come, and is calling for you. And as soon as she heard that, she arose quickly, and came to him. Now Jesus had not yet come into town, but was in the place where Martha met him. Then the Jews who were with her in the house, and comforting her, when they saw that Mary rose up quickly and went out, followed her, saying, She is going to the tomb to weep there.** So they followed. They went after her, it says here. Then, it says, "they went out and followed her, saying," again, "she's going there to weep." **And then when Mary came where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet, and said to him, Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.** Again, same thing, "My brother wouldn't have died." The first thing to come into their mind because they already believed he had the power to heal, the power to keep one from dying.

**Therefore, when Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews, who came with her, weeping, he groaned in his spirit, and was troubled.** "Groaned in his spirit, and was troubled." Interesting. **And he said, Where have you laid him? And they said to him, Lord, come and see.** And it says, Jesus wept. **And the Jews said, See how he loved him!** It's like, in this particular case here, "He's mourning. He's mourning like the rest of us. Look how much he loved him. He is weeping for him." And that's not what he was doing at all. It's because of their response. It's because of where they were and because of what he saw that they couldn't see yet, that they couldn't grasp, they couldn't comprehend. And he longed for that deep inside of himself that they be able to "see" what he could see. But it wasn't yet time for them to grasp that. They didn't have the kind of knowing and the kind of hope that rested in him. His is an absolute knowing.

**Verse 37—And some of them said, Could not this man, who opened the eyes of the blind, also have kept him (this man), from dying?** So, again here, they're all saying the same thing. All saying the same thing, "If you'd just been here." God has given him this power, this ability to do this thing. "People that have been blind can see and people have been healed. And couldn't he have helped him also if he loved him so much?" **Then Jesus said, after groaning in himself,** so again, "groaning," because this is their response, because they can't "see" and they can't grasp who he is. They can't grasp what God is doing in him, what his purpose is there, what his purpose being there is all about and what's being fulfilled in his life. It's like us sometimes, we groan because we see things that people are going through, but you can't give this to anyone. And that's a right response. That's a right kind of thinking. You groan inside because you long for, you yearn for others being able to grasp and

to "see" what you "see," but they can't yet. It's not their time until God gives it to them. But you *so long for it* because there are the answers.

And so Jesus said to them, groaning in himself as he came to the tomb. It was a cave, and the stone lay against it. He said, Take away the stone. And then it says, **Martha**, the sister who was with him, said he was dead, was telling him that by this time his body is a stench, it stinks. It's been four days. "Why are you doing this?" in essence. "This is not a good idea." She's pleading with him. It's hard enough he's dead, but you want to remove this and knowing what happens to human life after four days, any life after four days, and what happens to a body, and so forth. And so she's basically pleading with him not to do this. "Do you not know what's going to take place? Don't you know what's happening?"

And so, again here ...**by this time there is a stench, for he has been there four days.** And Jesus said to her, Did I not say to you, that if you would believe, you would see the glory of God? Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead man was lying. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank You that You have heard me. And I know that You always hear me. Now, he was saying this for them and he's saying it for us. He was saying it that it be recorded. See? Because this is their relationship anyway. But he's expressing out loud what's inside of him anyway, deep inside. ...**but because of the people who are standing by I said, that they may believe that You sent me.** So, for a purpose. For a purpose. So that they could be helped by it and so that all who read this later on could be helped by what's being stated here. Now, when he had said these things he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. And he who had died came out, bound hand and foot with grave clothes; and his face was wrapped with a cloth. In some ways I think of that. I think it's got to be a bit of a funny sight. I mean, here is something, somebody that's been dead and wrapped up like that and all of a sudden they're walking out and they're walking... I mean, that can do a lot of things in your mind. But, because, I mean, you've never experienced something like that, what are you going to think? A lot of you have seen too many horror stories on TV and in movies, and you probably have a quite a bit of fear there at a time like that. But in this particular case here, just awe, speechless. What do you say? What do you do? Someone walking! I can't imagine what the environment had to be like.

And Jesus said to them, Loose him, and let him go. You know, unwrap them. Take them off. Free him. Then many of the Jews who had came to Mary, and had seen these things Jesus did, believed him. See? Now all of a sudden they've seen something that no one has ever seen, like this. Like something of this magnitude, of something wrapped... you know, four days in a tomb like this and then walking afterwards, being resurrected from the dead. Incredible story! Incredibly inspiring story, something that took place. So try to place yourself in an environment like that and it's very difficult to do.

John 19:31. So there's even a greater example here in this particular chapter here, about Jesus Christ himself and what was going to take place in his life after being entombed for three days and three nights. So a little bit more just keeps being shown. A little bit more, far greater purpose. Here was

one who was resurrected back to physical life, and now here is one who is being resurrected to spirit life. Incredible. The first. The first human. The first who lived a human life. The first to be born into God's family.

**John 19:31** it says, **Therefore, because of the preparation day, that the bodies should not remain on the poles on the Sabbath (for the Sabbath was a High Day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken down/taken away.** So, to me this is an incredible story that you think the world would be able to grasp in an easier way, of why they came by and broke the legs of the two thieves, one on either side of him, and why they didn't break his legs. Simple things if people would just think about it a little bit in what was taking place and why they had this ritual in the first place of someone coming around and breaking individual's legs so they could die quickly, so they could bring them down from there. Because the Jews, their High Day was coming, they didn't want the bodies to be up there during this period of time. They wouldn't do the work on the High Day, on the Sabbath. They didn't want work to be done at that time. So this was going to be a rushed thing, to rush quickly to help them to die faster so that they could get their bodies down and everything cleaned up, wrapped up before the Holy Day began. That's basically how they were looking at this. And so again here, that the bodies should not remain up there on the Sabbath, on the High Day, because that was a preparation, as it talks about, for that Sabbath, talking about the High Day, preparation for that.

**And the Jews also asked Pilate that their legs might be broken and that they might be taken away.** And so they all desired this, that this process take place. **And then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first, and of the other who was placed on the pole with him.** I hate that word and what traditional Christianity has done with it, how it's translated.

**Verse 33—And when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was already dead,** it says, **they didn't break his legs,** they didn't have to, because, again here, it goes on to say, **but one of the soldiers, it says, pierced his side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out.** So it's telling the scenario of the story. Not just the scenario, but the actual story of what took place here where they finally came to the point in time where they did come and break the legs of the two thieves, and when they saw Jesus Christ he was already dead. Because as it says here, that a soldier, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and when he'd done that that's when Christ died. The water, the blood, his life blood from his internal organs there, he'd been speared right through there, and fell on the earth. And he had to die that way. He had to die in a manner that his blood was spilled to the earth, the Passover, the Passover Lamb. That's why I think of one group of people at one time - I think even in this area here they were teaching it. There was a minister here, one of the ministers that left that was teaching that he might have been strangled, could have died.... I'm sorry, not that he was strangled, that he could have died of suffocation. My wife came back with a comment, "Well, if that was the case, then God would have had them strangle the lambs instead of cut their throat." The point being is that blood had to spill to the earth. So no, he couldn't have suffocated up there and died.

He had to die in a different manner, and that was because of what took place. The others did. The other two died because they couldn't breathe anymore. That was the purpose of breaking the legs. Because when you're hanging up there with your hands above your head, nailed on a pole like that, and your legs are broken, because they have nails in the feet there, in that area there, both, one on top of each other and one spike run through there, that is run through there right into the wood holding you up, they pushed themselves up so they could continue to breathe. That's the only way. And then when they broke their legs they couldn't breathe anymore. You think that's so simple to understand! A very young child can understand that concept, and yet the world of traditional Christianity holds on to something that is so contrary to the story. You think, "Just ask a few questions. Think about this a little bit." And they can't. Even in a physical way they can't. They're willingly blind to their own beliefs. Matter of fact, last thing they could even begin to think of, that would be so foreign to their mind that they'd turn angry first and hateful and bitter, to say that his hands weren't stretched out from one side to the other. They become upset at you and mad at you for suggesting such a thing, "to take away our cross. How dare...!" If it'd been a guillotine and they wore a guillotine around their neck, "If you tried to take away my guillotine...!" You know, I guess, Guillotine, I guess is... I don't know how you pronounce it anyway.

These things frustrate me. I get so frustrated when I read some things like this. Some things are so simple and so plain, and yet people, they won't listen; they won't listen to God. I think of the book and what it says and why we're at this point in time. People will not listen to God about the simplest, most basic of truths because they want to hold on to their ideas, their false beliefs, their false ideas. I think of some conversations I've had within the last three years - not very many, but a few - in talking about some of these most simple things and talking about where it all came from, this great, big church. Well, it became great big. And the ideas they had and where they got the idea of a cross in the first place, and some of the most basic of things. And it just blows people's minds! Even when they have a bit of an open mind it slams shut... slams shut.

So again here, water and blood came out. **And he who has testified, and his testimony is true, and he knows that he is telling the truth, so that you may believe.** You know who that was? I like the way he writes this, about what he's witnessing himself and writing, as he's writing the book. **For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, Not one of his bones shall be broken.** So again, another prophecy fulfilled, things written a long time ago, that not a bone in his body would be broken. But more than that, because he had to spill his blood to the earth anyway. So that's the importance of the soldier and the spear and what took place when he pierced him.

**Verse 37—And again, another scripture says, They shall look on him whom they pierced.** See, things that were written that became fulfilled. After this, Joseph of Arimathaea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus. And Pilate gave him permission. So he came and took the body of Jesus. So, again, a very wealthy individual. Had the ability to go before him to ask such a thing in the first place, because of that prominence, because of who he was, and was able to go and ask what he did. And he didn't go

before the Jews. He didn't want the Jews to know about what he was doing here. He did it in this manner, directly to Pilate.

**And Nicodemus, who at first came to Jesus by night, also came.** He came to him by night because he didn't want to be seen. He was curious. He wanted to know more. He had seen things. He had heard things and he wanted more answers. And that's why he went and talked to Jesus, but he came to him at night. He didn't want to come to him in the daytime when he could be seen. Interesting how the human mind works and what we do sometimes, understandably so in this case here in that time period, but how people were and how they lived. But, again, showing a great deal about human nature.

So it says, **Nicodemus here (verse 39), who came at first by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds.** I don't know if I pronounced that right, but anyway. I don't know... You know, when you read this, I don't know if the women didn't know this or what, but he had already brought these because he'd already had these brought in. But they went and prepared, because that's when you get into the story about what took place on the preparation day, a Friday when they went and bought the different things and they prepared them and they couldn't come on the Sabbath because of the Sabbath day, so that when they did bring them Sunday, when they were going to bring them Sunday morning to put them with the body, that's when they found he was already resurrected, he was already gone. So, again here, you read things like this, and just something in the future want to know the answer to. Anyway. So it says here that he already did this, a hundred pound. There was a lot there that he took there with him.

And it says, **And they took they the body of Jesus, and bound it in strips in linen with the spices, as the custom of the Jews is to bury. Now, in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new tomb, in which no one had been laid. So when they laid Jesus there, it says, because of the Jews' preparation day, or they did so, they laid him there because it was the Jews preparation day, for the tomb was nearby.** So, again, it was a speeded up process here. They wanted to do it quickly before the High Day began, and they were able to close the tomb, have him in the tomb right at that mark...right at that mark before sunset.

**Now on the first day of the week (John 20:1)** it says, **Mary Magdalene went to the tomb early, while it was still dark.** Now, we know these stories. We know it. We're so familiar with these stories. But again, the flow of this sermon, the purpose of this sermon is for us to stop and think about how God progressively revealed things about matters of death, human death, and a resurrection and the power to resurrect, and how little evidence, how little these things were known amongst people. They didn't experience these things. It was only a matter of what they could hear by prophets or others that would teach about what God's plan was. And now here there are people that were living during this period of time who actually witnessed some of these events and testified, or witnessed of them, and these things are recorded for us. And it's inspiring to go through and see this process. It's inspiring to go through and see what God did and how God has revealed it through time and how much was revealed at this time. And here it took a quantum leap forward, because here is the very

Son of God, the very first of the firstfruits, the first one to be born into God's Family, Elohim. Incredible!

And so it says here, talking about Mary Magdalene went to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. Then she ran, and came to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and said to them... This story, candidly, even when you put all four together, all stories, four together, it's rather hard because each one writes from their vantage point, from the way they saw things and things that they experienced. And to piece them all together, it becomes a bit of a challenge. But the story is all there, the story flow of what took place. And there's much to be filled in between some of this, of what we're reading right now. But she says that she ran and came to Simon Peter and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and said to him, They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we don't know where they have laid him. We don't know where he is. And Peter, therefore, went out, and the other disciple, and were going to the tomb. So it says "Peter and the other disciple." Again, I get a charge out of how this is expressed here. So they both ran together, and the other disciple outran Peter. You know who that was? ...outran Peter and came to the tomb first. So he's writing this in a very unique way about himself and he says he outran this other disciple, outran Peter.

And he stooping down, and looking in, saw the linen cloths lying there, yet he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came following him, and went into the tomb, and he saw the linen clothes lying there, and the handkerchief that had been around his head, and lying with the linen clothes, but folded together in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who came to the tomb first went in also, and he saw and believed. For as yet they did not know the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. And yet Christ had told them earlier, but they didn't know what those things meant, of what was going to take place. But they couldn't understand because it wasn't given to them. It's amazing how there are some things that might seem so simple and clear, and maybe we read them in that way sometimes and wonder how they couldn't, but it's just like you. You can't see what you can't "see" until God gives you the ability to "see" it, and then it's God that gives it to you. You don't figure it out on your own.

I marvel at what took place during the Apostasy, because this is one of the greatest battles that took place in the Church. It's one of the greatest battles. Is that people had lost sight of, in that respect, the fact that they didn't know diddly about anything except that God gave them the ability to "see" it. They didn't know anything save what God had revealed through an apostle. Nothing! They wouldn't have known *anything* if God hadn't revealed it through an apostle, through Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong, whom God used to give it to them. They learned *everything* through him. And then when it was all said and done the *best* that some could say was, "He was a good teacher. I learned a lot from him." No (I'd like to say some words here and I'll refrain), you didn't understand *anything* but what came through him. You didn't know *anything* but what came through him." Was he a good teacher? Yes, he sure was. But God gave it to you through him. Amazing! And they couldn't humble themselves. Why a human being can't do that blows my mind. But it doesn't either because of human nature and seeing

what took place and what we experienced. But it's incredible how far the human mind can go, those that should have known better. Those that should have known better!

I think of so many stories of things that have happened in times past, that we never want to forget our history of. I think of Mr. Armstrong speaking in one of his sermons one time there in the auditorium in Pasadena, and the evangelists weren't sitting there. Not one evangelist, and from what I understood by what he said, not one pastor! And whether they were at home - in some of their places where they could listen in - there were a few that could listen in to what he was saying that night, I doubt highly if they were even listening in when he gave some of his Bible studies. But this was a particular Bible study he gave. And I remember one time, him crying out in that regard, because there was only one, basically toward the back, who was a minister who was there. You think, "Of all places? Pasadena!" All kinds of ministers there. All kinds of ordained people and they wouldn't even come to a Bible study to sit at God's apostle's feet to listen to what God was revealing to them, what God had to give to them. Because why? They'd already fulfilled what it says about Laodicea. They were rich and increased with goods already. They didn't need what he had to give to them. He's an old man. In a lot of their minds they were just waiting for him to die, "So we can get on with business our way." Incredible what we've lived through, brethren, it really is. Human nature.

**Verse 8** (I was going to use my little tab, and I haven't been using it. Shame on me.) That is where we are, isn't it? Yes. Okay. **Then the other disciple, who came to the tomb first, went in also and he believed.** It says, **For as yet they did not know the scripture that he must rise again from the dead. Then the disciples went away to their own home.** So again, even then, after all this had happened, the things that he'd said about what was going to happen, what he was going to go through that we see as plain, they couldn't see it as plain. They didn't know it yet.

**But Mary stood outside by the tomb weeping: and as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the tomb, and she saw two angels in white sitting there, one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain.** Incredible. Here are the angels. And they said to her, **Woman, why are you weeping?** And she said to them, **Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.** Now when she said this she turned around and saw **Jesus standing there, and did not know that it was Jesus.** She's been crying, was crying, tears in her eyes. Perhaps the vision wasn't what it should be or perhaps, as when Christ was walking with two later on, they didn't know who it was they were walking with. But anyway, this example here then she saw someone there and Jesus Christ being the *last*, the *last* that she would expect was standing there. It would not have crossed her mind no matter what. Probably didn't look him square in the eyes anyway, or straight in the eyes anyway. And was asked by him, **Why are you weeping? And whom are you seeking?** And she said, supposing that it maybe was the gardener, said to him, **Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.** And **Jesus said to her, Mary.** And she turned and said to him, **Rabboni, which is to say, Teacher. Rabbi.** Rabboni or ever how you pronounce it. I ought to look some of these up before I get up here. You normally use the Old King James and I have the new one here that I've used in this one here and I'm

not as familiar with this. But Jesus said to her, **Do not cling to me, for I have not ascended to my Father. But go to my brethren, and say to them, I am ascending to my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.** So, again, a beautiful example here of something where he couldn't be touched yet. He hadn't been accepted as the Wave Sheaf yet. He'd still been there in the area, whatever, I don't know, but resurrected already but hadn't ascended to God yet, but had been resurrected several hours earlier, many hours earlier. And so he sent her back with this message and it says here, **Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that he had spoken these things to her.** So again, an inspiring story, an awesomely inspiring story. No matter how many times you read it, it's very moving. To think of all history, and you come up to a point in time like this and a few people, handful of people experience something of such magnitude, of something so awesome, that would have so much meaning for people later on. Life. Life again. Life in a God Family.

Let's turn over to 1 Thessalonians, because it's even unique, in that respect, what was taught the Church then about matters, about a resurrection and about being dead, and about life that would follow and what would take place later on. And in 1 Thessalonians 4, scriptures, again, we're very familiar with, but think about the timeline, think about what they were being given and what they were being told, and understand who it was being said to. Because it was being told to the Church, to the early Church. It was being told to those in a very beginning of the Church. Because the same things will not be said in the same way in the future. They'll not be said in the same way to individuals in the Millennium. Now, the truth is there in the story of what was taking place, but the purpose in what was being fulfilled is a different matter. And this is very specific then.

**1 Thessalonians 4:13**— It says, **But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope.** And so that's the way most of the world is. They believe they have certain beliefs and so forth, but it doesn't comfort them because it isn't deep, it isn't what we have. It isn't the truth. It isn't true faith. It isn't true hope. There's a hope there but it's not alive. Ours is alive. Ours is alive because of God's spirit. And the more we can grasp these things the more alive that hope can be in us and God's purpose and a hope in His purpose - and not only a hope but a confidence in His purpose, of what He's working out, because of what we're going to see and what we're going to experience, and to understand that what is best will come out of it. That though it be so bad, that though it be so hideous, of what the world will experience, it is the most powerful and most profound way and most meaningful way, and candidly, the best way of being able to reach people, of digging down deep into people's lives, to make a change, to make it possible for a change to where people will have a greater desire, a greater hope for the things that are going to be revealed to them and given to them. Because of the way God is doing it.

That's what I'm going to talk about next week. To me it's an awesome process, of what God takes us through and what God's going to take people through and why, and why things are being done differently now than what they would have been a few years back. And it's for this greater purpose

that God is working out, to be able to reach more, to be able to help more, to be able to more deeply convict people - to be able to have the potential to more deeply convict, or to convict, just to convict.

**Verse 14—For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again,** that example we have of what took place here, and the Church, obviously, believing those things then as we do now. **For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.** So this isn't about those in the Millennium. This is about those who are going to come, who are part of the first resurrection, those who are part of the firstfruits. This is squarely about and being spoken to the Church at that time, of those who were living at that time. We understand another part of the story is going to be told to people later on, of what will happen to them, of the life they will have, of the opportunity they will have and how it will take place. But different than what's here. Because those who come with Christ are very specific.

And so, **those who sleep in Jesus**, it says, **he will bring with him. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will, by no means, precede those who are asleep.** And so, again here, those things that are going to take place in a future time, but very specific who it's addressing and what's going to happen to them, to those who are the chosen, to those who will be a part of the firstfruits. **For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a shout, and with the voice of the archangel, and with the Trumpet of God: and the dead in Christ will rise first.** And so again, those who have died in the previous 6,000 years, up to that point in time, through time. It says they're going to be resurrected first. **Then we who are alive,** and I mentioned that earlier in the sermon here, a very few. We don't know how many. One handful? Two hands? Four? I don't know! Can't be a lot. **And we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore, comfort one another with these words.** So again, this was a comfort. This was something being taught to the Church at that time that has gone down through time now over the past nearly 2,000 years now for us, to have hope and strength and confidence in, in a purpose that God has. But it's very specific about the 144,000.

So we're unique right now because we have a body of individuals who are part of the Body of Christ, and there will be those who will be in a first resurrection, and there are going to be those who live on into a new age and who will die a physical death. And their time will be later on. So look at those through 2,000 years and the seven eras of the Church who have died, lived and died, and those who died before that in the previous 4,000 years, of Christ, and then the next 2,000 years in the Church - and all who have died through that period of time that it's very specific about. But the most, most of you are going to have an opportunity to live on into a new age and to die and to be resurrected at the end of that period of time. It's an awesome plan that God has. So some had to wait nearly 6,000 years. Many have had to wait for a period of time within the past 2,000 years. And some are only going to have to wait a thousand years. And some will only have to wait a hundred years, or fifty years, or whatever it is the closer you get to the Millennium and individuals who are going to be

resurrected. But anyway, so, again, going through this particular sermon here for a purpose, brethren, because we're going to see some incredible things. We truly are.

Let's turn over to Revelation 11. People have witnessed different things at different times, just like what John was writing about and what he witnessed and a resurrection that took place. We live at a unique time of some things we're going to witness that the world has never experienced to this level, to this degree ever, since the time has begun. And as I said earlier, the closest it comes to it is what happened in Noah's time, because of the aftermath and because of what they knew took place, though they didn't see it. We're going to see a lot. You just have to prepare your own minds for that, and to think about that as a reality of life. Young or old alike, it doesn't matter. It's just a matter of life and death. And it has to take place. It has to happen.

I think something that is very difficult for human beings is to, almost in a - I don't know how to describe this - it's like some people feel about maybe a flag or about a cross or about something that they consider to be almost religious, as it were, or to have almost a religious type of worship or significance to it. And if we're not careful, we can almost do that to the human body. You know, when a body's dead, it's dead. That person's not there. It's almost as though we want to know what we've put in afterwards, how nice it is. Doesn't have to be the Waldorf. I don't want to mess... Anyway, you're not going to know it. It's only about people who are alive, that feel better about certain things and why they go through these things. Yet, we need to be careful about our feelings and one another's feelings and how we think, and we need to do so as a matter of respect, as a matter of understanding of a process in life that we go through, but not to the point where we almost look at some things in a distorted way. Because, really, the world does in large part. When someone is gone, they're not there. It's just a body. It's just a physical body. Thankfully, they're not there anymore. I wouldn't want to think someone was there! They're not there. They're not in that body sleeping anymore. They're not asleep in that body.

There is an essence in the mind, that as soon as we're dead it goes to God and it's stored, like anything of storage we might think about on a computer. There's a storage disk, or whatever, a drive, or whatever you have, and there's information in it. And what we have about us, it's with God. It's with God. It's the spirit essence that He gave us in the beginning, that He gives every human being, and it's with Him once we're dead. And He'll put it in a different body and bring all that back to life in the future time. But that's hard for us to separate that sometimes, because we think about the person then, the individual. But we have to think about God's plan and what's coming, and especially about the Hundred-years, and to understand that's a beautiful period. That's an awesome period. Because there God does intervene in life a lot more than what He has done in the past 6,000 years - far more than what He's even going to do in the Millennium, even though He's going to intervene a great deal in people's lives at that particular time. But there are going to be things where He intervenes often in people's lives to prevent certain things from happening or to help that certain things not come to pass. People are still going to be allowed to make dumb decisions, foolish choices and decisions and things will happen to them and they'll experience certain things, but God is there

to help and to give favor and to give healing as well, in a way that is meant for no other period because it's a second life and it has a different purpose than a first life. And it's hard for us to grasp and comprehend how awesome that's going to be, what an awesome, incredible, beautiful time that's going to be for human life and for people to experience it in a different age, at the end of a thousand years, after what we have done, helped to do, we will do together for the earth in the previous 1,000 years to make it ready.

I was looking out over the city today, part of the city, looking at old buildings and it's not a real pretty sight, when you really stop and think about it. And you think about cities and how they are and how so many are run down and they're let go and how.... To think that things are going to be kept beautiful? That things are going to be built to last, not to wear away? And those things that are built to last, they will be repaired the way they should be. They will be taken care of the way they should be. They will be taken care of in ways that we can't even begin to fathom right now and grasp in any fashion or form. Everything around us in life, the beauty that's going to exist, we really have no comprehension. But we're going to have a part. We're going to have a part in bringing it all together, and that's exciting. And to be brought back into a world like that? It's going to be far better than what the Millennium was. It's going to be far better than the beginning....

The beginning of the Millennium is going to be tough. It's not going to be a picnic. It's going to take a long time. It's going to take a lot of time. It's going to take a few generations to get things leveled off to where we can really begin working forward. A lot of it's going to be taking care of what has happened and repairing and building again and starting in again and getting ready to do a work later on. There's a lot of clean up to do for a long time, for several decades. A lot of work. Everybody will have a lot of work to do.

Let's just stop there today. There's just too much I'm leaving out here and I'm trying to rush through this and that's not doing you justice. So I'm going to stop there. The point being here, at this point in time, talking about a resurrection and talking about things we're going to see. I don't like talking about it. I really don't. I don't like discussing things that are going to take place, that have to happen, that we have to go through, because they're not pleasant. And something of this mass, something that's so massive... Even what's going to happen to this country, I don't like to think about what has to happen to this country.

Just like I think the other day when I was talking about some of this and I think of what's happened in the last seven years, to realize that this, that Ephraim and Manasseh, Manasseh in particular has become so much worse. And to hear people on radio and television, anywhere, anything you listen to in the news about what's happening with our economy and to hear the pride, that it's like, "Nothing can happen to us. We might go through a rough time, but nothing can hurt this country. Nothing can bring it to an end. We're going to come through this. Put your money here. Put your money there." Whatever it is that people have to say. And it's this haughtiness and pride that's gotten so much worse in seven years than what we faced back in the end of 2008, when I'll never forget the look of a President's face. He was afraid. I will never forget that look. At least I don't believe that I will. When

he came out and saw an individual.... You look to leaders to lead in a nation, but to see fear? To see fear in their eyes? To see fear in their face? To see fear in the things that they're saying and talking about, what's getting ready, what they had to do to intervene, to accomplish as far as the economy was concerned. He was afraid. He'd been given a story of something that was about to take place and he saw some things that scared him.

And yet people today they don't have any kind of fear whatsoever, and we've just made things so much worse. You hurt inside when you think about some of those things. And so when I think about the potential of what can happen now to this country, to know it's worse than what it was seven years ago, that hurts. It hurts. I don't want to see those things take place. But I also know that there are things that have to happen. And when it's all said and done it's what's best. And that's the challenge for us, sometimes, when it comes to seeing the things we're going to see, the things we're going to experience, especially people you know. It's not going to be easy. But that's why we need to have more of the mind of God. Ask for His help to be able to see life and death and a resurrection in the way He does, to recognize the life that they're going to have opportunity for later on that they have never experienced yet in their lives. They've never had those opportunities yet but they will have them later on.

So with that, we'll end for the day. I keep thinking we're going to have a closing prayer, but we're not.