

At the end of *Part 3* in this particular series we're going through right now, *It Is God Who Redeems Us*, at the end of that particular section we were covering a portion where God was declaring the power that He has as our Redeemer.

It's kind of a unique thing to go through this subject right now, to realize there are so many places in the Old Testament where God began to reveal those things in a progressive manner that Israel didn't understand at the time, obviously. There are things that they believed that He had to say about being the Redeemer, but now, for us as far as the Church, to be able to look back in time and see all these things that were gradually given, it's very inspiring, it's very exciting to see what God has to say because He had a lot to say about this subject and it continues to broaden in scope the more that time goes along.

Now, to me, it's exciting to think about where we are in time. We are so close to the time when Christ is about to return. We have gone through a period of 2,000 years, as far as the Church is concerned, where God gave so much to the apostles after Christ had died, and of course, he spoke of those things himself.

But we were going through Isaiah 43, so I want to go back there and pick up where we left off, but I want to back up a few verses to make sure we get the context of what was being said there. Of course, we are approaching the Passover season, and again, that's why to me this is very exciting to be able to go through some of this at this time.

**Isaiah 43:13**—**Before the day**, says “was” here, and that's added. It's kind of a contextual type of thing where you have to have a context of what's being stated in the verses here. He says, **I am He, and there is no one who can deliver out of My hand**. God at different times here, but especially in Isaiah, reveals who He is in a very powerful way as far as those things that are written in prophecy and things that the world has not understood, has not grasped very well.

So again, He's talking about these things, His power and part of His plan of what He is doing. “And there is no one who can deliver out of My hand.” So, what an awesome thing to understand, that once we are in God's hand, God's hands, if you will, once He's called us and we have told Him our life is Yours, we're set. If we continue to do the things God has given to us, if we continue to fight for this way of life, continue to follow the guidelines, the direction, instruction that He gives to us, the inspiration He gives us to do those things, we have it made. We really do.

To think, in that respect, that the Great God is there to watch over us, to protect us, to strengthen us, to give us favor, to keep the way open for us, His way of life. That's what He desires; that's what He wants.

He says here, **I work...** We have to understand that God has been working for a long, long time from the beginning and continues to work. It's His way, and it's about His

plan and His purpose, and especially His plan and purpose concerning Elohim and the calling He's given to so many at this particular time. There have been others at different times where there's been a lot more but we're in a unique time in getting ready to call the whole world.

**...who will reverse it?** So, if God's working to do something, we're in His hands, no one can turn that around. Nothing. Who can fight against us? Who can stand against us? Nothing. No one.

That's why I love what it says in Romans. What is going to separate us from the love of Christ, from God's way of life, if you will?

**Thus says the Eternal (Yahweh), your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.** Beautiful words when we know what these things mean, what these words are, what they're about.

**For your sake I will send to Babylon and bring them down fleeing.** So, again, I think of scriptures in Revelation that talk about bringing down in the sense "Babylon, Babylon has fallen," and what that means. We grasp those things. This is a part of what it's talking about.

**The Chaldeans, who sing, rejoicing in their ships.** Again, understanding it's talking about, when we talk about Babylon in Revelation, what is it about? It's about commerce. It's about, for this age, it's about a global economy and the pride, the haughtiness, the greed, the lying, everything that takes place, the wars, the battles, especially now at this time.

Think about the different nations because this is what's pushing toward war. It's the economy of every nation that's hurting so badly right now, because of this, even more so, but people turning inward after following an example that was set by this country of turning inward. And whenever nations do that, begin to turn inward, and when the most powerful nation on earth turns inward to protect itself (which is not a matter of taking a side of a right or a wrong)—it's understandable—but again, what's the rippling effect? Other nations start doing the same thing. People are out to protect themselves, basically, "to get what I can get."

So again here, we understand those things about commerce and how the world functions and how it operates. Things are so messed up right now. Going through some different news articles here this morning and so much of it is about that and where we are, just about ready to tip over at a moment's notice, whenever its God's time. Things are so bloated out there. They talk about bubbles, and this is so big that you kind of marvel that it's even able to stick together. But we know why it is. But when it's time it's going to go.

So again, **I am the Eternal, the Holy One (your Holy One), the Creator of Israel.** Those words have a lot of meaning, "the Creator of Israel," the Israel of God, the God Family, Elohim. **...your King. Thus says the Eternal, who makes a way or who is giving a way in the sea, a path in mighty waters.**

So again, as we talked about last week, talking about the sea of humanity. Expressions we even use, things that are used biblically as far as prophecy is concerned. The sea of humanity. It's so vast now compared to what it was a hundred years ago, a thousand years ago, and it's getting greater and greater out there. It's so incredible.

And yet in the midst of all that a world that's going the way of Satan as it always has. He is the God of this world, as Paul spoke of. But we're blessed to be called out of that and to be able to know God's way and to follow that way. We're going a different direction than the rest of the world. In a sea of humanity we're going against the flow if you will.

**...who brings forth** (makes to come out) **the chariot and horse, the army and their power**, their strength, in other words. **(They shall lie down together...)** So, it's a part of God showing what He's going to do as far as Babylon, as far as the world is concerned, and He's going to bring certain things forth like He did, using the example here as it's partially showing, of what He did with Egypt and bringing forth the armies, bringing them out of Egypt as well to destroy them in the Red Sea. Incredible!

**(...they do not rise; they are extinguished like a wick is quenched or put out.)** So, just using two fingers. How many people have done that, you know, take a wick on a candle and put it out. To God, it's a small thing, and so, it uses that analogy to show how small a thing it is for Him to destroy armies, if that's His will.

For mankind to grasp that kind of power, that kind of might, to bring forth for that purpose, just like God is doing in the end-time here to bring forth various things, of nations who are going to go to war, to bring a head all of this and then destroy those who are destroying the earth, who won't quit, who are going to fight until the end.

**Do not remember the former things, nor consider the things of old. But look at the new that I will do.** That's what God wants us in the Church to do, to keep focused on what He's doing and why He's doing it and why He's overthrowing the system of Babylon on the earth and giving to us what He is.

He says keep your eyes upon that, look at what He's doing. Especially at a time like this it's so easy to become distracted. That's why we're trying to where we can, have more fellowship together, try to get back together as much as we can in various areas. Because we need it. It helps us to keep focused.

**Look at the new that I will do. It is now springing up.** Well, you look back in time, in Isaiah it's springing up, progressive revelation, but look at where we are. Talk about springing up. It's what God is getting ready to do on the entire earth. We're there. It's awesome.

**Will you not know it? I will make a way in the wilderness, rivers (waters) in the desert.**

So, we're going to continue on from that now. That's where we ended last week.

All of what we've been addressing is about, again, God being our Redeemer and how He does it, how He goes through this process of redeeming us. The next chapter that

we go into here continues with this same thought of what He's already covered or what has already been covered.

You know, mankind put chapters in here. It's divided up so that people are able to go to things more easily, have a place to go to find a particular verse or a section of verses. And so, verses have been added, chapters have been added.

This just continues on, but something else is added here because some things are repeated almost exactly like they were in the beginning of the previous chapter. In Chapter 44 we're going to continue on, but now God begins to emphasize the importance of listening, of hearing what He's saying.

Again, when God repeats things like that it's very inspiring. That's why I think about certain things, even as we have gone through various sermon series coming up to now. We are at points going to look at some things that have been covered because it's a repetition because it's a building process to reinforce what we have been given with what we're being given in a moment's time. It's a powerful tool that God has given us to grow by.

He begins to emphasize now the importance of listening, of hearing what God is saying. We have to listen, which has to do with our reaction, our response. It's not a matter of saying, "Okay, now I'm going to listen a little more closely." No, the objective is to listen in order to do what God is saying, with that kind of focus. Not just to hear and think, "Well, that's exciting. That's interesting." It's a matter of what we live.

It starts out in **Isaiah 44:1—Yet now hear, Jacob, My servant, Israel.** Again, that word "God strives; perseveres," and we are to persevere and strive for God's way of life. It fits hand in hand what God is doing. God works. We're to work. **Israel, that I chose, whom I chose, if you will.**

**The Eternal says this...** So, there's an emphasis being placed here. This is what the Eternal is saying, **who made you and formed you from the womb.** We read about these things in the previous chapter but there's more of an emphasis taking place here.

"Formed you from the womb." So, we've talked about that, how even David spoke of such a thing. How that there have been people at different times in life who literally that God has worked with from the womb in different qualities and characteristics that they're going to be born with, of all the, what is it, thousands and thousands and thousands of possibilities, millions and millions and millions of possibilities, but there are characteristics. What an awesome thing to understand that God blesses us with.

**...formed you from the womb and will help you.** But even more so, in the womb of the mother, the Church. It's even more so what this is about though there have been people that God has started to work with, as He talks about Jacob, as He talks about David in scripture, as those scriptures refer to. This refers to some of that.

But spiritually for us, indeed, it is something that begins, as Herbert Armstrong used to talk about, that we are in embryo not yet born into God's Family. We are like an

embryo as far as a matter of the Church is concerned, not yet born. Begotten, yes, but not yet born into God's Family, spirit beings. Again, a very powerful verse that has to do with this process.

**...who made you and formed you in the womb, I will help you.** Because this is a primary place, obviously, where God forms us even more so. Above and beyond anything physical what is spiritual is what is the most important. What is in the mind and can transform the mind is what is the most important. That is done by the power of God's holy spirit over a long period of time, not a short period. It takes a lot of time.

**Do not fear, Jacob, My servant; Jeshurun,** which means "upright one," **whom I have chosen.** So, referring to him by that name. **For I will pour water on him who is thirsty.** So, we don't want to miss that one.

"I will pour water upon those who are thirsty," who want it, who desire it. That's up to us! God doesn't force us. We have to be thirsty. We have to want it. We have to choose prayer life. We have to choose a relationship with God. We have to choose to fight for this way of life. We have to decide and choose when we want to fast and draw closer to God. All those kinds of tools that God places before us, that it's our choice as to what kind of work we put into receiving what God has for us.

**I will pour water on him who is thirsty, or out to him who is thirsty, and floods on a dry land. I will pour My spirit on your offspring and My blessing on your produce.** In other words, that which springs forth from you, as in crops or offspring.

So, even within the Church that which comes along that we're able to be a part of in people's lives. That's why fellowship is so important, the example of different things in relationships that we develop that can help others.

I think of my wife and I being blessed to travel in different areas, knowing so many, having seen so many come in at different points in time in the Church, and we talk about times, at times having more children than just our two physical children. We mean that with all of our being. I remember Herbert Armstrong talking about those things, or different ministers in times past talking about that. Because there is a relationship and a closeness that develops there and that's what God wants us to have as a family in His Church. That's a part of what's being talked about.

This is about God then even more so, "My blessing on your produce," on that which springs, the word means, "that springs forth from you" because of your life and your influence and help that is given. **They will spring up among the grass like willows by streams of water.**

Now, I don't know if you've ever had a willow tree or know about willow trees and where they oftentimes grow the most. But if they have a water supply, they're going to take it. We had one in our backyard up in Toledo and that thing grew fast, it grew massive, so much so I had no idea it was going to just in a very short time start spreading over toward my neighbor's roof. So, I had to get a ladder out and climb up as high as I could trying to cut portions of it back and it would just keep growing.

So, weeping willows, they take up a lot of water. They tell you, don't ever get them close to your house because they will come in around the foundation and everything else and they're looking for water and they'll find it and they'll suck up everything that they can. But they grow fast—incredible—and big as well.

This is the analogy being given here. **...like willows by streams of water. One will say, I am the Eternal's.** We can all say that. Awesome! In God's Church we are the Eternal's. **Another will call themselves by the name of Jacob. Another will write with their hand, The Eternal's, and name themselves by the name of Israel.**

Well, that's what we learn. God lets us know who we are. He lets us understand. He gives us understanding of what these things mean and what we're a part of that's so great that God is molding and fashioning, developing us within the womb and looking forward to the time we're actually born.

**Thus says the Eternal, the King of Israel...** He is the King. Yahweh is the King. He's the Savior, as it talks about in other scriptures.

That emphasis in times past was not given as it could have been. As time went along God made sure that it was, that it wasn't something that was only Christ's. God gave that to Christ. He has turned all power over to His Son and all things are accomplished in and through him, even those responsibilities, those things that are accomplished as far as being our Redeemer, our Savior, our King. Even more so because of how God is doing it in and through His Son, Joshua. Those things take on even greater meaning in the sense of what He has passed along to His Son, but first and foremost it is God. He's made it possible. God is our Redeemer. It's God who redeems us.

**Thus says the Eternal, the King of Israel, and his or Israel's, if you will, Redeemer, the Eternal of hosts. I am First and I am Last; and besides or "apart from Me,"** is what the word means, or except...**apart from Me there is no God.** Awesome! There will be a God Family, but there is only one Great Almighty Eternal God who's always existed; something we can't even begin to comprehend.

**Verse 21—Remember these, O Jacob, for Israel, you are My servant; I have formed you.** We're to serve God. We're to serve God's way of life and that entails so much as far as fighting for this way of life. Again, I go back to fellowship because that's a very powerful part of it, the relationships we're able to have with one another, the closeness we're able to have.

**You are My servant, O Israel.** Saying it again and again to drive the point home. That means we are to serve God. We have told God we are His, our life belongs to Him. All that we do is to be geared toward serving God and God's way of life and God's purpose, whatever that is at any moment in time.

And for us the primary part of it is that we succeed, that we yield to the process of God working in our lives so that we will change, conquer, and overcome because He's given us the power to do that. We have to put the work into it. We have to listen to what God is saying and strive to respond to that and fight for it.

It doesn't just happen. There are choices every day of our life that we have to make. It's a fight. It's a battle. It's a struggle. We have to keep at that struggle, and what is the primary thing you have to do in your life? Well, it's what your Redeemer has made possible. It's about Christ. It's about repenting.

He suffered incredibly so—as we're approaching Passover and we focus on those things—he suffered incredibly so in order to give us what we have opportunity for. We're to think about those things. We're to have those things a deep part of appreciation and gratitude and thankfulness day in and day out. We have to work then for what He's given to us, to recognize the sacrifice that's involved.

He set the perfect example. To love with sacrifice. That's the way God loves. It takes sacrifice to love that kind of love. It's not selfish. It's not inward. It has to be outward. We have to work for that, we have to strive for that. Where we see we're wrong we have to repent and ask for forgiveness of our sins so that God's spirit will continue to work in our lives. A fight. A battle. Wrestling with God, along with God for what He's placed before us that we can be a part of.

**...you will not be forgotten by Me!** Sometimes we forget God. Sadly so with human nature. We forget to put God first in our life. Sadly so with human nature. Because of what we are.

Now, God understands that, knows that, but He wants us to know that so we know what we're fighting and so we'll make the choice to fight it. No one can do it for you. You have to want it. You have to do it.

**I have blotted out...** See, that's what this is about. **I have blotted out, like a thick cloud, your transgressions.** How thankful are we? What does that mean? It means we're able to have fellowship with one another. It means we're able to have fellowship with God and His Son, Joshua, on a spiritual plane, to be inspired, moved, and motivated by the things that God reveals to us and shows us.

**...like a thick cloud, your transgressions, and like a cloud, your sins.** So thick you can't see through it. You can't see them. They're gone. Beautiful! We don't have to beat ourselves up. You repent, they're gone. It takes time to even grow in that kind of confidence and peace of mind to know that when you have repented, and your heart is right, and you want to conquer and overcome it and you continue to desire that and you're going to keep fighting. You're going to keep wrestling. You don't give up!

There have been so many people who have just given up because they don't keep wrestling with themselves for God's way of life. That's what these examples are about. We have to make that choice. Are we going to keep fighting for it, wrestling with God, along with God? Because that's what it's about. It takes God to wrestle this way of life, to fight in this way of life, for this to change.

Again, it goes on to say then, **Return to Me.** Well, that's what we do every time we're turning to God. That's what it's about. We're turning to God every time we repent. Every time you go before God in prayer and you have those things to repent of that you know you've said in a wrong way to someone else, you've responded or acted

wrong as far as it is, as far as your day was concerned, whatever that might be, and you've repented before God and let Him know, "I don't want to be like that. I want to live the way You have given me and the way I know is right. Help me to do it."

Because we can't do it on our own. We have to have God's spirit. That's why we cry out to God and that's why we repent.

**...for I have redeemed you.** Awesome! Over and over again this thing about redeeming and all that it involves of God's sacrifice to give to us, of Christ's sacrifice to give to us this way of life.

**...for I have redeemed you. Sing, O heavens, for the Eternal has done it!** God does it. We have to work at it, we have to fight at it, but it's accomplished by God's spirit, by God's power.

**Shout, you lower parts of the earth.** In other words, like shouting for joy. In other words, you talk about the lower parts of the earth, death can't hold back what God does. That's basically what it's about.

**Break forth into singing, you mountains, O forest, and every tree in it!** So, using physical things and the beauty when things are going well in life and the growth is there and the beauty is there, and the majesty is there. God blesses us to drink it in.

**For the Eternal has redeemed Jacob and glorified Himself in Israel.** That's a powerful thing that God is saying here. He's glorifying Himself in what He's creating.

You look at the heavens, you look at the vastness of the universe, and we can't begin to comprehend it, and it glorifies God in a very powerful way, the majesty, the might, the glory of things we don't even grasp why it's all there yet. One day we'll come to understand that far more fully.

Because it's not out there by accident. It's not out there to be there just to the end of 7,100 years. That's just barely a beginning of what God is starting and what God is going to do and the part that we have in it that we don't know about yet because God hasn't told us. But it's there for a purpose and it glorifies God.

What He's creating then, Elohim, glorifies God even more. The power He has to take minds that are selfish by nature, that are selfish from the moment they open their mouth "Waaaaah," you know and start crying and that selfishness that you watch it develop and you are kind of in awe, human nature, and we can see ourselves in babies as they grow and get older. Because we know we're just adult at that now, selfish, a big blob of selfishness. Only by God's spirit can that change.

What an awesome thing that we can begin to have that change in our life to where we're not as selfish. It becomes less and less the more we grow. More like God. That's what we're to do, to think like, to be in unity and harmony. That's what it's about, being in oneness with God, being in agreement with God, with His judgments, His purpose. We are wrong, God is always right. We're always wrong as far as life is concerned by itself. Only with God's spirit can we be right. Only with God's truth living within us can we be right. We grow in that. It's a beautiful thing.

It says here, **and glorified Himself in Israel**. So again, taken what is fully a physical nature to make or create that which is spiritual. Again, it glorifies the might and the power of God, to take that which is totally selfish and create that which is totally unselfish, of Him.

**Thus says the Eternal, your Redeemer...** God is just driving the point home. “I am your Redeemer. Grasp that! Love that! Shout for joy; be thankful for that.” Let it stir you up in spirit to understand the beauty of what He’s saying to lift us up, to strengthen us spiritually.

**He who formed you from the womb. I am the Eternal, who makes all things, who stretches out the heavens all alone, who spreads abroad the earth by Myself.** So again here, the power of God. It doesn’t mean He doesn’t give certain things to others because He does in the process. But it’s Him, made possible. Everything that’s accomplished is done by what He’s created, by what He’s doing, by what He’s done.

**Who frustrates the signs, “to break,” as it means here, who breaks the signs, like declarations of things to come, predictions, opinions of various things, of the babblers?**

I think about today and news. Perfect description. All the ideas of what people have of how things should be and what should be done, and nothing works out, nothing goes right. Ideas of things because it’s not about God and God’s way of life. Only God’s way has purpose and meaning and will be sustained. Everything else is going to be torn down. At whatever point in time, it’s going to come crashing down and things are going to fail and right now we’re at a state in the world where things are failing more and more and more and it’s just escalating, getting worse and worse.

Refers to in the King James here rather than “babblers,” “liars.” Well, that’s human nature. But it has to do with, again, idle talk, empty talk. That’s the way mankind is in so many cases. It doesn’t mean anything. Just like opinions. Who cares about anyone’s opinion? Ask a hundred people, you get a hundred opinions. How did that enrich your life? How did that make you stronger? How did that benefit you?

That’s the way the world is living today. They’re living on drama. They’ve got to have more - more drama. “Give me more!” It’s like having a needle in your arm with this thing packed up here with all this liquid in it and it’s just feeding you and you can’t get enough. “I’m getting weaker. I need more drama!” It’s an insane world. With technology the insanity has gone off the scale. Soundness of mind, where is it?

God and God’s way of life and what He reveals is the only thing that has true, what you could call, that which is sound, balanced. Because it’s true. Because it’s right, based on that which is strong and mighty.

This world doesn’t have it and God’s bringing all that to the surface. All the swill, all the garbage, all the filth, all the lying, all the cheating, all the injustice, all the oppression, bringing it to the surface so the whole world can see it. They’re not acknowledging it and admitting it yet. They’re not giving up. You know, the pride and the haughtiness is still there, but that’s about to go by the wayside too.

It's a beautiful thing to see how God is working and what He's bringing this world to. It really is. It's all about His Kingdom that's about to be established.

So again here ...and make diviners mad. Who turns the wise backward and makes their knowledge foolish?

**Verse 26—Who confirms the word of His servant and performs the counsel of His messengers. Who says to Jerusalem...** Now, that's an awesome thing to understand. There are things that God gives and things He will establish. Sometimes because He's given that to be done, that He will honor and make accomplished, be accomplished, to be accomplished. We will see that in time as other things have happened through time that God has given. ...**you shall be inhabited.**

**To the cities of Judah, You shall be built, and I will raise up her waste places.** So again here, not just a physical thing. But there is that which is physical that's involved in the world and what is going to happen as far as a world is concerned. But what is primary is that which is spiritual and the family that God is molding and fashioning.

**Who says to the deep, Be dry! And I will dry up your rivers,** or streams of water. **Who says to Cyrus, He is My shepherd and he shall perform all My pleasure...** So again here, there are things that have happened in times in history that God has had a bit of a physical fulfillment. But the primary has to do with what is a spiritual fulfillment and what God is doing especially concerning His family, things like **saying to Jerusalem, You are built, and to the temple...**

So, it's all about that. Israel is about that. Jerusalem is about that. What it means about a city of peace, if you will, that's coming from God. It's what God is constructing, Zion, Mount Zion. It's all beautiful. It really is.

**...You are built, and to the temple, You are founded.** Not just as the King James says, "Your foundation shall be laid." It says, "And to the temple, You are founded," or established. God is making it very clear He is the one that is establishing and building the temple and He is the one who is going to accomplish it. It's been happening over 6,000 years now.

You can turn over to Luke 24. That's where we'll be going next. Again, this series has been focusing on a progressive revelation concerning those things that God has recorded for us about His purpose of redeeming Israel and understanding that in the greater sense of what it's all about and what it really means. The last section that we covered, I think of times sometimes in going through these examples in Isaiah, nearly 700 years or right at 700 years later that much more began to be given by Joshua, Joshua the Christ.

So, there are some times, and in large expanses of time that led up to the time of Christ, nearly 4,000 years gone by then. You look at that periods of time. Then from the time Isaiah had these things recorded. Now Christ is going to give more. The farther you go into God's plan the more that's revealed. Progressive revelation.

Even here, you know, what Christ revealed didn't come to be grasped by the disciples right away. They didn't grasp the things he was saying. Those who were following him,

they couldn't put it all together, the things he was teaching about his purpose and what God was doing. They didn't understand until after the Day of Pentecost, and then all of a sudden wham, wham, wham and these things just poured into their minds. It's like God opened up the flood gates through the holy spirit so that they could see, finally see on a spiritual plane very powerfully so.

They began to see and understand. But during that 3½ years they were drawn by what they were hearing. God was drawing them and working with them, but they couldn't see it yet. Awesome!

**Luke 24:13.** Incredible story here. This is after his death and resurrection. **And behold, two went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was sixty furlongs or about seven miles, or if you will, 11¼ km from Jerusalem. And they talked to each other about all the things that had happened.**

So again here, they'd experienced a lot here just in a short period of time. Christ had died, the various things that happened at the tomb, and they were discussing these things and talking about these things as they were walking together.

**And it came to pass that while they were talking and reasoning, Joshua himself drew near and went with them. But their eyes were held back.** Now, this is an awesome thing, too. Sometimes there are examples of things that have happened, they've happened at many different times in life, but there are times your eyes are just shut and there are things you can't see. Then all of a sudden God opens them; He lets you see something.

That which is of a spiritual nature the mind can be totally closed to, unable to see, until God just says, "Now." And when you see it it's like, well, that's incredible, it's awesome. It's like our calling and we begin to see something, and we have these experiences at different times in our life. Inspiring and exciting!

**But their eyes were held back from knowing him.** So, their ability to recognize him was restrained so that they couldn't know who it was. It was just another person that was walking with them all of a sudden. You think, how is that even possible? Surely, physically you would see and know it's him because he looked the same, it was the same person. But they couldn't.

**Now he said to them, What manner of discussion is this that you are having with each other as you are walking and being so saddened? "Why are you so sad as you're walking along and talking about these things?"**

**So, one of them, whose name was Cleopas answering said to him, Are you only a stranger in Jerusalem?** So again, a disciple. There were many who went with Christ on his travels. Just like later on we learn that there were two that they decided between who would take the place of Judas Iscariot. In a similar matter this individual went with them along the way. I believe it so to be the husband of Mary, the one Mary. Not coming to me right now.

But anyway, so here it is these two individuals are walking along and it's a little vague here in some of the identification of what it says here. You have to have the entire story to put it together, to know what is taking place here.

He was saying unto him, unto Joshua, **Are you only a stranger in Jerusalem? Have you just arrived, and you don't know what's been going on and have not known the things which have come to pass here in these days?** Because this was being worded around, the things that had happened in those few days, all over Jerusalem. Anyone that was in that area had heard from different ones what had taken place.

**And so, he said to them, What things? And they said to him, Concerning Joshua of Nazareth, who was a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people... Awesome! You read something like this and it, like, puts chills up and down your spine. ...and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death and have nailed him to a pole. But we trusted that it was him who would redeem Israel.**

Even there, because it's about the Messiah. They believed that he was the Messiah, and they knew that the Messiah was to redeem Israel, in the sense of those things that are given in the Old Testament. They didn't grasp it all, didn't know what it fully meant. Because that's to be revealed more as you go through the life of the disciples, the apostles, if you will, and the things that were revealed after Christ was resurrected and went to heaven permanently; not resurrected from the dead, but taken into heaven, if you will. That's probably a better way of saying that.

He's going through all this and talking about what they were saying here, that he would redeem. "We trusted this." In other words, it didn't happen so now they don't know what they're going to do. Some had talked about, you know, it's like going back to fishing. What are we going to do? They had no idea what they were getting ready to do, what God was going to tell them to do.

**Now, besides all this, today is the third day since those things have happened.** In other words, it's been three days and here we are now, time is going on. So, this is right after the resurrection had taken place in this particular day here and they're saying three days ago these things began to take place.

**Yes, and certain women also of our company made us astonished.** The word has to do with "shaken." "We were shaken by what they had to say, and they were shaken," **who were early at the sepulchre. And when they did not find his body, they came saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive.** Unheard of, something totally unheard of.

Yes, he was the Messiah, but they didn't know he had to die. All these things had not been given to them yet. All the things he said about what was going to happen they never grasped nor comprehended.

**Now, certain of them who were with us went to the sepulchre and found it even so as the women had said; but they did not see him. Then he said to them, O, without understanding and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have**

**spoken.** Now, can you imagine someone that they didn't grasp who he was saying something like this and being corrected, if you will, in one respect. They weren't able to, and he knew that, but he's telling them certain things here really for the Church.

**Shouldn't Christ, in other words, Shouldn't the Messiah have suffered these things and to enter into his glory? Or as it should be, to then enter into his glory?**

**Now, beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.** So, he went through and started showing those things that were to happen as time went along. Especially, you talk about some of the things stated in Isaiah, it gets very, very clear about what the Messiah was to go through. But they never understood these things. They never grasped these things. But now he's telling them. "So, wasn't it right that the Messiah should suffer as he did? Because he's to fulfill all the things that are written in prophecy, and so doing then to enter into his glory!" His purpose was to die in order to accomplish all this.

They had so much more that they were going to be given after Pentecost. I mean, these things are awesomely inspiring. When you try to put yourself in a place in time and to think about where they were, what they didn't grasp, what he was telling them, things that we just take for granted. That is so dangerous sometimes, to take for granted what we have.

That's why we're to have a deep, deep, deep appreciation and understanding. That's why we're continually reminded of our history and our past and this progressive part of life that has led us to where we are now. Because that's what brings us to who we are and what we are and what we can see now that we look forward to the whole world being able to see. Awesome!

**Then they drew near to the village where they were going, and he made out as though he was going farther.** Again here, acting as though he's going to continue on and waiting for their response. **Even so, they urged him, saying, Remain with us, for it is toward evening and the day is nearly over.** They loved the things he was saying, as it goes on to show. They were moved by the things he was saying.

He spent a lot of time with them in this talking along the way here, talking about the various scriptures that were about the Messiah that they hadn't seen. Even though they were being told this they still didn't grasp it mightily on a spiritual plane as they would a little bit later.

**So, he went in to remain with them. Now it came to pass, as he sat at dinner with them, he took bread, and blessed it and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened.** Pshew! Awesome! All of a sudden, they knew who it was. Before that, they didn't. All of this transpired and took place. Again, to be there, what an incredible thing that had to be. Awesome!

**Then their eyes were opened so they could know him; and he vanished out their sight.** Again, things that human beings have never experienced, anything like this, and all of a sudden here he is, and he's gone.

Now they said to each other, **Didn't our heart burn within us while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?** So, he talked about those things. As it were, it's about opening in the mind, opening up the things that were being said, that they were beginning to grasp more of this process and why he had to suffer, because of what was being told, though they didn't grasp it on the scale they did until after Pentecost. But again, this is a beginning in a very powerful thing that they were moved by.

**Verse 33—And they rose up the same hour and returned to Jerusalem.** They weren't sticking around where they were. They were headed right back because they were moved and excited because they had now seen Joshua. Awesome! So, "they rose up the same hour." So, obviously, that's what anyone would do in that kind of circumstance and situation and want to go back and talk to the others about what had happened, what they'd seen, what they'd experienced, what he said along the way and why the Messiah had to suffer as he did. Because they hadn't known those things just by knowledge and they were going back anxious to share this knowledge with the rest.

**They rose up the same hour and returned to Jerusalem and found the eleven gathered together.** Kind of a unique way of saying something here because we're going back in time. As certain things are written they're going back. They were in a situation where eleven were gathered together. Thomas wasn't there, so who was there? It's not Judas Iscariot. He's dead. He wasn't a part.

So, for eleven to be there and Thomas wasn't there, we know the other individual who was going to be chosen in the book of Acts was there, because it's referring back here to a point that here they were, the eleven were together. There are twelve. One was going to become the apostle, be chosen as the apostle, he was there.

**...they were gathered together, all these individuals, and other disciples as well.** But those who were going to be apostles, that's who it's talking about, those who would be the apostles.

**...and those who were with them, saying, The Lord has indeed risen and appeared to Simon!** Hmm. Isn't that a funny way of putting everything together? Simon Peter. He was the other individual. Now it's making it very clear here that now he's appeared as well to Simon.

So, again here, a unique way of introducing something, of telling about something that sometimes people don't stop and think about. But again, so awesomely important, especially considering the responsibility, the position that Simon Peter was given as far as being over the apostles there, being the chief of the apostles, and then one who was called later to be over the gentiles. He was the primary apostle over the Jews, over the Jewish people, those who would be called and drawn.

Again here, it wasn't a focus on the other individual at all, in that respect, the other disciple who had been following along, when you talk about Cleopas. So again here, now it lets you know who the other individual was who was with him, and it was

Simon. Because this is the point where this is revealed. So again here, a unique way that sometimes scriptures are written.

**So, saying, Indeed the Lord, speaking of Christ, has indeed risen and has appeared to Simon. And they told about those things that were done along the way, what had been said. Obviously! Because he told them what had happened from the time of Moses about the Messiah all the way up through things that were written about Isaiah, and how he was made known to them in the breaking of bread.**

What an incredible story to tell. “We didn’t know who it was.” “Our hearts burned within us as he spoke, but we didn’t know it was him.” “Been with him all those years; we didn’t know it was him. Our minds were closed to it.” “And then as he broke bread, we could see him, we knew it was him!”

**Then, as they told this, Joshua himself stood in the midst of them and said to them, Peace be to you.** Whew! I can’t help but be moved by stories like this. I’ll tell you what, it’s just an incredibly moving story to be able to go through something like this and recognize it, how Christ revealed himself even more so to them. Things that we can read to this day by God’s spirit and be moved by, to realize as though we were there.

Because we can read about it and think, “Man! This was moving!” And what it would do to you inside, how the words he spoke because of God’s spirit would burn in your being, because of that power that’s there. Even though their minds, even though they didn’t yet have God’s spirit they were being drawn by it and there were things being revealed to them and given to them in portion along the way.

Then they were able to share it with the others. Very inspiring and uplifting to them because they didn’t know what to do. They didn’t know what was going to happen next. “Are we going to go fishing?” “What kind of work are we going to do now?” All this is happening to move them and inspire them...and inspire us.

All of a sudden, he’s standing there and saying, “Peace be to you.” So, tell you what, that would be a little moving to you right now if he were to appear right here and start speaking, you know. I mean, human beings don’t experience things like that. All of a sudden someone is manifested, it’s like, way beyond the *Star Trek* thing where you see all the lights glittering there. No, they just appear. Forget the little lights. He does it himself whenever he desires. Incredible. In a physical form though he was no longer physical.

He was spirit as God Almighty is spirit, but he manifested himself back as his physical form, just like God Almighty as Yahweh manifested Himself as an individual, as a person, a peer, if you will, to wrestle with Jacob. He wrestled with Jacob, but just a physical manifestation of a human being - not stronger than, not weaker than, but of equal because they were able to wrestle.

That’s where the example was given of what we’re to be. It wasn’t by accident. It was all by design. You are Israel, a prevailer with God. Perseverer with God. Incredible!

So, from that time forward, again, God gave the apostles then more and more and more that's written through scripture, of things we're going to go through as we continue on in the series of a process of redemption and all that's involved in it. Because to this point in time there is so much more to be revealed of what it all means and the things we're to see and appreciate and love and grab hold of in our lives, what God wants us to deeply, deeply, deeply appreciate and love what's been given to us.

We touched on some of that in a recent series entitled, *Division Versus Unity*. We're going to go back and look at a portion of it and then continue on and build upon what was said there. But it's in Corinthians, 2 Corinthians; be good to revisit some of this. Because again, to me, the building process of how God builds and molds and fashions us is an inspiring thing. And so, every once in a while, there are things like this that are given that we can go back to and build more upon it. That's how God works with us. That's an inspiring process to go through, to see.

That's why I think about sermons that are given and how they're given through time. It's been a constant building process. We have been the most richly blessed during PKG. We really have. Sometimes that's hard to grasp, how much God has poured out upon us, what we're able to see, what we're able to know. That's our strength, the truth. That's our strength. The word of God, that's where our strength is. With God's spirit it's powerful and it comes alive. It gives us focus. It gives us determination. It gives us that mind to persevere, to wrestle, if you will, and continue to fight.

But you have to be close to God and you have to stay close to God and you have to want to be close to God and you have to continue to cry out to God and be consistent in those things with God and to repent of sin and repent of sin and repent of sin whenever it is wherever it is and not let down in that. Be honest with God, be truthful with God, and God's there all along the way.

So, it was stated in that series, just before we focused on the verses we're going to once again review here, that we're given warnings about how we respond to God redeeming us from this world. Meaning that God and Christ have paid much to redeem us, to separate us, to make a difference between us and those in the world.

So again, to appreciate that, to understand that, to thank God for that. As it continued on there, these are choices we have to make to the degree we value what God has sacrificed for us, for each one of us, what God and Christ have worked to accomplish for us.

**2 Corinthians 5:17—Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, they are a new creation.** Something new that God is doing, has been over 6,000 years. We're blessed to be a part of that. Because it's about Elohim. That's the new creation. It's the purpose of everything in creation in time, from the time a spirit world was created, spirit beings were created, angelic beings, to the time a physical world, universe began to be created, expanse of things we don't grasp and comprehend, and things put in its place and made and created through that time. We don't know how long that was - vast periods of time.

Now us, the pinnacle of God's creation because it's all about Elohim, what we have opportunity to be a part of.

**They are a new creation; old things have passed away; and look, all things have become new.** What God is doing, what God is building, what God is creating within us. New! Not like we used to be, nothing like it. Something totally different.

**Now all things are of God, who has reconciled,** a compound word here "to change accordingly." So, again here, **Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself,** to change accordingly to be like Him, to have that mind, to have that same judgment. As we judge, not to judge as human beings do, so much by appearance the physical way we tend to judge and think about people and expectations we have of other human beings.

We learn that judgment is about this big pile - each one of us to point inward with all the fingers and say, "Here it is. This is what has to change. I can't change anyone else." Everyone has their own choices and decisions to make. We can be an example. We can try to be an encouragement, and on and on it goes, of things that might have an impact on other people's lives. But we are to be in the right way of thinking with God, to agree with God in matters of judgment that have to do with His way of life, primarily for ourselves first. And where perhaps given responsibility, maybe an impact on other people's lives, but to be so very careful of those things, that it be in unity and oneness with God. Not a small thing indeed.

God blesses us within a body to grow and to have this process we live through as far as reconciliation so we can change, so we can be transformed, to change according to God, become godlike.

"Us to Himself," to become like God, godlike, filled with His spirit, filled with agape, God's love, more of that in our lives, in our thinking, rather than selfish human love that benefits self and what we can get in return. Because that's how human beings are. We will love but we can expect something in return.

God's way of giving isn't like that. It's not to get something back though it comes back to Him thousands and thousands and thousands-fold over because of that way of life. It's automatic.

**...to Himself through Joshua the Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation.** So, what a blessing that God gives us that. We have Sabbath after Sabbath, Holy Day to Holy Day. It's a way to bring us into one with God, a process of reconciliation with God.

**...that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself.** That's been God's purpose before anything was ever created. That's why it's so awesome to see this process, things like we've gone through in Jacob's life and why he was given the name Israel and why he was separated for a time and came back and then wrestled with God (in human form). All these different examples that have happened through time.

**...reconciled the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them.** Because that's what has to be done. From the time of Adam and Eve, what have people done? Sinned. God made us selfish by nature.

Soon as you're born, you're physical by design by purpose, to experience a mind, the mind of the one who rebelled against Him from the beginning, the adversary of God, the one who has fought against God ever since that time. The adversary, the opponent of God, to fight against God. Incredible to understand that, who he is.

And yet God has made us that way with that kind of thinking. It's an inward selfish, selfish thinking. God isn't like that. He made us this way by design and then in His time He chooses when to open people's minds so they can begin to see that and begin to see and have opportunity to make a choice for that which is so much greater. God.

But we have to live this first so we can come to hate it, so we can come to loathe it, so we'll never have that mind within us, and if we're ever able to see selfishness like what happens in us and we see it more and more, we'll come to detest it more and more and we'll see the author of it, the author of it all, and loathe that mind, that thinking that would dare to fight against the Great God of the universe, that would dare to oppose the Great God of the universe. He gives us the opportunity instead to embrace Him and His way of life. Choices.

That's why it's such an awesome thing to understand and marvel, to recognize that there are going to be a lot of people in time who don't want it, who will never, never, never want God's way of life, just as there has been in the Church over time. Though still physical in adverse conditions, because it's not in God's world yet, in the sense of God's government reigning and ruling on the earth, which will make it easier, better, the choices, the ability to do various things. But still there are going to be people still when it's all said and done, just don't want it. It's not their mind. It's not what they desire. That's fine. That's a choice.

It has to be that way. It can't be any other way. It's an incredible thing to understand, and why that can never be allowed in the family of God, to have that kind of power. So, it's so adverse it can't happen, but by design isn't to happen anyway. People have to make choices.

**...reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them.** This had to happen. So, from the time of Adam and Eve and everybody sinning something had to be done in order to bring us back to God, to be able to return to God or come to God or ever how you want to phrase it. It's a matter of being steeped in selfishness until the time that God begins to work with you to free you from that, free you from Egypt. We've had such a blessing to be called out of Egypt, spiritual Egypt, to where God doesn't impute our trespasses, our sins to us. That's why we had to have Christ.

**...and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.** So, everything about the word of God is about His plan and His purpose of our being able to become a part of Elohim. Incredible! It's all about redemption, a lifelong process. Redemption is a lifelong process. It doesn't happen overnight. It takes a lot of time, a lot of sacrifice, a lot of spilling of Christ's blood to the earth over and over and over again, in a sense,

if you understand what I'm saying. Because our sins, that's the payment we have. God has blessed us with that. Awesome!

**Verse 20.** So, this matter of reconciliation, again, is a matter of coming into unity, oneness with God. **Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.** So again, it's a matter of a choice, be reconciled to God. Is that something we want? Are we going to fight for it?

**For He made...** Again, this verse is poorly written. It says here, most translations, "For He made him who knew no sin to be sin for us." Which isn't what happened. He was never sin. He paid for sin. He paid the penalty for our sins, but he was never made sin. "...that we might become the righteousness of God in him."

As was explained, going back to that particular series, **For He was made sin for us who knew no sin.** That's, again, awkward the way it's stated there as far as the English language is concerned. It's all about reconciliation. The previous verses are all about reconciliation. That's what it's talking about, that process.

So, as was talked about before, the right translation, **For He made sin,** the word here, again, most often translated as "to bring forth; brought forth." So, brought it to the forefront. Sin, it had to be dealt with. That's what it's talking about here. Sin had to be brought to the forefront, it has to be dealt with because otherwise, we're dead. The penalty.

Christ brought it to the forefront, how to be reconciled to God. The previous verses, that's the context. So, in this case here understanding that Christ brought forth, made or did something to sin. Paid the penalty for it.

The last part of the phrase is important as well, again, **For He has made,** or again, brought forth, as it is, **sin for us.** The word "for" here is used in a figurative sense in the Greek to mean, "for the sake of or concerning and/or on the behalf of." So, on the behalf of sin, concerning sin, it had to be brought to the forefront so we'd know how God is redeeming us and reconciling us, if you will.

It's best translated **For he has made (brought forth) sin on behalf of us (concerning us) for the sake of us.** It's about Christ being our Passover and the purpose that God has given in that. In other words, he paid the price for sin.

Well, since I messed up with time, I'm going to stop here a little bit. I mentioned earlier to this group here that's meeting here in Arizona I thought we were a little bit different in time by an hour and I messed up and reservations are hard to find at some places. So again, remember some of the distancing things and public and protect yourselves because this stuff is not over with.

Going to be reading some news articles perhaps next week. This stuff just continues on and on and on and continues to mutate and it's nothing to mess around with, in one respect. And in that regard, we have to try to do our part. God gives us a responsibility to strive to do our part the best we can under the circumstances. He's always there to protect us. Always there to watch over us. Always there to help us

and give us favor, but there are things that we have to do along the way. So, remember that as we go through this little journey here of things we're experiencing right now with the COVID, and be careful. Do your part. Be wise.