

There is much information in God's word concerning this season of the year with Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread and we've focused on this season in a lot of different ways over the past many years because of this. We've gone in depth with the book of Exodus all the way preceding the actual Passover there and going through the exodus itself and then of course we've gone through the story flow as it unfolds in the New Testament as well concerning this season of the year, concerning Passover especially, and we're going to take a similar journey this season. We're going to go a little farther back though preceding Passover. It's really interesting, some of the things leading up to Passover. We're going to follow much that is covered in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John...in the gospels; and discuss some of the things preceding Passover and then the Passover period itself. We'll also go into some of the things of Exodus.

Every year when we cover a subject like this we're going to cover some of the same material but we're going to continue to add to it as God continues to add to our understanding. And again, there's so much on this subject anyway, you can't cover it all. I've had sermons... I remember one sermon series that we went through consisted of 7 sermons and we barely scratched the surface covering some of the flow of everything.

This current sermon series will run right through this season of Passover starting today and then the 1st Holy Day and the last Holy Day and the following Sabbath as well. This sermon is entitled: *This World's Passover* with today being *Part 1*.

We're going to begin with the story as it starts to unfold in preparation for this particular period, God's prophetic Passover, to be fulfilled because these things about the prophecy and so forth about Passover go clear back; so much of its contained in the book of Exodus and things that Jesus Christ fulfilled later on. We're going to go back there and cover it in depth. And just to let you know that sometimes when you try to follow a chronology on the gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, what are called the 'Harmony of the Gospels' and so forth... some of those are accurate to a point but there are a lot of things they don't understand because they have a story flow in a lot of cases wrong; primarily because they're trying to squeeze some things into a period of time that leads up to what they call 'good Friday', because they don't understand that Jesus Christ didn't die on Friday. So the timing of some of these events is lost when you go through some of the 'Harmony of the Gospels'...especially some of the importance as you'll find as we go a little farther into this. To me, it's really exciting and inspiring regarding how Jesus Christ fulfilled specific things in the Bible and you'll see as we go along here what I'm talking about. It's amazing when you go through some of the chronologies that are given by different "experts" out there that don't really know a whole lot in some cases because they don't understand the Holy Days in the Bible, they don't acknowledge them, they don't acknowledge God's Sabbaths and so it causes them a lot of confusion.

There is one account in particular that we're going to come into that's especially irritating to me because it speaks of...they call it, 'The Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem' when it's talking about when He came in on a colt and it talks about Him coming in on Sunday morning, typically so they fit that into Sunday, and they are off base – a lot. We'll cover some of those things, but there are things like that that just irritate the tar out of me when I read that because they try to squeeze everything into the understanding that they have about a Friday burial and Sunday morning resurrection.

Let's begin the story in **Luke 17**. We're cutting into a point in time here. It's amazing to me how much there is that you're going to find out here just a few days before Passover that's actually contained in scriptures here. There's a lot that's contained here that has to do with a period of time that's a couple of weeks before this final Passover for Christ. And this story here begins at a point in time when Jesus and His disciples are in a city north of Jerusalem called Ephraim. In **Luke 17:11** it says - **And it came to pass, as He went to Jerusalem, and He passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee.** So it's kind of an unusual direction here but He was going to Jerusalem, before the disciples even understood what was going on, He knew it was time. He knew it was time to begin the journey there and some of the things that God was going to accomplish and do in and through Him. And so He actually takes a bit of a, if you look at the map and take a look at the area there, He doesn't head straight back toward Jerusalem; He actually heads up in an area northeast of where they were located and literally through the area called Samaria and then up to Galilee and then started His journey back down. It says, **And as He entered into a certain village,** they followed kind of along the Jordan River there all the way down until they cut over toward Jerusalem.

But it says here, **And as He entered into a certain village there met Him ten men who were lepers which stood afar off: And they lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us. And when He saw them, He said unto them, Go show yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed.** So this is just bringing in a bit of the story showing that this is where the journey begins. Before this time He was preaching in that particular area and teaching the disciples and there are a few accounts of some of the things that were covered there. But here's an account now where He's actually starting a journey; the timeline, things are beginning to count down, preparation for Passover and so forth and this is one of the first great miracles then that begins to follow along this process here of what He was covering.

And He said, Go to the priests and show yourselves unto them. And it came to pass as they went they were cleansed. And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God; so just as a matter through obedience the process began and they were going to show themselves to the priests and the one, in that respect, turned around and it says, he glorified God because he saw what had happened. And it says, **and he fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks: and he was a Samaritan.** Amazing here; it wasn't anyone of Judaism, it was one of Samaria, a Samaritan as it says here...**and Jesus answering said, Were there not ten who were cleansed? But where are the nine?** This is hard to imagine... here you have these lepers receiving healing from God and only one of them turns around in response to God and acknowledges Jesus Christ, thanks Him for what took place and here it turns out to be a Samaritan on top of that. So, an incredible story here in that respect; lessons that you can glean from things like this.

Going on here... **There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger. And He said unto him, Arise, go your way: your faith has made you whole.** So again here, because of an act of obedience here and they recognized Jesus Christ because of His teachings and so forth in that area and they had that basic belief there. Not like we do. It's not like being called. You know, there's a difference here. Sometimes people read things like this and they think, "Well, this is equivalent to someone who's being called and their mind is opened up to all the truth of God." That's not it. It's only a portion, a portion of ability to grasp and comprehend something. They were drawn to Him. It's really interesting too because throughout the region John the Baptist had done some preparation by what he was preaching about regarding the Messiah coming... it began to be more on the minds of people and because of the oppression of the Roman government at that time...it wasn't too long after that, 40 more

year down the road and because of that oppression it became exceptionally strong upon the people of that region of the world and Jerusalem especially and they began to be wiped out, including the city of Jerusalem itself. And that's how the area of Masada became well known, because of people hiding out in that region and then they finally most of them committed suicide. Incredible history of things that took place there: so it was on the minds of people that they needed deliverance, and you go through the history of Israel over and over again and they'd have captivity and when they were captive and were being oppressed...what do they do? They turn to God. All of a sudden there's a desire to look to God, to want a Messiah – especially the Messiah because of the promises in the Old Testament which meant that they were going to be delivered from any foreign government, any foreign rule and so they had a desire then. And so God used a particular time frame here and stirred up people's minds just like He's doing today, more and more...

I remember a few years ago when I was writing the last book here. Before that period of time it wasn't so much in society that people were thinking about 2012 like they are today because of some of the things written out there that make people wonder...not what we've written, not what we have out there...but you talk about the Mayan calendar, things of that nature, Nostradamus and there's more excitement about some of those things that are written out there and so people are delving into that, but it's all happening for a purpose and for a reason; that there are those things that God, working with mankind, preparing mankind...there is that which is being broadcast in a sense that people are being drawn that's taking place there in their minds, a curiosity. And so whereas five years ago it wasn't being talked about much by people, it's more on the minds of people today. Something is happening; what's going on...? We had an interesting conversation with an individual before we came here and (not in the Church, just a person in the world here in New Zealand), talking to the fellow and we had an incredible conversation about this world and what's getting ready to take place...how that he feels that something's getting ready to happen. They don't understand what necessarily but this is the same kind of thing that was in the air as Jesus Christ approached Passover. People were really, especially because of what John the Baptist had done and some of the stories that were going around about various miracles and the name of Jesus Christ going around that people were looking for things to happen.

And so here's a good account – these lepers. They'd heard stories already and so they wanted to know and they wanted to have understanding – but it's not to the point of someone having their mind opened up and being *called* into the Church. I hope you understand there's a big difference there. God has worked through people through time and worked with situations in history where people haven't been called to be worked with specifically. You can find that in the Bible over and over again.

Christ says, 'weren't there 10 cleansed so where are the other 9?' And only one returned to give God thanks. Good lesson in this too for us to always remember as well. How much do we acknowledge and understand how much God has given to us? You know you need to do that on a regular basis. We have been so incredibly blessed – far more than those lepers. If you understand it...we have been blessed *far, far, FAR more* than those lepers. Being physically healed of something is *minor* in comparison to what God has given us through the power of His holy spirit to have the opportunity of a begetting of God's spirit, the opportunity to have a process begin in us whereby in time we're going to actually have the opportunity of being born into God's Family. There is nothing greater than that. That process that begins in us where God blesses us with an impregnation of His spirit, where literally we're a part of an embryo, we're growing, waiting for a time that we're going to be born into God's Family, into God's Kingdom.

Thinking about some of that this morning here as we were walking around in the kind of a botanical garden back over here by the lake of how blessed we are, how much God has given to us. And those are things we need to think about from time to time. It's easy to get distracted and get your mind on your problems, your trials, your hardships, your physical problems and so forth and not to be focused on the spiritual of what this is all about and what God has called us to...*especially* with an attitude of gratitude, of thankfulness. Gratitude always! Being grateful and thankful to God – giving God thanks. I hope our prayers contain a lot of that – thankfulness to God, because if you're not thinking about it you're not acknowledging it in that respect, you're not really filled with the excitement and the fullness of that. It's something you have to think about and you need to think about...we need to think from time to time of what God has blessed us with, what we have, how great a treasure and a blessing we have because sometimes when we come into the Church and we live it year by year by year by year – especially those who've been around a lot longer...you know it can be a dangerous thing. We've seen that in the Church where we get to a point where it's just a way of life with us.

That's why I think about the Millennium. To understand there are going to be people born in time, that the norm for them is to have the God Family on earth. It's just going to be their norm and they're not going to be as dumbfounded and as impressed by that because they've grown up with it. Something you grow up with – sometimes it's more difficult to realize or grasp what you really have. And just like people who are blessed to live in the scattered nations of Israel...because we've grown up with what we have we don't recognize sometimes how blessed we are, how much of the world doesn't have *what we have*. Not because of how great we are, but because of God's blessings that He's passed down from Abraham...blessings of wealth and prosperity in this world. And there are a lot of nations in this world that don't come *close* to having the kind of prosperity we have and sometimes we think we have it really bad. And sometimes... depends on what your measure is, of what your classification of bad is.

Let's go on here to **John 11**. So again, this is just the beginning of the journey; picking this up because this starts showing here where the journey began, passing out from that area of Ephraim, the city of Ephraim, the little town of Ephraim, whatever: and again going through Samaria to Galilee and finally we come to this story here now, or we're coming to this story here. It says **there was a certain man named Lazarus that was sick, and he was of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha**. So now this is an area down toward the bottom, if you go down the map from the Sea of Galilee; there's the Jordan River between there and the Dead Sea, and as you come in a little way from the bottom of the area of the Jordan River right where the Dead Sea connects there, and if you start going inward toward the west you're heading kind of toward Jerusalem there. It's a little bit south but you're heading toward Jerusalem. Well, just before that, if you go in a little ways from the Dead Sea and come up a little ways toward Jerusalem there's this little town of Bethany. So it's located really close to Jerusalem there as you're going to see here in a little bit; but it's part of this journey here down toward Jerusalem, not going into Jerusalem...we'll get to that in time here, not even in Bethany yet, but we'll pick up the story here.

So it's talking about Lazarus and it says, **verse 2 - (It was that Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.)** So on this occasion here it's reminding us what the family connection is here. Later on it talks about some of this and you have to know the time sequence but I'll bring all those in when we come to it. But again, we're familiar with this particular story here.

Verse 3 - Therefore his sisters sent for Him, sent for Jesus, saying, Lord, behold, he whom you love is sick. And when Jesus heard that, He said, This sickness is not unto death, Now you have to understand

here - He isn't in Bethany. He is starting a journey having left going through Samaria to Galilee and then going down kind of along the Jordan River area. This is how He's going to be travelling down toward Bethany first; and here Lazarus, his two sisters Mary and Martha are down there, and Lazarus is very sick, near to death. And so in this particular case here the sisters sent for Christ and wanted Him to be there, wanted Him to intervene to save him from dying and so they sent a message. They didn't go, they sent word. So they sent some servants, someone up to an area where they thought that Jesus Christ would be toward Galilee and it doesn't say exactly the exact location where they finally met, but Jesus just responded this way when He finally received this word; not from the sisters directly face to face because they stayed with their brother. They stayed there in Bethany, but they'd sent someone else.

So it says ...**his sisters sent for Him**, sent for Jesus, **saying, Lord, he whom you love is sick.** And again, **When Jesus heard that, He said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.** Incredible here the things that... it's hard for us to grasp and comprehend sometimes Jesus Christ; to grasp and comprehend the mind of Christ; to grasp and comprehend those things that He knew. He knew. There were things that God gave Him through the power of His spirit because of that relationship and because of that mind that was in Christ in ways that I've mentioned in many times in times past we can only imbibe of. We drink in of that mind, but we don't have it living in us to that extent in the way Christ did. From the very beginning of life Christ had that mind, that life within Him. He grew up with that mind in Him, the word that was made flesh...something that's very difficult even with God's spirit to fully appreciate and grasp and comprehend the difference that was in His life as a part of His life, in other words...and fully physical, fully human, but filled with the mind of God. And there are those things then that God just gave to Him as a matter of knowing.

We experience that from time to time. I've been blessed over the years to experience that more and more. You don't experience it all the time, but when there's a need, there's a purpose – there are times that God just gives you the knowing – it's in your mind. It's not something you think up, it's not something you imagine, it's just given to you. All the things of prophecy that have come, all the things that have to do with timing of various things here of what we're doing and why we're doing it...I don't understand it all, but I know we're supposed to be doing it. Just like preparation here for baptisms that are coming up; where can you turn in scriptures and say, "This is going to take place specifically," unless you are given certain things by God and He gives you certain scriptures to go to to understand what's being said and what the greater purpose is. But again, it's just there are things you're given as a knowing...just as much as when you were first called and what God gave to you in your mind when you understood the Sabbath and the Holy Days and you started understanding a 7,100 year plan of God for mankind. Just as much as that knowing you were given when you couldn't, you couldn't prove it by scripture...in some cases you heard it from someone else. Some cases you may have heard someone on TV or radio (if some of you have been around longer, a lot longer) or you maybe heard a friend tell you; and it's not because you had understanding of God's word in the Bible...because sometimes those things actually hurt when we think we have understanding and all of a sudden it's just something you just know and you're excited about it and you want to share it with somebody else and they don't get it – they don't see what you see but there's just that knowing, and this was magnified in Christ many, many, many times over in a very powerful way.

And so He *knew why* Lazarus was sick. He didn't have to be there. He *knew* what was going to happen. He *knew* what was going to take place. There are specific words He spoke for a great purpose – **that this is not unto death.** Okay? ...**that God be glorified.** Because as the story goes on you know full well he

died, so what's He talking about? Well, it's because of what was going to follow and what was going to be accomplished and so that people might begin to see some awesome, some incredible things take place here before the actual Passover; the event of the Passover and the death of Jesus Christ. In a very powerful way a great witness that was going to be given here toward the end of a lot of miracles and things that God was going to accomplish here just at the very end.

Just like with us. That's why I marvel sometimes. We've gone through quite a process because there was that time when we have felt and believed that the final 3½ years is going to be almost to the point of nuclear explosions going off right on the first day. 3½ years from the time of Christ's return, backing up...and yet it's not happening that way, it hasn't happened that way and God thankfully... you know we prayed about some of those things anyway, but God even led us to that because it wasn't God's purpose to do those things. And so there are things that people have commented on when they write in, or whatever and it's like a mocking that takes place..."Well, why aren't you calling down this plague, or that plague; or why don't you do this or do that." And they don't understand that most of those things do not happen until *nearly the very end*. They don't start happening until after the 5th Trumpet even. A lot of the things that are going to take place as far as the Church is concerned, as far as two witnesses are concerned is not until toward the very end when God begins to perform greater obvious miracles that are going to be accomplished. And so, again here...How do I know? How do you know? Same thing as when you were first called and God just gave you the knowing. And if you understand how God works in the Church there's just that which God gives and Jesus Christ was filled with this is a very powerful way, in ways that it's hard for us to comprehend. I understand it in a greater way now than I did a few years ago because of what I've experienced in some of those things. And by sharing that I think we come to a greater understanding as well.

So He said; **this is not unto death, but for the glory of God**. And what happens in the future is for the glory of God, of turning people to God. It's not about us. We're blessed to share in it, but it's not about us individually, whether it be any one of us or all of us together in what we're going to be doing. It's about what God is doing and why God is doing it in the world and we're blessed to be a part of it, to share in it.

Going on here in **verse 6 – and when He had heard therefore that he was sick, He continued two days longer in the same place where He was**. He wasn't... it wasn't like, "I've got to be there! I've got to be there on the spot. People have to see this." No, He just stayed there for two more days right where He was where they came and gave Him the message. He wasn't in a hurry to get down there. Stayed right there two days longer in the same place where He was.

Verse 7 - Then after that He said to His disciples, now this is where He begins to let them know where they're headed. **Let's go to Judea again**. ...meaning Jerusalem. They understood what He meant by that when He said Judea; other places talk about Jerusalem. It's kind of interesting when you have four different accounts in the Bible here of people writing in the gospels here – all witness of the same kind of events with Jesus Christ, things that He spoke and yet they wrote from their perspective of how they heard and what they heard. Sometimes people bring up that there's contradictions of what was written when Pilate had it written out there, the placard or whatever, at the death of Jesus Christ – of the different things that were said on it – because they say that different things were written. But people don't understand that in some cases it was actually that there were certain things that were written in different languages and it wasn't just one thing said. And so they're given the interpretation of those things, or what it is in the language they're speaking in, but there were different things written because it was written in different languages, specifically how it was stated.

Then after that He said to His disciples, Let us go into Judea again. And His disciples said unto Him, Master, lately the Jews have been seeking to stone you and are you going there again? Why are you going back down there? Here they want to kill you...they want to stone you and you want to go back down there? ...type of thing. It wasn't exactly in that attitude but it was close. Why are you wanting to go someplace where they're wanting to stone you? And that becomes important as we go on here as well, all the stories as they begin to be put together.

Let's go back over to Matthew momentarily and pick up some more. **Matthew 19** – so, we're following a timeline here and between the books here it keeps jumping back and forth bringing in little sections. One will speak about one thing whereas three others don't speak about a particular incident and so there's a chronology here of events and putting them all together here in the way that is indeed the most accurate, in the best flow.

So again here, at this point in time here from this point on Jesus Christ... there are a lot of parables that began to be recorded, different miracles; that they began to increase more and more. **Matthew 19:1 - And it came to pass, that when Jesus had finished these sayings, He departed from Galilee, and came into the coasts of Judea beyond/on the other side of Jordan;** And so again here it's just this continuation of the journey. Now it's bringing in the fact that it was from the area of Galilee down on the other side of Jordan all the way down the Jordan. It tells exactly the journey, the way they were coming and it says; **And great multitudes followed Him;** so already things had gone out. He'd sent out the pairs we talked about here a Sabbath or two ago, (I can't remember exactly when, but a few Sabbath's ago) talking about the 70 and how that they had teamed up. This was way in advance; and so the different ways that this message continued to spread of what was taking place and so it says, **and there are multitudes that followed Him; and** it talks about how **He healed them there.** Different ones who followed Him. A desire to be healed because it began to go out – miracles that were being performed, of healings that were taking place. Here we just had an account of 10 lepers – what does that do? Stirs up a lot of people. They have a problem, they have a weakness – they want to be healed – they know these individuals and now they see them whole? What kind of an effect would that have on society and little towns along the way and different ones were... and that's exactly what took place and throngs of people began to follow Him. They had a desire to be healed or someone that they knew to be healed and so forth; and just the inquisitiveness there, the desire to see Him.

And then in **verse 3** it says - **The Pharisees also came,** you know the reasons why they always came along – it wasn't good. And it says, **the Pharisees came also/also came unto Him, tempting Him,** wanting to trip Him up in front of the people, wanting to embarrass Him, to put Him down in other words. That was the way they functioned; that was the way they worked. They didn't want Him to have any credibility so they were trying to trick Him by different things, asking various kinds of questions that they thought for sure that they'd be able to corner Him on, that people'd be able to look upon Him and say, "Oh yeah..." and similar things taking place today. Says **...tempting Him and said unto Him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?** And so again, it goes into the things that are covered in that, but let's drop on down here in the story flow.

Matthew 20:17 – Again, in all these different books we're going to keep going forward piecing together the story as the journey takes place. **Matthew 20:17 - And as Jesus was going up to Jerusalem He took the twelve disciples apart along the way, and said unto them, Behold, we're going up to Jerusalem;** and now He's adding a little bit more. He told them earlier, 'We're going to Judea.' And it was like...Why do you want to do that – here they're wanting to stone you? Why would you want to go

back? And now He's being more specific with them but they didn't get it. They didn't understand. They had no comprehension what was going to take place, what was coming. **And Jesus, it says, was going up to Jerusalem. He took the twelve disciples apart along the way,** in other words on this journey, **and said unto them; Behold, we're going up to Jerusalem and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn Him to death, And shall deliver Him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to kill Him on a tree,** in other words a stake, a pole: **on the third day He shall rise again.** So, again here, He's telling the disciples what's going to take place and *they did not understand what He was saying.* They did not comprehend it was about Him going into Jerusalem and that He was going to die. It didn't click. It's like you trying to tell someone, whom God is not calling, trying to help them to understand about The Last Great Day, a second death; that man can die twice because man's going to live twice. Now some people out of curiosity might be interested in part of the story but they *don't get it like you get it.* They can't put together the plan of God from Passover going through the receiving of God's spirit – how that they're going to be people resurrected into the God Family. Even that alone – that there are going to be people in the God Family. People can hear those things but they *don't get it like you get it.* They don't *see it like you see it.*

And here at this point in time the disciples couldn't see what Jesus Christ was telling them. It even gives accounts later on where it talks about afterwards they remembered back to what He said; they remembered the words that He spoke – and all these things that were written were written later on as they went back and pieced together the story flow in their own mind and their own recollection of how it took place. Just like the journey...Matthew wrote about part of this journey in one way in his own terms, used different locations to describe along the way. Because they didn't sit down beside each other and say, asking John – “Okay John, what are you going to say about this incident?” They did it on their own when they wrote and they were a witness of those events that agree fully in God's word about the life and the death of Jesus Christ.

Let's turn over to Mark's account on this. **Mark 10** – Again, just showing here a little bit of the difference in how different ones spoke of these events, how it's written of in Mark. That was Matthew – this is Mark's account. **Verse 33** – and this is Jesus Christ speaking...**Behold we're going up to Jerusalem and the Son of Man shall be delivered unto the chief priest and unto the scribes and they shall condemn Him to death.** Again, stated a little bit differently, but still bringing out the point He's going to die. **...shall condemn Him to death and shall deliver Him to the Gentiles. And they shall mock Him,** so He's telling what's taking place, what's going to take place here. The Romans are going to put Him to death – going to be delivered to Gentiles. So it's the scribes and the Pharisees who are behind this, they're responsible for this and they're going to deliver Him over to the Gentiles, to the Romans, to put Him to death. Basically what He's telling them. **And they shall mock Him and shall scourge Him, and shall spit upon Him, and shall kill Him: and the third day He shall rise again.** Now it's kind of hard for us as we maybe read through a story like this and you think, here are the disciples and Jesus Christ is talking to them and He's telling them this: they're going to kill Him. Use the words! Put Him to death! Going to hang Him on a tree, on a pole, on a stake! There are different accounts of different words here as they recount, as they describe it in what they heard and what they took in. And then adding this above and beyond Matthew's account...**and on the third day He shall rise again.** They didn't understand it was about the death of Christ, that He was going into Jerusalem to be put to death and then in three days He's going to be resurrected.

You know, when Jesus Christ died it's an incredible story...and you go into the account there and they didn't even know what to do; talked about fishermen... What are they going to do? Go back to fishing? That's what they know. Whatever you've done in the past, whatever you're good at – He's gone – what

are we going to do? And that's basically the state they were in. They had no idea He was going to be resurrected. They had no idea when they went to the tomb that Sunday morning what they were going to find. They were dumbfounded! You know, you find Thomas, who even after He was told about it and different ones said, "We saw Him!" ...who still didn't believe it. Jesus Christ finally had to tell Him, "Thomas stick your hand in My side! It's Me!" Amazing!

Luke's account – **Luke 18:31** – again, says **He called the twelve, and said to them, Behold, we're going up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written in the prophets** so this is even added, a little more to the story. Jesus Christ was telling them, this account, these things that are going to take place – it's written in the book of the prophets and so when you go through and you read various accounts here later on in some of your Bibles, it'll give different little letters there maybe if you have that little margin in the middle it gives different scriptures of the Bible...so many of those places it gives (if you have that type of Bible). I have one of those, right down the center of my margin here all these little scriptures all over the Bible and the little letters beside a particular part of a verse, and it'll tell you what scripture, what other area might be speaking about the same thing, but especially when you go through the story of the disciples here, an account like this or various things that were fulfilled prophetically – you'll find those verses all over the Old Testament, different prophecies that were fulfilled in Christ's life. When you go through those things you're going to go through all the books of the prophets as a whole because there are things about the life of Christ that are recorded and talked about over and over again in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John – filled with things. And this is what Christ was telling them... **all things that are written in the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished**. It's going to be fulfilled. Now you'd think that... sometimes you're talking to someone about what you believe and maybe you feel at times here, and sometimes people do receive a little bit here and there, but that you're getting through to them or whatever – sometimes it's just wishful thinking. Sometimes people are just kind and listen; and sometimes people are curious because they see a little bit here and there, *but they do not see what you see* because it's spiritual. It has to be given by God's spirit. The disciples were *unable* to grasp what Christ was saying because it's communicated by God's spirit. You can't figure it out. You can't work it out. You can't study it out. It's something that God has to give in your mind through the power of His spirit. It's an awesome thing to understand.

Then it goes on to say here; what's written in the prophets is going to be accomplished, it's going to be fulfilled... and **He shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully mistreated, and spit upon: And they shall scourge Him, and put Him to death: and the third day He shall rise again. And they didn't understand any of these things:** now to me that's dumbfounding. Thinking of all twelve of the disciples that are listening to Jesus Christ tell them something like this, of this magnitude and they could not piece it together – it was like this veil over their face and they couldn't see. Incredible! **And they didn't understand any of these things and this saying was hidden from them**, they couldn't see it, they couldn't know it unless God were to give it to them. There are just those things that people can't comprehend unless God gives it; **neither did they know of the things which were spoken**. So they couldn't see it.

So before we begin to pick up the story of Lazarus again, because you have to realize the chronology here and different things that are being spoken and different things that are being said along the journey here – that's what we're covering. And you'll see as we go along here that it has greater meaning, it has greater importance when you recognize the timing of the various things that God was doing and why God was doing it and why Jesus Christ was fulfilling so much of this along the way.

Let's notice a couple more events before we get back to Lazarus here. Let's notice the event here that took place while in the area of Jericho. So again, we're coming down...you remember the Israelites crossed over the area of Jericho when they were coming from the east and going to cross over the Jordan River to come into the promised land. This is the area where they came in, where you have the Sea of Galilee to the north, the Dead Sea to the south and in between there is the Jordan River and it's the Israelites when they were coming in – that's the direction they came into; they came up around the end of the Dead Sea there, up out of the nation of Jordan today. Some of the flat areas, if you know the region around Petra close to those mountains in there to the east...they came up by those mountains and they came in then above the Dead Sea across the Jordan River and right there is Jericho, the city of Jericho – where the walls came down.

That's one place I wanted to see when we were over there at one time but I didn't realize it was a part of the West Bank area, and what was referred to as that, because I wanted to see the agriculture that time of year because it was around Passover – the first time we went there. But I didn't go in that area because of the problems there. It's an area you don't want to travel in as a whole, renting a car and driving in on your own. But I wanted to go there because there are areas there that are a little below sea level. You know the Dead Sea is lower. And the reason for that is because there are some things when you go into scriptures there when you talk about knowledge about the counting from the wave sheaf up to the time when we talk about keeping Pentecost – how to count Pentecost. There are a lot of people that have had a lot of misunderstandings there about when the Israelites came into that part of the land that they couldn't start the harvest until after the wave sheaf. And a part of what I've written about Pentecost was to show that they started the harvest well before the wave sheaf ever started. What the Israelites were told is they couldn't partake of *that* harvest until the offering of the wave sheaf. It wasn't that... but Judaism has it, a lot of Judaism has it this way, and a lot of people in times past in the Church had this concept in mind that somehow everything was going to get ripe at a certain time and it would happen right after Passover, right at the time of the wave sheaf; you go in and cut the sheaf – offer it up before God and then you can go in and harvest. Totally false! There was a great harvest that had already taken place in large part before they ever came into the Promised Land there and it's about when you can start partaking of that harvest that God was commanding them and giving them instruction. But anyway, that's one reason I wanted to see that because I saw enough up on the higher areas; because things that are lower like that where it's warmer, it's hotter, it's going to ripen faster than what's up higher in the higher elevations. So I kind of wanted to see that but I already saw it higher up – they'd already had harvest by the time Passover came. There are great areas of fields and so forth that had already been harvested well before Passover ever took place. But anyway, personal interest of mine at that point in time. Things that people don't have knowledge of because they don't know what it's like. People who write books living here in the United States who've never been over there, of people that don't have understanding. You'd think especially in Judaism they should have some understanding of those things, but they don't.

Mark 10:46 - While in the area of Jericho here this was where this was taking place. It says this is where they came to Jericho. **Verse 46 - And they came to Jericho: and as He went out of Jericho with His disciples**, and so here they'd spent a little... just right through the area there it says, **a great number of people**, speaking of a great number of people along with the disciples; **blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by the side of the highway begging. And when he had heard it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out**, there are actually two there, but it's in another account – but this is the main one that's focused on here... **began to cry out and say, Jesus, You son of David**, so already there is this recognition, the story is out there that this individual, The Messiah... they all understood that The Messiah had to be descended from David as far as the lineage is concerned and so this is a part of what

it's talking about. ...he says here, **Jesus, You son of David, have mercy upon me. And many charged him that he should hold his peace:** not be crying out, **and he cried all the more,** ...says a great deal! He just got louder instead of quieting down because... you know how people are sometimes, it's like, "You can't bother Him, He's a busy man, He's whatever... don't make noise like that when you're around Him." So this kind of thing that was going on here. Anyway, he just got louder and he went on to say here, **You son of David, have mercy upon me. And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called.** So He heard him and it says, **And they called the blind man, saying unto him, Be of good comfort, rise; He calls for you. And he, casting away his garment, arose, and came to Jesus. And Jesus answered and said unto him, What will you that I should do to you? The blind man said unto Him, Lord, that I might receive my sight. And Jesus said unto him, Go your way; your faith has made you whole.** What faith? It was very basic what was required, what was given to him. He believed; he said, "**You son of David...**" he believed He was the Messiah. He was given that much.

That's why I'm excited about what's getting ready to take place because people don't have to know what all of you have been brought to because you've been brought into a fellowship where you're able to, though we be small in different parts of the world, all over the world, we're small, a very small group of God's people... we have the opportunity of being brought into a fellowship, but it's unique to us. What's going to happen later is not going to be like what's happening right now to the same degree where you've had time to get on the website; you've had time to read both books; you've had time to read Mr. Armstrong's books – his autobiographies and whatever... and the 'Incredible Human Potential'; 'Mystery of the Ages'. You've had time to go through those things. You've had time to listen to tonnes of sermons on the internet. You've had time to read through the FAQ and the topics and all those things. There are people coming in the future here who are not going to have that kind of time. They're not going to have that same opportunity – some cases they're never going to have the opportunity – in some cases of even getting on the internet. But because of what they hear and how fast some things are going to travel, they're going to believe that Jesus Christ is returning! ...in a more powerful way than what took place here! What's getting ready to take place is going to make this look small by comparison because we're talking about the Messiah coming again. It's all about Him coming again! And God is going to glorify and make that very powerful in the minds of people and people are going to be able to come to a point where they're going to grasp and comprehend God's Sabbath – that God's Sabbath is right: that I've been lied to all my life about Sunday! They're going to understand something very basic – that it wasn't a day and a half He was in the grave – He was in the grave three days and three nights – and some people get upset when they understand they've been lied to all their life. And that's how a lot of people are going to be. "I've been lied to all my life!" ...and they're going to understand and see, and they're going to believe that Jesus Christ is returning and they're going to want to be baptized. And we're going to baptize them! They don't have to go through what you've had to go through in order to come into fellowship in the Church because God is doing something different in you and has a different purpose in a lot of those things that you'll come to understand in a greater way later on...which I could now, but it'd take over the sermon – and it's not the subject matter of the sermon.

So, to me it's awesomely exciting what's coming, and God is preparing us to be able to handle a lot of people. It's awesome! Hundreds of thousands of people...all because of this return of Jesus Christ – the coming of Jesus Christ. This event here was the coming of the Messiah the first time, but as a Passover, as a lamb to be killed. And God did some incredible things here through this process of time with Christ – glorifying Jesus Christ and glorifying God because it glorifies Himself in those things that are revealed to human beings when they come to see just a measure of God. This blind man just came to see a little measure of the power of God. He believed some of the stories he'd been hearing. He believed that He was the Messiah. He'd heard about different ones being healed – maybe even just having heard about,

because the crowds were there with Him and preceding Him – and maybe had just passed by. We don't know the timing! And maybe someone stopped along the way and told him about 10 lepers and how that one returned to give God thanks, but it was enough, whatever it was the stories he'd heard that he believed He was the Messiah and he said, **blessed You son of David**. And so he was crying out to Him and so Christ asked him, "What would you like? What do you desire?" What would a blind man desire? "I'd love to be healed. I'd love to see." Jesus Christ said, "It's yours." It's yours. Incredible! He wasn't being called to be a part of the Church. He had an opportunity of something very physical happening in life to give God glory, to glorify the Messiah.

So it says, **immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus along the way**. Can you imagine? Here's someone that couldn't see and now he can see. Would you want to be close to that individual? Would you want to see the rest of what's going to take place? Would you like to travel with the rest of the crowd...be with them to see what's taking place? ...and have a greater understanding at a point in time, "He is the Messiah... I'm proof of that. I can see. No one else can command sight to be given, but I can see." Incredible things: sometimes we just read through a story and we don't think about the magnitude of what's taking place here...that what's more awesome to me is all these events that are taking place preceding His coming into Jerusalem.

How awesome these things are! How awesome it is, the things leading up to going into Jerusalem before He even goes into Jerusalem. Some of the events that took place – all because God wants to magnify this moment in time. God magnifies this moment in time in a very powerful way, He truly does – all the things that are written throughout all four books here from the moment we started here on some of these chapters – all leading up to and just happening at the very end...happening toward the end.

Let's go on to **Luke 19**. And so again, this individual, blind man, obviously wanting to follow Jesus. Now there were two actually there and it just mentions this one here as the one who followed Jesus so I don't know...some things in some of these accounts we have questions, I have questions about. I'm looking forward to hearing more of the story – what...some of these things that took place because we only have bits and pieces here and there.

But beginning in **verse 1 - And Jesus entered and passed through Jericho**. Same event...**And, behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus**, so here's an account here of another situation that happened. So He passed through Jericho and this man named Zacchaeus **who was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich**. I like how this is stated here. **And he sought to see who Jesus was; and could not for the press because of the people, the masses of people**. Amazing what was taking place here. There are so many people around Christ and he wanted to get a closer look; he wanted to be able to see Him in a better way because **he was little in stature**. He was a small man and so he couldn't see past all these people and he wanted to get up a little higher. You got to hand it to him. You think, here this guy has such a desire to see Christ that he climbs up in a tree, and that's the story here. **And so he ran ahead**, the direction He was going, that Christ was going. **He ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him: for He was to pass that way. And when Jesus came to the place**, can you imagine? Here you stop because you see this...and you know this guys up in the tree looking because he wants to see; he wants so badly to see that he ran ahead of the whole group there, climbed up in the tree and you know, here's a wealthy man, a rich man, and he wants to see Christ so much that he did this.

And it says, **he ran before and climbed up in the sycamore tree to see Him: for He was to pass that way. And when Jesus came to that place He looked up, and saw him, and He said to him, Zacchaeus,**

quickly come on down; for today I must abide in your house. What an awesome thing! Says, I'm going to come and abide in your house today. So he wasn't going to just get the opportunity to see Him, he was going to spend some really close time with Him because He's going to spend some time in his house there. Says, **he quickly came down and received Him joyfully. And when they saw it,** the people around saw it, **they all murmured, saying, That He was going to be guest with a man who was a sinner.** Isn't that amazing how people are? Here you believe certain things – this is the Messiah, this is the Christ – different curiosity that's there of people wanting to be around. They've seen or heard about different miracles here – they want to be close to this man but not all with the right reasons, as it talks about, some were Pharisees and different groups here that were mixed together and it doesn't take too long before people find fault. Human nature...it doesn't take very long in the best of situations and circumstances in life...and you think – what an incredible opportunity in time. They didn't grasp the magnitude of what was taking place. Here is the Messiah and there are people finding fault with what He's doing. He's going to spend time with a sinner...like Jesus Christ didn't know. And the point being is they didn't grasp who they were: sinners...every one of them. They didn't grasp the magnitude of their human life and what we're like as human beings. They didn't see themselves for what they were, for who they were; instead they were self-righteous, they were filled with pride and ready to speak out and find fault. Incredible! Not all of them, but some of them.

Verse 8 - And Zacchaeus stood up, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I'll restore four times unto him. So, again here, throwing out a little bit – he wanted to perhaps do a little impressing or whatever himself, but it's something he was deeply convicted of by the way the story is written here, it's something that he believed with integrity in his life. **And Jesus said unto him, This day has salvation come to this house, for as much as he also is a son of Abraham.** Now, what does it mean...**salvation has come to this house?** Does it mean now Zacchaeus is being called into the Church? The Church hadn't even started yet. It's not what this is about.

Going on here... **for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.** So He's using an opportunity here to teach. **And as they heard these things, He added and spoke a parable, because He was near to Jerusalem,** ...He was speaking about Himself. He was speaking about the One through whom salvation was going to come. **...salvation has come to your house today...** It is an awesome thing. Zacchaeus didn't grasp and comprehend the magnitude of even though there were certain things that he saw – he wanted to see Him, but he didn't grasp fully the magnitude of what Jesus Christ was getting ready to do, that Jesus Christ was his Passover. He didn't understand these things. He didn't comprehend. And so Jesus Christ is speaking in terms of things that have to do with the reality of His importance; of who He was and what He was getting ready to fulfill.

And so again, **He spoke a parable, because He was near to Jerusalem.** So He was in Jericho on His way down. He's passed through the area of Jericho and He's on His way toward Jerusalem **...and because they thought that the Kingdom of God should immediately appear.** So there are people who were of that mind that the Messiah's coming. That's why... I don't want to get ahead of myself here in the account, but again, when the people gathered around Him they had expectations just like the disciples did, "The Messiah is coming to save us from the Roman government, from oppression, from the Roman rule that we have over us." And this was on the people's minds and they thought that the Kingdom of God was going to be established very soon now and so that's why they were crying out to Christ like they were. If He is the Messiah He's going to bring us deliverance from the Roman government, from the Roman rule. And that's not what this was about at all. He was coming to die.

And so He gave this parable. **He said unto them, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for Himself a Kingdom, and to return.** Amazing! **And He called His ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said to them, Occupy till I come.** So again here, you can go and read the rest of the parable here. You know the story of the parable of the pounds, if you don't, you can read it. But again here He used this occasion here to teach something about the Kingdom of God and a certain nobleman who went into a far country. There are things about Himself that He taught and what He was going to be doing and that there would be that left behind that others would need to do when talking even about the Church and what was going to be given in people's lives and how we should use what God gives to us that we might increase above and beyond; that we're not to remain dormant and stagnant. That's why we talk about some of those things. We can't straddle a fence, we can't just kind of wait – we have to be active. We have to... if God gives us certain blessings and gifts of His way of life, of the mind to understand, then God wants us to work on those things and most of that work has to do with self, conquering and overcoming and growing spiritually, yielding ourselves to the very purpose Jesus Christ was getting ready to die. Why did He die? So that God the Father and Jesus Christ could *live* in us: but not just live in us, but so that we can grow and mature to a time that we can be born into God's Family.

And so again here, different parables that are given along the way to add to the meaning and understanding of what was being given. But again, all these parables being taught along the way here that were taking place and the different miracles that were being performed.

Let's go over to **John 11**. So again, this journey was continuing to Jerusalem by way of the Jordan through Jericho and then on to Bethany is how the stories going because Jericho just on this side then, speaking of the Jordan River there, and then again heading right down to Bethany, not too long of a walk now: fairly good distance but they were walking along the way to head on down to Bethany.

So again, this story picks it back up again where He was told about the sickness, again, of Lazarus and how He stayed around for two more days. He didn't even start on His way down there to Bethany yet because He knew that certain things had to be fulfilled, some more days had to pass here. So picking up in **verse 6 - When He had heard therefore,** again the story here that Lazarus was dead, what we read earlier... **He continued two days longer in the same place where He was. And after that He said to the disciples, Let's go to Judea again.** And so here's the account and I'm reading this for a purpose; because of the response of the disciples at different points here and how they responded to some of the things Christ was saying because there's a comment they make a little bit later here of something that's unique.

After this He said to His disciples, Let's go to Judea again, and again, His disciples said Master, lately the Jews have been seeking to stone you; and are we going there again? And **verse 11** goes on to say here in the story flow; **And He said these things: and after that,** at some point after, **He said unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleeps; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep.** It's amazing how we as human beings take things because the first response over and over again... that's why I love the book of John especially...over and over again there are so many accounts there that the response of people that came into contact with the truth, with Jesus – their response was always one that was physical because that's the way we think. We can't think spiritual until we're brought into the Church, as we're being brought into the Church that process begins as we're being drawn and then it continues on after we're baptized and we just grow and grow and grow in our ability to see and understand. And so in this case here He spoke to them of something: He knew full well that he was dead, but He said, **he's asleep,** you know terms that we use in the Church sometimes. Then He says **I go that I may awake him out of sleep. And**

His disciples said, Lord, if he can sleep, then that's good for him. You know if he's sick and he's asleep and you're going to go wake him up ☺ this was their response – they're thinking very physically...and yet that's not what He's saying. He's not talking about that.

So they said, **that's good if he's resting in sleep, Then Jesus said unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead. And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent you may believe; nevertheless let us go unto him.** And so basically, what's coming to pass here is being magnified because He *wasn't* there at the time of his death...because what would people say? Here Jesus comes along and heals Lazarus before he dies and so what do people say? "Oh, it was coincidental, He didn't heal him." That's how people are. "That's no big thing. Lazarus got well again. Jesus, He didn't have anything to do with it." That's what the Pharisees would say. But instead he was dead. Incredible story as we go along here.

Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellow disciples, Let's also go, that we may die with Him. Now what's he talking about here? If you understand this context of some of the story here of what was taking place...Bethany is just a hop, skip and a jump from Jerusalem and the story was up here a few verses before this, "You want to go into Judea and be stoned?" And Jesus Christ is going on down to Bethany now? We're going to be closer. Not up around Jericho where it's a little bit safer, a little farther away, but now you're going in now to their back door? Because that's where Bethany was, right at the back door of Jerusalem here. **Let's go on down, we'll die together** by this time here; not because of what Christ had said about *His* death, but because of an attitude of mind here of "if He's going to be stoned we'll be stoned with Him." Little bit here of not fully believing that they're going to be killed and die with Him by any measure, but again that's...

Going on with the story here. So it wasn't about them dying with Lazarus and so forth – had nothing to do with that.

It says, **Then when Jesus had arrived,** so He finally made it to Bethany, **He found that he had already been in his grave for four days.** Now, Jesus Christ knew he was dead. How? God put it in His mind as much as He puts things in your mind – except in a very unique way because there's no verse or anything else in the Bible you have to go to. It's just put in your mind. Awesome when you understand some of those things. So again here, he was put in the grave, he was in the grave for four days.

Now Bethany was near to Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs: that's only about 2 miles, 3¼ km away, so it's a hop, skip and a jump. **And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother.** So there are a lot of people coming in. They're known in that area and so they're coming in to comfort Martha and Mary because of the death of their brother. **Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met Him: but Mary was still in the house. Then Martha said unto Jesus, Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.** You know You could have healed him. **But I know that even now, whatever you will ask of God, God will give it to you. And Jesus said unto her, Your brother shall rise again.** This is awesome! I mean, you can't find accounts like this in the Old Testament. You can't read of stories like this in the Old Testament writings. So incredible here the depth of some people having seen the kind of miracles they had and believing more and more; not understanding it all, but believing more and more *He is the Messiah* – the evidence was being piled up and stacked up so powerfully so. And the people who'd been with Him – they believed. They saw these things; they were witness of these things. It moved powerfully in their lives and did in the life of Martha and Mary.

He said, Your brother shall rise again. But notice here... **Martha said unto Him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.** See that's what she understood. That's her response. "I know that he's going to arise..." guess I got a little ahead of the story there but it wasn't a matter of her believing he was going to be resurrected yet; but again, notice...her response was that belief that she had about the last day. That's what we believe. There are certain people we know of; they don't know God's way of life and we have comfort, we know that there's coming a time. I look forward to that day with great anticipation. Its a thousand years away, but even now, already I look forward to that time because isn't that the way we are, the way people are who know the truth? We look forward to a time when people haven't known God's way of life are going to be able to know it. They're going to live again in a body, a physical body. That's an awesome thing to understand that we grasp. The world has no comprehension.

People think that when...some people are tormented by some of those things in their minds because they knew certain people really well and knew how they talked and knew how they lived and their idea is they're not up there; he or she is not up there, but they're down there – wherever that down there is and they're being tormented, or whatever. Some beliefs that people have... or they're stuck half way in between... isn't it the Catholic church and purgatory? You get stuck half way in between – isn't that purgatory? Or is that...what is the other place they have? ...limbo? If you give more money to the priests they'll pray more for a person to get them on up – that's the custom of a lot of peoples in a lot of different nations of the world. Give them more money and they'll pray more for the individual to get them out of there, to get them to heaven. Incredible!

What a peace of mind when we just understand God's plan. No, we just die, physical human beings that don't know God's way of life...we return to the dust of the ground, the earth, what we came from just like God said and someday then people are going to be resurrected back to physical life again and have an opportunity in a beautiful world – not this sick, political, lying world we live in today where people are lied to in every nation around the earth. Incredible! When they're no longer lied to about religion and about what is true; when they're told the truth, when they're able to see the truth and know the truth.

I think of some of the crazy religions out there and starting with traditional Christianity; but every one you look at and you think of how tormented, how twisted the truth is and God's way of life and God and ideas about God.

Verse 25 - Jesus said to her, (Incredible!) I am the resurrection, that's powerful what He had to say! **I am the resurrection, and the life** - it's not a matter about the Last Day – see? It's about the one who's standing before you. Jesus Christ knew; He told them, but they didn't grasp yet... **he who believes Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:** so again, talking about those things future, those things coming to pass... **And whoever lives and believes Me shall never die.** Incredible! The second death is what it's speaking of here, because some aren't going to be able to come to a point of believing until they're in a second body, a second life, a second time and this is the death it's talking about. Just as much as it's talking about you're going to have eternal life, or everlasting life; there are some then in this case here who shall never die and those are the ones who are going to be given continual life. And so He said: **Do you believe this? And she said unto Him, Yes, Lord: I believe that You are the Messiah, the Son of God, who should come to the world.** The one who's prophesied to come – I believe that. Doesn't mean she understood what He was saying there. She just understood His importance in some of the basic things here.

Notice **verse 28 - And when she had stated this, she went her way, and called Mary his sister secretly,** in other words, in quiet, not to disrupt other people because there were a lot of others who'd come into the area to comfort Martha and Mary; and so she did this quietly, in other words, where others wouldn't hear it – that Jesus Christ is out here and just wanted her to come out, in other words. And she **says, the Master has come, and calls for you. And as soon as she said that, she arose quickly, and went to Him. Now Jesus had not yet come into the town, but was in the place where Martha met Him.** So just before they got there Martha had gone out and now the both of them are going out there again to see Jesus; and then **the Jews who were with her in the house, had comforted her and when they saw Mary, then they rose up quickly, and went out and followed her,** so nothing could be done secretly in this case here. There was something else that they were doing – they thought that she was going to go to the grave and so they were going to go with her to try to comfort her because she's going to go back out now to where her brother is...and so they felt, it says they made the comment here, **she's going to the grave to weep there. And when Mary had come to where Jesus was, and saw Him, she fell down at His feet and said unto Him, Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. And therefore when Jesus saw her weeping,** crying, in other words, at this point, **and the Jews who were come with her also weeping and crying, He groaned in the spirit, and was troubled.**

Do we understand why? Why He did that? Just kind of a groan and it says even in spirit here He was troubled: because of who He was and because of their lack or their inability to see. His desire for them to be able to see and grasp and comprehend what He was saying and yet it wasn't time yet and a little bit of that kind of a frustration type of thing with human beings, of how we are. We do that sometimes. We groan because of things we see around us and the inability of people to grasp and comprehend God's way of life and yet it's not their time yet; but it's a bit of a frustrating thing sometimes because of what we can see and a lack of believing there that's just in the human spirit.

And so in **verse 37 – Then He said, Where have you laid him? And they said unto him, Lord, come and see.** It says then, and **Jesus wept.** He cried. Amazing! It think this is referred to as the shortest verse in the Bible. He wept. **Then said the Jews, Behold how He loved him!** And that isn't why He wept. It's because of that emotion that was there, the desire He had for them that they weren't able to have in their life yet and it wasn't because Lazarus had died – because He was getting ready to resurrect him. He was getting ready to give him life again. He knew full well everything that God had brought Him to that point to do, to accomplish, that it was in His mind. That's why He said, Lazarus is not dead, he's asleep; knowing full well he was dead and they buried him. It says He wept, He cried. It's because of the people, because of their lack of faith, their lack and inability to see, in ability to comprehend and understand. So again here, it's like when He looked down over Jerusalem, we're going to read later, when He wept and He made the comment, "How often I would have taken you in like a mother hen under My wings and protected you," it says, "but you would not." That's coming from God the Father, see, its God the Father's desire.

It's like some of the things I've been saying here recently, trying to convey more and more the reality of an excitement that God Almighty has right now for where we are in time – an excitement that after so long of time we're finally at a point in time where mankind is going to be able to receive what they haven't been able to receive to this point: the very reason Jesus Christ wept – that yearning, that longing and that *heartache* about how man is. And just like Jesus Christ when He said, and made those comments...that was coming from the Father through Him. It's where it came from, because it's God's mind and God's desire for human beings. "*How often I would have taken you in as a mother hen would take in her chickens and spread her wings around...*" and wings that are used in scripture over and over again about protection, "...and would have protected you and kept you close but you would not. You

wouldn't do it! You continued to resist and fight." And that's our human life. And those things affect God. He loves every human being that comes into life; and that's why there's that great plan He has for times of salvation, but that there's still that yearning and that desire. But we have to wait. It's an awesome thing, it really is, it's an incredible thing to grasp the mind, the heart, the desire of God Almighty...and yet has a plan and a way to accomplish and fulfill it, but still – that desire that's there and that heart that's there for His creation in ways we can't even begin to comprehend. We don't begin to comprehend the magnitude that love that God has for every one of us. It's an awesome thing; goes far above and beyond our understanding. We learn it as we grow and as we grow we learn it. We experience it more and more and more as we grow and we go through a long period of time. We see ourselves for what we are; we ache inside for sometimes because we see what we are.

Paul,(talking yesterday about some of this)...if he hadn't written what he did in scripture there've been times that it would have been far harder for me to be able to cry out, "Oh wretched man that I am." 25 years after God's apostle... and Paul meant that with every fibre of his being because he knew what he was as a human being, but he says, "I thank God through Jesus Christ," and he went on in chapter 8 there of Romans and explains the process of how God's working with us. Thank God He has a plan, thank God He works with us in the way that He does that we can be forgiven of those things and we can continue going forward and we learn of a magnitude of mercy and the grace of God and how He works with each and every one of us. It's an awesome thing!

And so the Jews, what they saw, they just saw something physical, He's crying because he's dead. How we sometimes respond because we see somebody die, or something happens, someone close to us. The stronger we are, it doesn't mean that we're not going to have those things that hurt – because they do hurt – death hurts, but the reality is we have strength in ways that people in the world don't have because we know full well what comes next. It's either going to be the first resurrection that some are going to be resurrected into, of people we've known, and people are still going to die before this is over with – we know where they're going to be. There are going to be some that are going to die and be resurrected on Pentecost, the beginning of Pentecost 2012. Incredible! There are others that die and we know full well they'll be resurrected a thousand years from now. It's hard for us as human beings sometimes to deal with that gap in time, but its there and people are not lost, they're not gone forever.

Verse 37 - And some of them said, Couldn't this man, who opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died? It's amazing – human beings...and Jesus Christ knew what was in their hearts and in their minds – that lack of understanding, that lack of what we're like as human beings. And **Jesus therefore again groaning in Himself...**He knew what they were thinking. In many cases here He *knew* what they were thinking. They didn't even have to say it. It's an awesome thing to understand – given by God. **Jesus therefore again groaning in Himself came to the grave.** Not because Lazarus had died, it's because of what they're saying and because of what we're like as human beings and the weakness we are as human beings and how we resist and fight against God and the truth of God and the way of God.

And it goes on to say here; **it was a cave,** He came to it, **and a stone was laying upon it. And Jesus said, Take away the stone. And Martha, the sister of him who was dead, said unto Him, Lord, by this time he's stinking: for he has been dead for four days.** You been around an animal, especially if it's been about that length of time, indeed, the body doesn't smell good, a decaying body. And so she was concerned – the smell, how people are going to react and how bad that is...and basically I want to remember him as he was type of thing.

Verse 40 - Jesus said unto her, Didn't I say to you, that, if you would believe, you should see the glory of God? Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead had been laid. And Jesus lifted up His eyes, and said, Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. Now these things were being said for them, and for us, for everybody who reads these things. It was being said for them. He already had that relationship with God, knew exactly what was going to take place. **And I knew that You always hear Me: but because of the people who stand by I have said it, that they may believe that You have sent Me.** That's why it was said. That's why it was spoken. **And when He had spoken this, He cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth!** Incredible! **And he who was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave clothes:** now that had to be a sight! If you know how they did it, and wrapped them up like they did and he comes walking out of there like that... I won't go into it any farther. ☺ It had to be an incredible thing to witness, to see that, to behold something like that that never has taken place in time that's been recorded. So He says, **come forth! And he who was dead came forth, bound...**and so forth **and his face was bound about with a napkin.** A kerchief like they had a handkerchief type of thing. **And Jesus told them, Loosen him and let him go.** So here he is, he's trying to move; he's trying to move around and he's coming out and so He's telling them – basically help him, unwrap everything.

Then many of the Jews who came to Mary, who had seen these things which Jesus did, believed on Him. That would do a bit of a number to you! ☺ Here you talk to God and then you just command the individual to come forth who was dead. It would tend to cause you to think differently than you'd thought previous to that – definitely. Had a great impact upon people. But these things were all happening for a purpose and a great purpose, because word was going out. Can you imagine now the next day talk in Jerusalem 2 miles away? ...3¼ km away as people were going back into Jerusalem – some of them who'd come out to comfort –because that's what the story's about – it's about the Jews, some of them who'd come to Bethany to comfort Mary and Martha who knew them, because of the death of Lazarus; and so now some of them are going to go back into the city and what do you think the talk is going to be *all over the entire city?* People are going to be talking about someone who was dead and was resurrected! That so and so saw it! That several of them saw it. "I know several people. Here, this is who they are and they saw what Jesus Christ did..." or what Jesus did. Incredible! All this just before Passover.

Notice what else transpired from all this; going on here in **verse 46 - But some of them went their way to go to the Pharisees, and told them the things which Jesus had done. Then the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered together a council, and said, What do we do? for this man does many miracles.** It's amazing what some of their confession was at time – that they knew He was the Messiah, because they knew that no man could do these things except it be of God. But it talks about how but for their jobs, their positions, and because of the Roman government - that they would lose their place and would not be able to do the things they were doing and have their positions and so forth. They were more concerned about that than they were about who He was. Incredible!

John 11:48 - If we let Him alone like this, all men will believe on Him: and the Romans shall come...that's their concern...the Romans shall come and take away both our place and our nation. They're not going to stand for this; they're going to intervene. So they didn't believe the things about a Messiah obviously. They didn't believe the various things about what the Messiah was supposed to accomplish – to take away the government, the rule of oppression over them and to give rule and reign to the Jews, in essence is what they've always believed about the Messiah. They haven't understood what's been said in the prophets but that's as close as they could get. So they were concerned about the Romans reaction. **And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, You know nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die**

for the people, and that the whole nation not perish. This is his conclusion... its better that He die – see – that’s how you take care of this; that’s how this is resolved: that one should die than the whole nation should suffer. Isn’t it better just to kill Him? So isn’t this a righteous thing to do? That’s basically their attitude, the way they’re thinking.

But notice here...that what he spoke was in a respect here a matter of something that’s prophetic far above and beyond what he could comprehend and understand – that’s what it’s talking about here. **And this he spoke not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation;** it wasn’t a matter that he grasped it, it’s a matter of that’s what he spoke – his motive, what he wanted to do as wrong, but again here – it’s prophetic because this *is* what’s going to happen because it’s far even beyond that as it goes on to say... **And not for that nation only, but that also He should gather together in one the children of God who were scattered abroad.** In other words this goes far beyond what is spoken and why He’s going to be put to death, indeed to save others, but not the timing. The timing was not here.

Verse 53 - Then from that day forward they took counsel together, it says they determined **to put Him to death.** From that moment forward, at different times there... they already knew, about the disciples, they already said there they want to stone You and you can be killed by being stoned but now it was more blatant, it was more to the point. They wanted to put Him to death. That was their objective from that moment on. **Jesus therefore no longer...** do you see the magnitude of things here – how God works things out? That’s why I’ve become more dumbfounded the farther we go into this, how that God can bring a part about timing in a perfect way to where things happen *perfectly* because of how *He* works, of how He allows people to do certain things, bring certain things to a point – knowing the reactions of individuals, of people, how they’re going... knowing the reaction of Lucifer – Satan; and knowing what *he’s* going to do before he ever does it. God Almighty knows that when He does certain things, says certain things, that certain things will come about because of the nature we have as human beings, of the nature certain people have in Europe. He knows them inside and out. He knows every one of us as human being inside and out – what we will do under various kinds of conditions. *He knew by doing these various things exactly what would transpire so that at a specific moment in time the account could take place where Jesus Christ could be betrayed exactly when He needed to be betrayed and put to death at exactly the time He needed to be put to death!* That’s awesome! The might, the power of Almighty God. He didn’t force these things, but He moulded and fashioned certain things to come about, certain events to come about so that the reactions of human beings is very predictable because the mind, the power of Almighty God to know *exactly* what we’ll do and when we’ll do it. He brings things to pass exactly to the day, exactly to the moment He intends them to come to pass and we don’t grasp the might and the power of Almighty God as a whole to accomplish those things in human life. He doesn’t force human beings to.

It’s like Pharaoh; He knew what Pharaoh would do under *every one of those plagues*. He knew what plague it was going to *take* for Pharaoh finally long enough to say, “Go and get out of this nation! ...and take everything with you to get out of here.” And He knew exactly what Pharaoh would do later on as soon as he got a few of his wits about him again and his anger started building up when his own son had died and that he himself and sent his army with the chariots out to kill them. He was so infuriated by it all; now his anger was so great! It’s incredible. God knew he was going to do all these things. God fully intended to open up the Red Sea. He didn’t just all of a sudden say, “Oh Moses sure backed up to the sea, the mountains are on the side of you, the Egyptians are coming...what are we going to do? I guess we’ll open up the Red Sea.” God had these things all planned out. Why? To His glory; for it to be written that Moses and the children of Israel were baptized. The children of Israel were baptised unto

Moses as they went through the Red Sea. All these things have been predetermined – things that God has planned for so long.

And the more we understand those things, the more we'll be in awe of Almighty God. The more we comprehend that the very God who created everything that's out there, every galaxy within the entirety of the universe that we haven't even begun to see the end of yet...that man thinks, "Oh we know now – we've seen 13 billion light years out into space." ...and they haven't seen the edge yet. They can't measure it. *They can't measure the universe!* We don't know the extent of what's out there. We can't even comprehend what's in the Milky Way Galaxy let alone what's beyond it. We barely grasp there's something beyond Neptune and Pluto and all those others out there now – that there are some other things rolling around out there circling our sun. We barely grasp those things and yet God sustains every bit of it. We should be dumbfounded; and that's why we should be far more dumbfounded than David when David just looked into the heavens and said, "What is man that You're mindful of him? All this expanse, everything that's there and yet... it's right here that You're focused upon us, upon mankind in Your purpose."

I become more and more in awe the more I see things come to pass and see where we are in time and see how God brings together everything in time – His time, His way. It's to His glory and His honour and now in a very powerful way to the glory and honour of His Son and very soon to the glory and honour of His Family – those who are going to be first, behind Jesus Christ now. He's the first of the first fruits, but very soon now 144,000; finally, a great part of the structure of the Temple of God, of Elohim is going to come to pass and God has a desire for that, an excitement for that that you and I can't even begin to comprehend...but He has it. Incredible anticipation. And so great events are going to be accomplished, awesome events...that's why they're recorded in scripture of things that are going to take place before Jesus Christ returns, and on the very day Jesus Christ returns when God takes control of this earth and sets up His Son, that which resists – so much of it in one fell swoop, in one day... it's incredible what God's going to do. All to the glory of God – to His purpose and His plan.

Verse 53 - Then from that day forward they took counsel together determined to put Him to death. Jesus therefore no longer walked openly among the Jews; but went from there into the country near to the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim, so again here we have this location, and there continued with His disciples. And the Jews' Passover was drawing near: and many went out of the country up to Jerusalem before the Passover, to purify themselves. Then they sought after Jesus, so again here, this area isn't that far away. It talks about the distances here of some of these things. Sometimes people get an idea that the area of Israel is a huge area. It's really small; drive from one side, from the area of the Jordan River to be on the coast at Tel Aviv – doesn't take very long...takes a little over an hour and you're the whole width of the nation right there in a car. Incredible!

And so again, when people were walking in that particular area everything that it's talking about here, Bethany and Jericho and Jerusalem – these areas are really close together there as far as... that's why it talks about journeying, walking around there and so forth.

So again here, picking it up...**and the Jews' Passover, it talks about here, was drawing near: and many went out of the country up to Jerusalem before the Passover to purify themselves.** So here it's talking about...not speaking about those with Christ but in this case here talking about different ones who, because of the Passover, they actually come into Jerusalem. They're coming ahead of time. That's what it's setting the stage for. There are people coming into this area and coming up to Jerusalem because of a desire to be there even by the Sabbath before Passover because Passover that year was going to be on

Tuesday evening and so some are coming up ahead of time to go through this thing of purification, as it talks about here, their desire to be purified before they even come. They want to come to Jerusalem in other words, and so talking about other Jews. They were coming up from different parts of the country up to Jerusalem to keep the Feast. And it says...**and to purify themselves. Then they sought after Jesus, and spoke among themselves, as they stood in the temple,** so again, this is being mouthed around all over the place; the things about Christ, the things they'd been hearing and people were talking. This was the talk of the whole area, and again, talking at the temple... **What do you think; will He not come to the Feast?** Is He going to show up or not? ...because they knew what some of the Jews, the leaders, this disgruntlement... the disciples already knew their desire is to stone Him and so forth way ahead of time and now this point here talking about a desire they had to kill Him.

It says, **Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a commandment, that, if any man knew where He was,** because they were coming up here – some of these people coming into Jerusalem before the Sabbath, so they could observe the Sabbath there and have their process of purification before Passover actually took place here...a desire to draw closer to God with their understanding and so forth that they had. And it says, **Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a commandment, that, if any man knew where He was, he should reveal it, that they might take Him.** So different ones knew about this, this was spread around amongst the Pharisees especially and that if any Pharisee, if any different ones had contact with others and if they spotted Him to immediately get word...because their desire was to go get Him and by certain means have Him put to death.

Let's back up here a little bit in the story flow and go over to **Exodus 12.** Very interesting what's brought into place here at this point. **Exodus 12:1 - And the Eternal spoke unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, This month,** speaking of the first month of the year, the month of Abib, referred to in other places as Nisan. **This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you.** So what they were starting to observe; God was giving them a timeline to follow here, months to follow, days to observe and so forth in the beginning here as they were being brought out of captivity, going to be brought out of captivity.

Verse 3 - Speak unto the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month, so in the 10th day, the 14th obviously is the Passover day, but the 10th day is a beginning of an important time here as far as preparing for the Passover. And He says, **In the tenth day of this month, they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for a house:** So they were to pick out a lamb, or as it goes on to say... **And if the household be too little for the lamb, let him and,** as it says here, **his neighbour next to his house take it according to the number of the souls; every person according to their eating you shall make your count for the lamb.** So on the tenth day they were to pick out a lamb and they were to set it aside, separate it from all the others. It was a family thing. It says; if the family was too small to eat of the lamb they should invite someone else, perhaps a single or two people, or whatever how many it took to eat the lamb. And so they counted how much, in other words, they wanted to have enough that you're fully satisfied with the lamb in the meal but not to have a lot of waste or anything. If there's just two people in a house invite others – that type of thing. But anyway, a family. Can you imagine a family and having children and so forth and here you pick out a lamb and you tell them about Passover; what we're going to do four days from now. We're going to be eating this lamb. Has an impact on a family. You ever been around livestock? Okay, some people haven't grown up on a farm...those of you haven't may not appreciate this as much, but you can grow close to animals. People have dogs and cats and they grow close to their animals. But if you set a certain animal aside, in this particular case here, and the whole family knows it – this lamb is special. This is the one we're going to eat...now for a child this may be a little more difficult sometimes, but this

is common, this is what they talked about and it was special and it was to have special meaning so that when you killed this lamb it had a little more meaning to it. Especially when you think of... you're a mother and a father and you have children and you know how they feel about it – they're going to... you get attached. You see this one here's been separated from all the rest. It wasn't just a matter of going out and grabbing one in a group one day and like normally you would do if it's time to butcher something and take it and butcher it. No, the family was involved in this; it was a family thing. For four days they were to see this lamb separated from the rest of the herd, the rest of the flock, if you will.

And so it went on to say here...very specific here; **Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: you shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats: And you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month:** they're to keep it, special, separate from all the rest – don't let it be mixed with any of the rest anymore. It has to be special, without blemish – a special lamb, or small goat, whatever. ...**and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening.** Again, that special word, *bane ha erebyim*, means 'between the two evenings'. Because as time goes along, especially for God's Church – we understand there's great meaning that it's specifically between two sunsets, between two periods from beginning of one day to the end of that day...that Jesus Christ was to fulfill the entirety of the meaning contained in that day. Very powerful. There's been times in the Church we haven't fully grasped the importance of that word in the sense of God showing here that there's much to be done on that day, on the Passover day, this here having to do with the lamb, the one who pictured our Passover Jesus Christ.

So again, the tenth day of the first month the lamb was set aside to be killed as a Passover on the fourteenth day, the beginning as soon as the sun set. And again, understanding family's were involved in this – to keep it close, and of the attachment that grows there – you see it all the time, more than you do the rest of the flock. You see it constantly for those four days as a whole – as a family.

Let's go back to John. It's important because this is when it's set aside, this is when it's made known *this is the lamb* that is to be eaten, that is the Passover lamb. **John 11:55 – And the Jews' Passover was drawing near: and many went into the country up to Jerusalem,** so they were travelling up to Jerusalem as it was for the Holy Days in the first place, but unlike the Feast of Tabernacles they were coming in a little early because it's a Passover and they wanted to go through this process of purification. That's what it's talking about here. They came to Jerusalem, **before the Passover, to purify themselves.** The Sabbath, again, being the primary time for these kinds of things to be accomplished; the Sabbath before the Passover.

Notice **John 12:1 - Then six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany again,** so here they are, they've come back down because of all this word spreading around of what had taken place, some of the things that had taken place, so He backed away again because it was not time. He went back into Bethany again here and so you're going to find the account here through these days that follow now, up till the Passover, He's constantly walking back and forth between Bethany and Jerusalem just 2 miles away, 3¼ km. So here we're down to the wire now, **six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany again,** in other words, **where Lazarus was who had been dead, whom He had raised from the dead.** So again this is just a recount of when He came back to stay in Bethany prior to the Passover here and the things that were going to take place that preceded the account of what happened in the four days before Passover.

Notice **verse 2 – There, in Bethany, they made Him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them who sat at the table with Him. Then Mary took a pound of ointment of spikenard,** so here's

the timing. It talks about a period of time here when He came back down and it's jumping back into a story here of something that was to follow. **So Mary took a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment. Then one of His disciples said, who was Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, who should betray Him, Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?** Amazing! God knew his attitude. God knew his spirit. That's why he was put in charge of what he was put in charge of. He was in charge of the purse. He was in charge of taking care of certain bills and so forth along the way in their travels – Judas Iscariot. God knew his heart. He knew what he would do under certain conditions, certain circumstances, and sure as the world, this fit into it. Why? Because it began to eat away at him. You know; it's a funny thing, human beings, what we do sometimes and how we think and if our minds aren't right... I've seen this over and over happen in God's Church if people's minds aren't right and how people begin to think and how they have wrong motives to do some of the things they do – especially as we go back into our history and see some of the things of what took place in times past and what led up to what we went through. And God allows those things. God allowed things to take place that took place to the Church. There had to be... there was that which was to prove a great truth to us of what we're capable of even with His spirit. The Church had to be witness of that. We're witness of that – those of us who were back in that period of time – that's why we're here to this day; because God has a plan and a purpose that there were those who were witness of what things took place in those times back at that time, what took place to a Church who had the impregnation of God's spirit dwelling within them. To show what human beings are capable of even *with* God's spirit. We know what human beings are capable of *without* God's spirit...now we know what human beings are capable of *with* God's spirit. And we're going to learn during the Millennium what human beings are capable of *with God's spirit who have the God Family and Jesus Christ Himself here on earth.* We're going to learn that in a very powerful way at the end of the thousand years. That's astounding! But we understand that now; we understand how it's possible...and what's amazing is they're going to be told that throughout the thousand years. This is going to be preached...and sure as the world it's going to come to pass. The conditions will be such; God knows human nature – what human beings will do under certain circumstances and conditions and those things... many are going to come to a point in time where when Satan's let loose they're not going to be able to deal with it and they're going to succumb to him again. Amazing! Astounding... but amazing!

And so this really began to really eat at Judas... this was something that was so deep in his human nature that it was his undoing... it started here. It didn't just happen all of a sudden, that all of a sudden he went to the priest to get the 30 pieces of silver... it started, it was magnified, it was escalated, right here. This just *ate away at him* because of his mind, because of the way he thought about things. He was so critical of different situations and so critical of others. Why? Because as so often happens with human beings; it's because of what *they* want to do with it, what *they* think is right, what *they judge is right.* You think... if you really understand who it is that this was given to, and if you... well, he didn't understand the purpose of it, but if he just understood who it was done to... learn. Hasn't He been our teacher? Won't He tell us why if there's a reason and a purpose behind all this?

I can't help but think of Mr. Armstrong. I can't help but think of people who found fault with in the ministry – *evangelists* that found fault with things Mr. Armstrong did. *Evangelists* in God's Church who found fault with the building of the auditorium, the house that was dedicated to God. That was a point in time that pushed some over the edge, just like Judas. It pushed some over the edge. They found such fault with how money, finances were being used to build something like this and then everything they saw from that point on blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, you know how the human mind is sometimes – picking at, finding fault with. And then that leads into other things, finding fault with this decision and

that decision because they're so convicted that *this one's* wrong that this decision is suspect now and now it's like, "I can justify; I can *judge* these different things that are going on and I *see* where *he's* an *old man* now and he's getting older... *he's getting senile! Look what he's doing to the Church!*" And they didn't grasp and comprehend: he was God's *apostle* to the end; but because of the things that happened they began to go astray and they began to do things that were not expedient. I hope most of you, I feel fully that those of you who've been around for a long time who lived through some of that period of time... you understand and see those things in a way you didn't back then...if you were part of the Church back there in the late 70's and in through the early 80's. We experienced those things. We understand how human beings can be. This is how it happens, with or without God's spirit. A little bit can lead us away. God allows certain things to exist even today in the Church to try people sometimes, for that purpose alone. Some things exist simply to try us of what we're going to do – to see what we're made of – to see how we're going to respond – to see whether or not we keep God in the focus and how God is working in the focus. It's a powerful thing if we understand it.

And so he said, **Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?** Do you think that was his motive? That he was so righteous? That his desire was to give it to the poor? ...or that he'd have it in his purse to use as *he* thought was best for what they were doing and how they were doing it...because I'll tell you there was no desire in any fashion or form to use this for the poor. That's not how he thought. But see that justifies people sometimes. Couldn't this have been used like this, or used like that and blah, blah, blah. That's how we are sometimes as human beings. Amazing! **He said this, not because he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief...** That was his heart and you see, God knew that from the moment he was drawn to be a part with the twelve, it was a part of a plan. God didn't force him to change, God allowed him to be who he was, gave him incredible opportunity to be a part, to walk with the Passover; to be with the Passover Lamb, to be with the Messiah. But he didn't see it, he didn't get it – couldn't...at that point in time. But not even on a strictly a physical plane of things that He taught and things that he saw was he moved by that. Because see, the other disciples were, in a very powerful way because of everything they had witnessed – but not Judas Iscariot.

So again, **he said this, not because he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and he had the bag,** in other words the one who carried the money, **and carried what was put in it.** To me there's humour in things in life about what we are as human beings. If we can see our human nature and see what we're like, there's great foolishness in it sometimes; and here's some incredible foolishness of how easy it is for the human mind to seek to justify itself of what it's doing – because look – "wouldn't it have been better to use this for the poor" – doesn't he look good when he says that to others. See, that's how he thinks he's coming across, but they knew, some knew full well his attitude and spirit and where he was coming from.

Then Jesus said, Leave her alone: for the purpose of the day of My burying she has kept this. She's kept this ointment for My burial. Powerful words and they still didn't get it. They didn't understand fully what was going to take place. But Christ was preparing for His death. He knew full well what God was doing with Him, how God was working various things out in His life, but again, the rest still didn't understand what was coming. This is an awesome story. When you put everything into format here in recognition of what He's leading up to – that He's leading up to Him walking...knowing full well He's walking into Jerusalem to spend some time on the last day with His disciples, then He's going to be killed, put to death – knowing full well this is what He's getting ready to do.

Verse 8 – He said, For the poor, in other words the needy, you always have with you; but will not always have Me. Many people of the Jews therefore knew that He was there: and they came not only

for Jesus' sake, but so that they might also, again here, see Lazarus, so again here He's talking about being in Bethany and it's talking about many people now – it's kind of jumping, changing some gears here and talking about how the Jews knew that Christ was there now back in Bethany, but not only that but they wanted to come and see Lazarus too. Some people were coming up to the Feast, Jews were coming into that area of the world and they heard all these different things; so there were some who were coming up there hoping to see Jesus and also Lazarus. You want to see the guy who's been resurrected. He was dead for four days. I gotta see this man. That's what their attitude was. They wanted to go up there to see him, from the stories they'd been hearing.

But the chief priests consulted how that they might also put Lazarus to death; they were so eaten up inside that they even wanted to stop that. They didn't want this to be noised around. Here's the individual that he'd be able to testify and tell people, "Yeah, I was dead for four days. My sisters, my relatives, different ones, different people that came in from Jerusalem they saw me – so and so saw me, they saw me after I was resurrected. They saw me come out wrapped up and stinking." Incredible! It says, **Because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away,** in other words, from them, from the influence *they* had over them... **and believed on Jesus.** Incredible here, human nature, when you read through stories like this and see how people are.

Well, let's read this account in **Mark 14:1** – now, when we go into Mark 14, when we look at Matthew and Mark here as we're going to do (I believe I have some of Matthew here), when we go into some of these accounts here, or at least in these two here, this is the way some of the timing is stated but it can be confusing unless you know why it's being stated in this manner, so let's just pick it up here. Because this account here now is actually two days prior to the Passover but there's a reason why in the account of John it goes through as a story flow, but in this account it kind of goes back and forth. And when you understand the reason why it adds more meaning to it: it brings it all together; it ties it all together in a more powerful way. So here it's talking about a period of time just two days before the Passover. So we're jumping ahead a little bit – we're going to come back in a moment because what took place here when it talks about dinner being served and so forth and talking about Mary taking the oil and the ointment here that she put on Jesus – this happened in a specific moment in time that we're going to come back to, but we're jumping ahead a little bit here because it's going to refer back to this same account here. So we're jumping ahead just two days before Passover and then we'll come back to this point here that we've been talking about.

So it says here in **Mark 14:1 - After two days was the Passover,** now it says, ***the feast of the Passover,*** those words are added – that's not in the Greek language but there's a lot of expressions here used at different times when it talks about we're at the Passover, there's some accounts of what Jesus Christ has to say when it's actually the day of the 13th but they knew what He meant. Where the Passover is coming this evening... the Passover's going to be here and so sometimes even the whole Feast of Unleavened Bread, that whole period of time is referred to as The Passover, in other words, the Passover season – it doesn't even have to be stated. We know what that means, but sometimes people get a little confused, especially being new and not understanding the terminology that's being used until you become so familiar with it it's just the way we talk and that's the way they talked. So it'd be **the Passover, and the Days of Unleavened Bread: and the chief priests and the scribes sought how that they might take Him by craft,** in other words by trickery and deceit. So they wanted to kill Him, but they had to try to figure out a means of how they're going to accomplish this, and so they're trying to figure out these things **and put Him to death.** ...as it says here.

Verse 2 - But they said, Not on a Feast day, so now they were... amazing the timing here and why they're motivated to do this...and God knew this about them. They didn't want to put Him to death on the Feast day because the people are going to have an uproar – it's a High Day! It's a Holy Day! And you can't put Him to death on that day, so it's got to be done earlier. So this is what the kind of scheming and planning of how they were going to do this. So they said, we can't do it on a High Day, **on a Feast day, lest the people be in an uproar over this**. So they were pushing the timeframe. They were pushing it ahead a little bit. They wanted to get this done quickly.

So in this next verse we're actually going back in time here now, in **verse 3** because it records something that had previously taken place by a couple of days before this, referring back to this ointment. **And being in Bethany**, so it's talking about now, because this was two days before – this is what the chief priest did, but now it's going to refer back to a few days before this to what took place that we just read about in John. It says, **And being in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as He sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment and spikenard which was very precious**; in other words very costly, of great price as it means in the Greek here, a very expensive as was already brought out in John... **and she broke the box, and poured it on His head. And there were some that had indignation within themselves, and said, Why was this waste of ointment made? For it might have been sold for more than three hundred pence**, and we know who that was, it was Judas Iscariot, **and have been given to the poor**, to the needy. **And they murmured against Him**. So he affected a few others – not the disciples, the other disciples; but because of his mouth as so often happens I think back again of things that happened to Mr. Armstrong and what different ministers did because they would blab it around to others it'd get others into a wrong attitude, begin to think, "Yeah, that is bad, that is wrong. He shouldn't have done that." And that's exactly what happened here. "Should have given that money to the poor..." and others... "Yeah, should have given that to the poor – not to be wasted and poured over somebody – what a waste of money! Could have been sold!" That's exactly how things get started.

That's how Satan works. Do we understand the attitude and the spirit? That's exactly how Lucifer worked. When they found out; when it was revealed to the angelic realm that God's purpose in time here was He was going to create something on earth – human beings...and they were going to become a part of the God Family... See at some point in time God revealed this to the angelic realm. They didn't know this as soon as they were created. They didn't understand the plan and purpose of God. So at some point in time, and we don't know how long... millions? Billions of years? We have no idea. Time? We don't know what God did and those things aren't told. But at some point in time, makes it very clear what Lucifer did. He began to hate God's plan and that's a primary part he hated. You know why? Because at that point in time he was basically chief honcho. He was the primary archangel of God. There wasn't another made like him God said, created like him. So there were three and he was given many talents, many abilities and great responsibility...and it began to eat away at him: God's going to make human beings, physical beings and they're going to have something greater than me. So he wanted to make himself above God and take over. Incredible! But how he got 1/3 of the angels to rebel with him was through time that mouth at work...like so often happens – finding fault with different things that are taking place, how things are being done. And after a while a mind that will begin to listen to that kind of thing and not stand for what is right and stand up for God and say, "No, this is what God says." And so in time, millions of angels began to go the same route in their thinking and they followed Lucifer. Amazing! Became demons on earth. Incredible story.

So this never changes – pride, what happens with pride and this kind of nature, this kind of selfish nature when it's about self. It wasn't about the poor, it's about self and then others get pulled into it and they begin to find fault. It's incredible.

And so again here, **Jesus said**, so just recounting the story again, **Let her alone; why are you troubling her for she has done a good work for Me. For you always have the poor, in other words the needy, with you, and, in this account here in Mark it says, and whenever you want you can do good to them: but you will not always have Me. She has done that which she could: she has come beforehand to anoint My body for the burial. Verily I say unto you, Wherever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she has done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her.** In remembrance of her and what she did. So again, the reason this is inserted right here in this story flow, and it's referring back to what happened a few days earlier, couple days earlier...and it's going back to the story flow here of bringing in now of what Judas Iscariot did, and it's bringing in the same account John gave earlier, but it's because it's about Judas Iscariot now. The focus is upon Judas Iscariot. So it's remembering, it's going back and reminding everyone of the story flow here of what took place, why Judas began to think the way he did and then it interjects something else in the story flow here with Mark and Matthew. That's why it's written in the way that it is and going back in time.

That's why it says in **verse 10 - And Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went unto the chief priests, a couple days later.** See, after all this had happened, it shows the flow here now. This is what stirred it, this is where it started – because of that oil and what had taken place there and it ate away at him and so a couple days had passed now and so he **went to the chief priests, to betray Him unto them. And when they heard it, they were glad, and promised to give him money. And he sought how he might conveniently betray Him.** Some of these stories like this blow my mind sometimes.

Just a quick wrap up here and we'll come back to this same story flow here on the 1st High Day. Again here, the reason it's going through this time is because it's showing what led up to Judas doing what he did and so it states it in a different way – it goes back in time and talks about what Mary had done and the oil, this expensive ointment and it ate at him so much finally he went to betray Christ – for money...because that's his motive all along. Incredible story here how someone could do something like that. But anyway, that's the story about our Passover and what led up to His finally being taken and killed for us.

So we'll stop there and continue on in the first High Day.

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