

The Bondage of Abraham

Ron Weinland

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This sermon on this third day of the Feast follows the first sermons as fundamental and core to the root of so many problems that have evolved through time from this beginning that the title of this sermon embraces today, this sermon's entitled, *The Bondage of Abraham*. Now, not Abraham specifically, obviously here, but I can only have so long of a title to put on the site. It really has to do with those who claim to be, those who are, in essence, descendants of Abraham who claim, in essence, that title, that they are the children of Abraham, that they still hold onto those things. And it has a great deal to do with their beliefs.

The world of Traditional Christianity doesn't do that; it goes back basically to Christ. It doesn't really focus on the Old Testament. As a matter of fact most people in the United States that attend churches there, if they go to services at all on a Sunday, if they take a Bible it would just primarily be the New Testament. The Old Testament is not focused upon because basically they view it as some nice little stories in there and so they don't use those very often. And the main thing for them is that it has all been done away with anyway, all the laws were basically done away with so what's the need of going back in the Old Testament. So we're talking about two other groups.

So in this subject matter, from the beginning there was a gradual evolving of jealousies, anger, resentment, and hatred began to evolve followed by the evolving of great deception, misgivings, distortions, and lies that has led to great persecutions, wars, and even greater religion deception and misgivings over time. And all this has led to where we are now in historic events and the need for great deliverance from this escalating, intensifying bondage that began so long ago. It just gets worse and worse and worse through time. And as I say this I think of Judaism at the time of Christ and Judaism today; it's just that there's an evolving process there where it just gets worse and worse and worse.

And so this is a complicated progression of events that we're going to cover, and as we focus on the truth of these events that once they are seen and admitted by these individuals, by people who are a part of this, in humility and meekness of spirit – because that's what God is going to bring this world to. That's the only way that people can receive God, if you're brought to a spirit of humility, if you're brought to a spirit (which means a teachable spirit), to be able to be teachable. There's that which has to happen in your life as far as humility and pride and being lowered, being brought down, so that people will begin to listen to God. That's why this world has to go through what it does and it's going to be an exciting process as massive numbers of people begin to come out of bondage, it truly is, from oppression and from the slavery and hatreds that are out there.

We're going to begin focusing on this subject in what might be considered an unusual place to do so here in John 8. And as the people we focus upon in this sermon begin to understand the truth regarding what we'll cover first here then this will do much to help bring about deliverance from bondage out of spiritual Egypt.

Again, a theme that's running through this Feast here this year of that which God wants us to grasp, to be excited about, to be inspired about, because God's excited. After all this time and all those deceptions that began to evolve through time now the lights are going to shine upon it and these things are going to be exposed for what they are and people are going to be able to be brought to understanding of God's way of life, finally.

So we're going to look at an account here where Jesus was speaking to a fairly large group of Jews including Pharisees and teachers of Judaism. **John 8:31 - Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed on Him**, so these are the ones we're focusing on first in this sermon, those who go back to Abraham, those who speak of Abraham, especially at the time of Christ. Today they probably speak more about Moses and some of the things they refer back to, but it's still, again, the descendants of Abraham. They bring those things up.

Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed on Him, if you continue in My word, then indeed you will be My students/disciples; that's what disciples means, "...you'll be my students, you'll learn from Me." And so believing on Him has more to do with believing what He said versus believing that he existed. It's not just about Him having lived and so forth as traditional Christianity tends to focus upon in nice stories. It's what He had to say, it's the truth He gave, and that's why this is such an important scripture, even right here for people to understand, but people read through things like this and they don't think about it in traditional Christianity.

So He says, **if you continue in My word;** He was showing the importance of that word having to do with 'dwelling in', 'living in', 'continuing in', 'remaining in', and if you remain in His word that means you have to do something. There's a way of life you have to live. And so He's starting out here telling them, **if you continue in My word;** so He's telling those who do look to Him, those who are following Him, and we understand that it's not just talking about the twelve who became the twelve apostles and obviously one of them was discarded and another one took his place. But we're talking about many who followed, because at different times, like in chapter 6 when He was talking about '...you have to drink My blood and eat My flesh,' it says many of His disciples, many of His students, quit following Him at that time.

Verse 32 - And you shall know the truth; What an awesome thing! 'If you continue in My word...' if you continue listening and continue in it and live it, remaining in it, dwelling in it, 'then you shall know the truth,' because He's the source of it. He is the source of where the truth came through, came from, from God through Him to mankind in a very powerful way. Things were being revealed now after 4,000 years that are incredible, bringing things in the Old Testament together and revealing things about God's plan that to this point in time really hadn't been known. Even the angelic realm was learning. Even the demonic world was learning, Satan himself hearing things that Christ was saying. And so things that they never knew what was really meant in the Old Testament, certain things that were there, and talking about a Messiah and so forth, they didn't grasp until it's given by God, and now it's being given by God through Jesus Christ. **...and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. Free!** What an awesome thing!

The more we learn, the more truth we receive, the freer we become, and so it's a process of time too, it's not something that happens instantaneously when you're being called and you're baptized. You're not totally free yet but as far as God is concerned you are if you'll continue to follow, if you'll continue to do as He says. He opens that door for us and we're able to walk through it, if we continue to walk through it, if we continue to fight the fight. That's why I mention so many times, the major thing that I've seen in God's Church is that people quit fighting the fight, so my encouragement has always been, in that respect, don't quit the fight! Fight against your human nature, continue continue going before God acknowledging your sins, repenting, because every time you do you're growing in character. You may not *grasp* that fully, but through time the more you acknowledge you are wrong and God is right you're growing in strength and mind of character. Truly! ...until it becomes the way you are.

That's why I've made comment about the 144,000 through time; there was a time when God told Abraham, "Now I know you! You've gone through everything; you've done everything to this point in time. In other words, I know what you'll do under every circumstance. You've grown to that point in time now on a spiritual plane." And so it is with us; that we come to a point in time where, in essence, it's as saying, "You have arrived. You are there. The work in you is complete in the sense that if you were to die you are now going to be resurrected, because the rest of your life as things continue on, there's going to be a response you have because you have grown to that point in life. You will continue to repent. You'll continue to fight the fight; it is in you now, it is in your mind, it is in your being." It's an awesome thing that as you continue to yield to God your mind becomes more at one with God, though you live in a human body and you fight this fight. And so much of it – that's what it's about, that you're acknowledging God is right and we are wrong. You're acknowledging God's way is right and that you *want* His way. Every time you repent you're acknowledging God's way is right, He is right, and we are wrong. And that's an awesome thing!

...and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. And so as truth begins to be revealed on this earth, things that people have to come to understand, things that people need to understand about this sermon in Judaism, and those of the Arabic nations as a whole, as those people come to understand their past, their truth.

Verse 33 – then they answered him, notice... **We are Abraham's seed**, *puffed up, proud, haughty, arrogant*, because they have their own ideas, their own beliefs, and here the very one that the Old Testament over and over...all the prophets it says, the law and the prophets have foretold of, the Messiah, is right there in front of them, the one that they don't know and understand yet is going to be their Passover through whom they can have access to God, through whom they can be forgiven of their sins. Not just a ritual where once a year the priest went into the Holiest of Holies, but now it's going to be complete. Incredible! But in their arrogance they couldn't see, they couldn't be let free, they were in bondage. They were in bondage! They're captive.

We are Abraham's seed and have never been in bondage to anyone: Incredible! **We have never been in bondage to anyone:** So how can you say, such a thing? We're Jews! We're God's special people! And here the one sent by God standing right in front of them. Incredible! Awesome! **So how can you say, You shall be made free?** "We're Abraham's seed." And today there are those who say they are Abraham's seed as well, another group of people, "We're Abraham's seed." They say exactly the same thing, and then they change a little bit of the story about the offering, that it was Ishmael being offered up. Incredible!

So they didn't grasp that they were even at that time, 2,000 years ago, in captivity, in bondage and not free as they supposed haughtily so. And today the Jewish people and all who embrace Judaism are deep in captivity, in bondage in Egypt. What an incredible thing to understand – deep in Egypt. That's why I marvel at God bringing them up to Mount Sinai, the place where they could truly be made free; because when they came out of Egypt they weren't free, because it goes beyond being physically free. It goes beyond people being able to live in so called freedom today in New Zealand or Australia or the United States and different countries where there is 'relative freedom' per se in the sense of not being in slavery, in bondage, and yet people are and they don't grasp that they are, and so they can't see that which is spirit, God's spirit, what He is revealing that's of the mind. Of the mind!

Listened a little bit to the sermon we're going to hear during the Feast here, which I want to say today so that he can hear it now too in case I can't get a hold of him, but Johnny Harrell has a pre-recorded

sermon, he's giving it live in the UK and live in the Netherlands when he's there, but it's pre-recorded to be played here tomorrow and we'll be listening to it as well. And I was dumbfounded and yet not dumbfounded at one section of scripture he went through – some that I've already gone through, some that to my recollection I've never heard at a Feast of Tabernacles. And yet we spent some time going through it talking about Egypt, talking about the very ones that mentioned about Assyria and Egypt and Israel that we ended on, and he goes through some of the same ones. You think, "What an awesome thing, God's spirit!" He wants us to see and focus upon things and to notice various things that are stated in different ways, but that's the area that God wants us to see.

And just like in the opening sermon, the one about rejoicing, and again mentioning bondage and captivity and so forth, that that was in Terry's mind. And so it's an incredible thing to see how God moulds and fashions and leads us and how everything works together, flows together as it does.

And so again here, a powerful message, things that God wants us to see, the importance of what He's getting ready to do on this earth finally, to be able to take people out of real Egypt, that which is spiritual in the mind. And people don't grasp the reality of such a thing.

They're deeply deceived, speaking of the Jewish people, they're deeply deceived about their history, the truths of God, and their religious doctrines and so forth; and obviously they're deeply deceived in those things. They are of the seed of Abraham, but they're not in a true relationship with God. They are deceived about God, who God truly is and what God is doing.

And once the Arabic people, even all the people of Islam, come to see this truth it will begin to give them healing and an opportunity to begin to be free, finally, from all those things that started way back. It's hard for us to understand how things are passed down generation to generation, but they are, into nations. That's an incredible thing to grasp! Going all the way back – *because* she was a handmaiden and not the wife, there's a *stigma* of the mind, there is a *battle* that began to develop. And I look to the day, because I believe that that's what God has given, that there's that which Sarah did to her when she came back so that she would not be seen as attractive and looked upon, that she did out of jealousy, because there's no good history of where it came from, the eyes showing in a garment that's being worn. And why is that upheld in such a powerful way in a religious fashion by a specific kind of people? It's an incredible thing that things are done!

I think of every time, as a whole, I don't know what it's like here but I think I've seen them before here, when an ambulance goes down the road and you see this pole and you see this serpent around it, and I think of that incredible story when in the wilderness that because of the rebellion of the children of Israel that God sent amongst them the poisonous snakes and thousands of people were killed as a result of that, because of the rebellion, because of their disobedience to God, and Moses asked for help and intervention and God told him to make a pole and to wrap a serpent around it and to stick it in the ground, and anyone who came to look upon it they'd be saved, they wouldn't die. And you know, if you get bitten by a snake and you hear the story go out to all of Israel, if you come and look upon this pole, you obey God, if you'll do that then you won't die, and so people did.

And then it took on a different kind of meaning. It was like this symbol had some kind of healing power! And *700 years later... 700 YEARS LATER* a king had to grind it up to dispose of it because the children of Israel were looking upon it in a wrong fashion, as a religious symbol, like people look at a cross or a star of David or whatever as a religious symbol. Incredible! And yet that didn't stop it, it didn't stop people

from looking to that symbol, it has gone on through history that people still look to it as a symbol of healing. Awesome!

And so it shouldn't be a surprise to us to understand where different ideas and customs come from that are passed down generation to generation for hundreds and *thousands* of years. And so these people are so deeply deceived. What an incredible thing when they begin to be freed from their backward lie. Because it's a horrible thing when you think in your mind that this is the way you should look, that this is the way you should appear in public – to peer through a little hole slit in cloth. What a captivity! What a *horrible thing* that you can't dress in public in moderation and be beautiful as you are, be yourself, that you have to be something different and have something so distorted in your mind that you have to be that way, and how you're to act in a family, how the husband is to be esteemed in a way that he is that is not the way God says it should be, where he's held up on a pedestal, to even walk in front of and you walk behind, to be like a servant, to be like a maid...*to be like a maid – Hagar! Incredible* what has happened through history and how people have been oppressed!

I look so forward to people being freed! We're going to hear more as we go into some of the sermons. I'm getting ready to go into some of that now; I've got to back away. Because of things that have happened that people are in captivity of and don't even understand it!

There are things about men and women that some of you are still deeply in captivity about and you don't even know it! Especially you husbands! ...and I better stop there. One woman wanted me to say more here...well if you couldn't tell already, it's coming in the Feast, okay, it's going to be here. But you hold yourselves in captivity too because of that thinking. Men and women are both in captivity over things like that.

But I think of the Arabic nations, those of Islam, they're in a deep, deep captivity. It's going to take time, you don't just come out of that overnight! When you've grown up and you think that's a certain way that you're to live – it's hard to change, it's hard for the mind to change and to see something different. You've got to live something else for quite a long time before finally you're actually freed of that in your mind!

Like I said before, it took me *25 years* because of my mind, to come to a point, because I wasn't going to say it until it was deeply, deeply in my being in spirit and truth, that I could tell God Almighty, "Father, I love you." *25 years!* I'm dumbfounded by that – God's patience and the timing that God gave and the opportunities that God gave me in His Church during that period of time. Astounds me! But God knows the heart, God knows the mind. He has great patience with all of us to bring us out of captivity, because that was captivity. When I was able to say that I was freed from something in a very powerful way.

You make certain growth at certain times in your life, certain plateau, and you're freed all of a sudden from something and you're able to continue on now and grow in other things and be freed from other things. You live a life of being made free because it doesn't happen in one fell swoop, it doesn't happen when you just pass through the Red Sea, it doesn't happen when you're just baptized. It's the beginning of a process and I look forward to, deeply so, all these people being freed. Awesome! And that's what God wants us to do, to have that excitement, to look forward to what's happening now.

Going on here now, repeating it again here, **John 8:33 – then they answered Him, We are Abraham's seed and have never been in bondage to anyone; so how can You say, You shall be made free? And Jesus answered them, Truly, truly, I say to you; Whosoever commits sin is the servant of sin.** It's in

your mind! You're in bondage! You're in captivity! So He's plainly telling them that they serve sin and not God and this didn't go over well. You're *in* captivity; whenever you sin you're a servant of sin, you're in captivity and bondage. You don't get it, what I'm saying about Abraham, or what's going to be said about Abraham and what they're saying about Abraham.

And the servant does not dwell in the house forever; the servant doesn't dwell in the house forever... **but the Son dwells forever. If the Son therefore shall make you free, indeed you shall become free.** Incredible things He was saying here about His relationship with God, who He was, the power that would come through Him. So this matter of being told that they were not free didn't go over well with them. They were filled with pride and a very high estimation of their importance, especially with God, because they were Abraham's direct seed in lineage.

I think of what happened in the Church. It happened on a spiritual plane in the Church after Philadelphia. Began to happen during Philadelphia because that's the spirit of Laodicea, that was the spirit that God warned about, that Jesus Christ warned about in Laodicea, said that we had to repent of, but as a whole the Church wasn't able to, except for a remnant that was brought out of that were able to repent of those things. And it's that mindset, 'I am rich and increased with goods...I'm better than...' what we really are. We can't see how we really are.

So in their thinking there could be no other group of people on earth who were freer than themselves, because of the perceived close relationship that they deeply believed they had with God.

So notice what Christ went on to say, **verse 37 - I know that you are Abraham's seed; but you seek to kill Me, because My word has no place in you.** See those who talk about... I think of traditional Christianity again, 'believe on Christ' – it goes way beyond that. You better believe what He said. You better live by what He said; and this is where He's really putting teeth in this, about His word. That's why people hate *us* in the world of traditional Christianity, because His word is not in them. See, they'd rather look at a person and the things He did and the nice stories that go along with it, the bedtime stories, a babe in a manger, or the stories of Him dying on Friday and being resurrected Sunday morning at a time when all the kids can go out and gather eggs around the trees and different places where they're hidden, all those little nice stories that people like to tell, and when they come together on special occasions...sick world, they're in bondage, deep in bondage and they don't understand it, that it's about His *word*, living by His word. And so if they just start out in Matthew, 'Think not that I've come to destroy the law or the prophets', and yet one of the first things people will come up with when you tell them you're to keep the Sabbath – "Oh, He did away with that – nailed it to the cross." Sad. Look forward to them being freed from that. Truly!

Verse 38 - I speak that which I have seen with My Father: now, oftentimes when people read things like this, as still in the scattered group, people read something like this and they think that this is talking about something physical. But if they really thought about it they'd say, "Well, no, it's in a spirit realm but it happened like it was an actual event, that they're together, that they were together at some point in time and they were having conversation and they've seen certain things..." He's talking spiritually! That which He *sees*, that which *we see* when we read God's word, that which all of a sudden comes alive for us. It's not a matter of seeing someone face to face, whether it be physically or spiritually, because that's not what it's about. It's what's in the mind! ...that you see spiritually, that you have ears to hear. He's not talking about a literal voice, literal ... it's what you have in the mind, and yet physical expressions are used, ...to have the ability to hear, to have the ability to see that which is of God, God's spirit, God's being and God's mind.

He says, **I speak that which I have seen with My Father and you do that which you have seen with your father.** See...they don't know what He's getting ready to say here. He really gets to them in a moment in a very powerful way and they hate it. The world, traditional Christianity *hates* hearing such things. People don't like the truth, they don't come to the light – it isn't natural. Thankfully they're getting ready to though through being humbled.

They answered and said unto Him, Abraham is our father. They are still going back to that! **And then Jesus said to them, But if you were Abraham's children you would do the works of Abraham.** You would live like Abraham did; you would do the same things. If you were really Abraham's children! So He's not talking about a physical lineage here, He's talking about how you live, by what you live by, by what word, by what understanding you live by. So to paraphrase the intent of what Christ said that is here is "You would do those things Abraham did in his relationship with God." That's basically what He's telling them, "As you would be taught by Abraham, as his children, to regard, honour God as he was doing, then as honouring your parent because you're obedient you would do the same things, the same kind of works. You would live the same kind of life." And so in essence that's what He's saying.

So, as most of the Church knows, Judah was only one of twelve eventual tribes, or nations, that descended from Abraham and Sarah through Isaac. Then there are those who are Abraham's seed through Sarah's handmaid Hagar, through whom Ishmael came, and there are those who are Abraham's seed through his second wife Keturah, that we mentioned the other day here. Incredible. Notice! I just want to mention these things as an aside here – through whom Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian (like we talked about the other day – Midian, the priest of Midian, like Moses father-in-law), Ishbak and Shuah. Incredible! All these children - where are they? What peoples are they? I don't have an answer for it but they're out there – large. All the descendants, again, are primarily known...these here are primarily known as Arabic, but there are others who are not Arabic, but nations who have descended through Keturah. Powerful, awesome! But here there are certain ones that hold onto religion and belief that goes back to Abraham, and not all through Ishmael.

And so again here, talking about some of those things having to do with what Christ was saying here in **verse 39**. Incredible the religions that transpired after this, but all the seed of Abraham, whether it be through Ishmael and even those that I've mentioned here a moment ago, they all have to address the same thing because they all go back to the same thing – and then things get twisted and distorted and they all have to come to understand they have to do the works of Abraham. But let's go on here.

So they answered Him and said unto Him again, **Abraham is our Father, and Jesus said unto them, But if Abraham were your father you would do the works of Abraham, but now you seek to kill Me, a man who has told you the truth, which I have heard from God:** People don't like that. **Abraham never did such a thing.** "But I'm telling you...but Abraham never did such a thing," received these things, talked to God about these truths and give these truths to you, they're not recorded there for you. There are certain things about his life and so forth, but all the things that He is going through and telling them about He says, "You never received this from Abraham."

But you do the deeds/works of your father. Then said they to Him, But we're not born of fornication: for we have one Father, even God. So they began to understand as they were going along in the conversation here that there is more to what Christ is saying; that He's talking about God, that it's not all about Abraham but it's about what you're living and what you're doing that He's focusing upon and so now all of a sudden they claim God. For a while there it was Abraham, "We're Abraham's seed. We know who we are. And because of that we're God's special people..." but they didn't come out and say

that before but now they drive it home a little bit more and saying, “But we are of God and we have one Father.” So they just came to that point where they finally understood that in a more powerful way that He was speaking of their beliefs, their religious practices, and it wasn’t a matter of being of Abraham’s seed anymore.

Verse 42, notice what He went on to say - **Then Jesus said to them, If God were your Father, you would love Me:** ‘If God were your Father you would love Me’...so now they’ve gone from something very physical because they got caught in a bit of a trap there, they think, (and in a way they did because of their pride), and all of a sudden now they’re claiming God as their Father, because before it was about how Abraham was their Father. But now God is our Father and we’re not born of any kind of fornication. So God is our Father, and He says, **If God were your Father then you would love Me:** what an awesome thing! **You would love Me: for I have gone forth from and have come here from God;** that’s what it is saying very clearly in Greek. Sometimes the King James is a little blurry and especially because of the Old English there and so forth and because of what’s in their mind of what they’re translating.

But He says, **For I have gone forth from and have come here from God;** sent here in essence, and He comes from God, He is the Son of God, and so He’s saying things to them that they can’t understand. They can’t grasp these things! These things are written for later. These things are written for us. They didn’t grasp these things! It’s written for the disciples who would later on understand. More fully, it’s written for those who are called into the Church, who are called and are beginning to be freed from, who have to be freed from, Egypt, who begin to see that they aren’t free, who come to understand they haven’t had the truth, who come to repent and hold onto the truth and do the things that Christ said here at the beginning of this story as we began to read. And He knew their attitude too; “You seek to kill Me – a man who told you the truth.” Because there are those in the group there that were deeply moved in the sense of riled up because of what He was saying – so much so they *hated Him*, they hated Him with a passion! And they didn’t know by hating Him they actually were hating God, the one they claimed to be their Father.

Just like today in Judaism, of those who hate us. There are those who do. Not as much. They tend to, more of those individuals in that respect, because of maybe through time the things they’ve gone through. When someone embraces the Sabbath and especially if they know you keep Passover and the Holy Days, there’s a bit of a bond in their mind oftentimes toward you in a way that’s not with the rest of the world. Because they know how a lot of the rest of the world feels about them and their beliefs. So for them they tend to have more of a bond, in that respect, they’re a little more open, but there is still that deep rooted pride as a whole that’s still there and they can’t receive what you have in the sense of believing that Jesus Christ is the Passover and understanding that there is that which they failed to accept and still fail to accept.

With Christianity, it’s a whole lot different. There are people who hate to the point that if it were legal, or if they could get by with it, they would do you in. There are people who sometimes threaten to do people in, or to do harm – which we receive on occasion, I’ve received at different times and different occasions from people – amazing what’s out there. And the more this goes on the more that’s going to become pronounced when it becomes more powerful, because people hate it, because they’re not freed yet, they don’t see the truth.

If God were your Father you would love Me for I have gone forth from Him and have come here from God. I did not come on my own but He sent Me. “I’m not doing this of My own – He sent me.” **Then**

why don't you understand My speech? It is because you cannot hear My word. It goes back to His word, it's what He says, the way of life. **You have come from your father the devil** - He did not mince words! **You come from your father the devil;** See why they wanted to kill Him even more so, to shut Him up? They *hated* what He said! Truly! **You've come from your father the devil, and the lusts of your father is what you will do.** The lusts! That's how you live! You don't live by this word, by the truth I'm giving to you, by the truth I'm telling you. You're not continuing in My word. They got that message. They understood what He was saying at this point about that. They didn't understand it on a spiritual plane but they knew what He was saying and they hated it – that He was from God, that He was sent there to tell them these things from God. In their minds, you know what they thought? “You *arrogant... From God?!*” To them that was blasphemous! That they're so deeply rooted in ‘they're Abraham's seed’ and the pride that goes with it, that ‘they're God's special people’ that they hated Jesus Christ and everything He said.

And He went on to say, He didn't stop there, He said **you do the lusts of your father...He was a murderer from the beginning**, that is a really difficult thing for people to understand, when it talks about that in the Old Testament about that part of the Ten Commandments – You shall not murder. It is something difficult sometimes for people to understand that spiritually in God's Church. If we had only grasped that in a greater way during Philadelphia; if we could grasp and understand the things that are said in the book of 1 John in a greater way on a spiritual plane. But then it's a matter of yielding to that process too, and a matter of understanding the importance of what God is saying. Because it comes down to it, John decades later after the disciples, the rest of the apostles have died, and the things he was writing and God gave him a tremendous ability, a power to see and understand the spirit of the law in a magnified way, that God is love.

And God gave through him and said to him, “If you fail to love your brother you are a murderer!” If you know that you're to love someone and you fail to do it...in other words you fail to obey God, you fail to live by God's word, that's the spirit of murder. That's why sometimes people say...you hear something like that for the first time or much later you hear it again and again and again – at some point it begins to click more, to take on more of an intensity in your mind, you begin to grasp and understand the importance of the spirit of the law. But it's not an easy thing because it's on a spiritual plane. And yet people read through things like that in the Old Testament and they don't feel like... “Well, I would never murder anyone! I would never take anyone's life!” And yet God shows that there's an attitude and spirit there – given time, given the right circumstances, if that spirit is in there, if it is not brought in check, if you had a longer lifespan, if the conditions were such, that's what it leads to. Hatred can become so intense, the mind can go so far, and spiritually it is the same spirit.

And so when Satan did what He did it was a spiritual matter, to destroy, to go against God's way. When you fight against peace, when you remove peace, when you go in a different direction it is murder, it is destroying, it is destruction, it does take life, and the moment Satan did that it began to take life; it began to take the life of other angelic beings. Because with his big mouth he began to spread division. Division! “God's going to do this. That isn't fair! That. Isn't. Fair!” Spirit of murder. Incredible! And we as human beings do the same thing. Thankfully we can repent and change when God draws us and helps us to learn these things; but we learn them over a long period of time, how to love, and the importance of loving others by how we live.

...you have come from your father the devil, and the lusts of your father you will do. He was a murderer from the beginning and did not abide/dwell in...I'm saying this because this is that Greek word that has all those meanings, and they all apply and are translated accordingly throughout the New Testament.

...and did not abide in the truth; did not continue in, did not remain in, did not live in the truth, all those words that you can insert every place you see that word. When Jesus Christ said, 'Abide in Me and I in you,' – 'Remain in Me and I'll remain in you,' – 'Live in Me and I'll live in you,' – 'Continue in Me and I'll continue in you,' – they all apply – every one of them has powerful meaning and they're all to be inserted in your understanding when you read such words.

And so He says, **he was a murderer from the beginning and did not abide, remain in, the truth.** And when people don't remain in, continue in the truth then the bottom line is we have the same spirit. That's what we have to repent of; it's the spirit of murder. **...and did not abide in the truth, because there is no truth in him.** No truth! When he began to go a different direction he chose his thinking, his mind and rejected God's. And God says there's no truth in him.

And so sometimes people in the world, sometimes people in the Church in times past, there were problems at different times with people, people would delve into what somebody is writing in a commentary... Why go to someone in the world? Why go to Judaism? Why go to what rabbi's have to say? Why go to what pastors and preachers that have written books or commentaries? Why go to them, to what they have to say about what God... they don't have the truth, there's no truth in them. But sometimes people felt, "Oh there's a little truth here and there, you just kind of have to weed through it and sort it out." Well, how do you have that ability? How do you *know* you're doing it right? How do you *know* that you're able to pick out a truth? What is the truth? Where is it coming from? By what inspiration and by what power? Is that how God's spirit works, through such avenues? That's why if people understood those things they would have run from those things.

And so it kind of became the thing, "Well, we're not *allowed* to read other things. We're not *allowed* to read what some other minister who has gone off on a tangent, what he has written. We're *forbidden* to do that in God's Church." It wasn't a matter of understanding why it was wrong; it was, "Because the Church told me I can't do it. Boo hoo... It's the Churches responsibility, not mine!" Do you understand what I'm saying? I know those of you who have been around a long time definitely do. But it's to understand the reason why.

It's the same old thing like certain things that have been in the Church, where someone has been told that we shouldn't be on facebook. There's a good one. You put your life out there and you *don't* know what you expose yourself to that's out there forever. You think it's not? You don't understand. Everything that goes out there, it's out there forever. Now, within the Church it's not a healthy thing because of where the Church is going, and time, and so forth, but let alone the information that you put out there and expose yourself to. And so people have to choose, and sometimes with relatives and so forth to do that on a limited scale but you have to be careful what you put out there. But within the Church God has shown we shouldn't be doing it. And the point being is then when it first starts it's like, "Well, the Church tells me I can't do it, that's why I'm not doing it." It's not a matter of understanding. It's not a matter of trying to grasp that, "No, I don't want to do it because I don't believe it's right, it's not because the Church told me I had to do this, or I can't do it." Do you understand the difference, what I'm saying here? It's a spiritual thing, whether or not we embrace it because we have looked into it and prayed about it and asked God to give us understanding and wisdom, that this is coming from Him and we want to do what He's given to us and so we're convicted; "I'm not going to do it because I don't believe it's right, not because the Church told me I can't."

The point being is when people do things like that, “The church made me do it...” or “The church told me I can’t do it,” it’s not accepting personal responsibility. If that’s the reason you do something it’s the wrong reason in essence, spiritually. It needs to be because you’re convicted of it.

We’re going to have some of that on the Last Great Day. I deeply believe that’s where some of the sermon is going to go on the Last Great Day, of things –especially all who are new - in a more powerful way that need to examine in their lives. What is deeply embedded in you? What do you deeply believe and why? Is it truly deeply embedded in you? Is that *your* spirit, *your* mind, *your* heart, *your* conviction totally?

Spiritual things that Christ is saying to them that they couldn’t receive because they’re in bondage, they’re in captivity, and so He spoke about a murderer, He spoke about Satan. **He was a murderer from the beginning and did not abide in the truth because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own:** in other words, the context, ‘**speaks from his own way**’ because there’s only *one way of life* and either we seek to be in unity with *that* because we know it comes from God and we want to be in unity with the word of God, but any other deviation is not God’s way, it’s our way! And that’s what we have to get rid of to be free, our way, and that’s a *lifelong battle*.

When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own, from his own way: for he is a liar, Incredible! Powerful words here. **...he is a liar**, he lies, he twists, he distorts, because his vision of what he sees. That’s why God lets us know He hates lying, He hates a lie. We have to hate lying; we have to hate a lie. We have to hate a ‘white lie’, a ‘little white lie’. I was told after the apostasy by the ministry, in essence from the top in one organization basically, that there are some things that sometimes can be like a ‘little white lie’ and basically that’s what was said. Something can be told in such a way, if it’s what’s better, if it produces a better result in the Body in the Church, it’s okay not to tell the whole story, it’s okay to fudge a little bit here... if it produces a ‘good result’. What do you mean? How does a lie produce a good result? I found this even within the Church, sometimes even within the ministry. And the reason I mention this is not to give anyone in the ministry a hard time because we all go through this in life, it’s a part of maturing – because if it can happen there it’s happening throughout the Body, we just don’t see it yet.

The point being is that there are these battles that we have in life that are there, that sometimes we can look at an issue, a matter, a conflict within the Church, and we can pass along the story of what has happened, say to Johnny or Wayne or Terry, as an example, or if it comes to me it comes to me, and because of the way we see it, because of how we’re judging a matter isn’t the way it fully is, because we’ve already judged it. You don’t realize sometimes in life that you can actually judge a matter and then repeat a situation, give an explanation of what’s taking place somewhere and have it not be all the facts because you’re not giving all the facts, because you’re not telling the entirety of the story. Does that make sense to you? It happens all the time in life; it happens on a job, it happens in family and so forth.

And the reality is one’s ability to make a decision...this has happened throughout time in the Church; that sometimes some decisions have been made sometimes by the ministry because people haven’t given them the entire story because they’ve already judged it so they slant the story to their perception, really to their judgment. And so how can someone else come along and give a judgement out of a matter when the story isn’t fully true? Sometimes we don’t understand what we’re coming out of, that there’s still that in our mind that is so difficult to see, a bondage, a captivity that we’re still in. We come out of these things through time, it’s not overnight. Ask God for help to judge righteous judgement

because it has to do with the truth. You want to be truthful. When you judge matters in life, when you perceive things in life and how you deal with situations and people, strive to get all the knowledge of a matter you can before you make a judgement. Don't judge from appearance! ...what *appears* to be a certain way. That's what Christ said, "I don't judge that way." That's what He said, "I do not judge that way; I don't judge like man, from appearance." Or from what you hear or from what you're told only... someone comes and tells you a story, don't judge fully from that. Be careful in life! Do the best you can in all matters, strive to do that, but strive that above all things it be as truthful as possible when you finally have to make a decision and a choice in life.

A side lesson in all this about Satan and what he was going through and the inability of the Jews to see the truth, that they believed lies; they were deceived and didn't know it. And that's what He's telling them, **you do the works of your father.** In other words, you're liars. That's what is being said here, "You're lying too! You're not living the truth. I'm a man that's telling you the truth and you seek to kill Me. You're to abide in my word, live in my word, and you can be My students, but you do the deeds of your Father."

"Oh, we're Abrahams!"

"Oh, we're God's! God's our Father!"

Well, what is it? Then He goes a little deeper then and tells them, "No, you're of your father the devil, he was a murderer from the beginning; he is a liar, that's what you live, that's what you're doing. You're lying!" Powerful words!

...for he is a liar and the father of it; of lying, in other words. **And because I tell you the truth you do not believe Me.** I'm telling you the truth and you won't accept it. **Which one of you can convince Me of sin?** In other words, 'expose or reprove Me of sin'. "Where's My sin? Show Me! Who can do it?" They tried! They tried to the very end to find people who would come up and give witness against Him and they had to give false witness; people who twist and distort and not tell the truth, not put things in a proper light, not to tell the whole story! That's how it got done! They finally got it done because.... well, anyway.

And if I speak the truth then why don't you believe Me? Whoever is of/from, is what the word means, **hears God's word.** That's why we're able to hear the truth, because we're of God. God's given us of His spirit, we're able to hear it, we receive it but others out here don't receive it. They might have some interest in, because they're in awe at first, "I've never heard such things." But you have to be really careful; you have to walk softly in those [cases], because you don't know how they are going to treat you after that. They might still be your friend, if they're a friend, they may not be, they may come to where they don't like you at all now. Incredible!

Whoever is from/of God hears God's word: therefore you do not hear because you are not of God.

That wasn't easy to receive. The only ones who could receive that were the ones that were yielding to being drawn by God, the rest couldn't. The rest became offended; there were those in the midst of that group that wanted to kill Him at that moment. Incredible!

So this is a hard, most difficult truth for those who see themselves in a different religious light. And we've got to understand what they're going through. Don't ever forget what it was like coming out of, or being called. Sometimes maybe we just remember the good parts of it, but don't forget what you were like before when you wouldn't have received this way of life. You couldn't receive this way of life until God brought you to a point where you could. Because that helps us in how we deal with others so often, how we work with others in life, how we treat others in life.

So again here, what an awesome thing the kind of freedom God's going to bring us to.

I'm going to be reading some things here in the notes that I just don't want to miss as we talk about some of this. But again, what an incredible thing that God is giving to us, the importance of being made free, and in the process the excitement of seeing Judaism freed, the excitement of seeing those of Islam freed, the Arabic world first and foremost in that respect, all the rest as well who have followed that way of life and that kind of thinking as we go through some of these things in these sermons and talking about them. But along the way learning the lessons of how difficult it is to go through a process of being freed, even if you've been in the Church for a long time. It's a lifelong process of being freed and we're still going through it.

That's why I mention the more you draw closer together, the changes that Laura and I see when we visit from area to area every six months or so as a whole, as an average type of thing, and those changes we see, it's because of being made freer. That's the process that's taking place. The more you're made free the more God can dwell in you. The more your mind is freed, the more truth you're able to receive the closer you're able to draw to God – it's this process of coming out of bondage, of being made free spiritually. And so if we always understand that then that should be an awesomely great excitement for us to see this happening even more so in the world, and an ability to deal with people of different ideas and so forth and always keeping that in mind.

So I'm going to be reading through some things here.

Abraham's descendants are in bondage and do not grasp that truth, just as Jesus Christ was going through and explaining to the Jewish people. But very soon now they're going to be given freedom through the truth about themselves and each other, and that's a beautiful thing! For the Jewish people to understand their neighbours, speaking of those in the nation of Israel today and those neighbours around them and the hatreds that are there. And when they come to more deeply understand what they have gone through from the beginning starting with Hagar and Sarah, the things that weren't really right, the things that weren't really fair. Because you see, God was working in a powerful way with Abraham and Sarah, but there's still that human nature, there's still those things we contend with, and they were blessed mightily and they are part of the 144,000. Awesome to understand!

And so even as they were being drawn and coming along, just like for us, we all have sin in our life, we all have things we've had that have taken place in our life within the Church. We all have things that we hope aren't going to be written about. David has a lot of things in his life that *are* written about – a man after God's own heart! I really hope that there aren't things in my life that are written about, but if they are so be it. And in your life, do you want that out there? No, we don't. We want to put the past behind, we want to put the sins behind, we truly want it to be as far as the east is from the west. Not just a matter of sin and God forgiving it and forgetting it, but for it not to be written that anyone remember or see it. So we're humbled by those things, that's good.

Going back here; The blessing and the ability of people being able to understand others, what they're going through, and that helps to soften your heart. And when those of the other side, Abraham that have come through Ishmael, and even those who came through Keturah that are there as a part of that as well, some of those regions, when all those people come to understand their neighbour and the feelings and where they've come from and why they developed and begin to understand there's no need for jealousy, there's no need for envy, there's no need for hatred, there's no need... to understand what they've gone through. It helps, when people come to see the truth of what others have gone

through, it helps to soften the heart, it truly does, and how you work with others, how you deal with others, the more you can empathize with their problems and their trials, understanding that you have had them as well and that we're all, in that respect in that context, in captivity. And all of us are still in it, we are coming out of it, we are not out of it yet but we're going forward still coming out of it as a process.

Concerning the descendants, talking about the Arabic peoples and peoples of Judaism and so forth; concerning the descendants who are primarily known as the Arabic peoples – What about them? Have they fared better than Judah? We know that they haven't. Islam that came into a beginning, it's beginning, about 600 years after Christ, was not of God. It wasn't of God's spirit, no more than traditional Christianity was of God's spirit, no more than Judaism is a matter of God's spirit; but it's touted as being greater than that which God has testified was corrupt and treacherous, speaking of Judah, which Jesus Christ also testified of the same concerning Judah. And this is touted as being better than that which God says is treacherous. What a comparison to make – two things that are wrong – comparing traditional Christianity with Judaism. What's the point? They're both wrong. They're both in error.

So we're going to take a quick look at Islam and see how they too, as Judah has done, stumble at the same Rock, at Christ, because that's what it's about. Incredible! I read quite a few things here in preparation for some of this sermon, things that I haven't known about Mohammad, things about Islam, things about its development, things about the Arabic peoples going back to a period of time even before the 600's and going back to 400 and 500 and it's been good because until we know certain things that have happened in people's lives we don't know what their battles are, how they developed, and it's a part of this process of being made free.

But anyway, I want to read these things here:

Mohammad, it is said, is to be the greatest prophet, greater than Jesus Christ who was a Jew. You think that enters into their thinking? Mohammad is said to be greater because he was the last prophet. That's what they see, because he came after Christ so he had to be greater. Strange isn't it? Yet he wasn't even the last because they don't understand.

Just as with Judaism the Arabic people and those of Islam are going to have to come face to face with the truth that they are not doing the works of Abraham whom they say is their father, although most of them are indeed, obviously, of the seed of Abraham.

So with Mohammad, with Islam, we only have to look at some simple teaching as with Judaism. Either the truth is upheld as being from God or it's not. Judaism fails on one major doctrine, obviously, and that is the Passover. (We'll come back to that if we have time.) Again, I know we mentioned that in the sermon here, in other sermons here, but it's an awesome thing to understand. Who, obviously speaking of Jesus Christ, the Passover was the Messiah. But Islam has stumbled at the same Rock, just as they have. And like the Jewish religion the Arab peoples have had a similar history of evolving ideas that eventually led them to the exact same opposition toward God on the most fundamental of all issues.

At this point I'm going to read a compilation from various sources in order to give you a kind of a synopsis, an overview, of Islam that they must address, obviously, that Islam is going to have to address in order to become free, because of the truth that God Almighty, that *Allah*... You know, some people think that it's wrong to say 'Allah'. Give me a break! You know, what is wrong with people? It's like if I

put in the book about 'Allah' that I mention that He is God. Give me a break! Different languages have different expressions that say the same thing! They are referring to the God of Abraham, and just because they use the word 'Allah' doesn't mean that somehow it's a bad word to be used.

It's like people... we have people that come into God's Church that think using the name 'Jesus' is wrong to do because it comes from paganism or something of that nature, there are those who try to tie it in as coming from paganism, and they don't understand etymology, they don't understand words and languages and where words have come thru through time. They don't understand that part of the New Testament, much of it was written in Arabic! Do you know that the original things written in Matthew, Mark, and Luke as a whole, that they're not in Greek? They're in Arabic! And you know who you're going to read about there? *ALLAH! God!* It's a word in a language!

And Jesus is a word that's come out of a name for Yeshua, Jeshua [*Yoshua* or *Yahushua*]. Languages are awesome when you see some of the connections of things. You go to Europe and you see different words between German and Scandinavian countries and going on down through the Netherlands and into Belgium, and everyone... it's amazing because of the tribes and the peoples who have migrated from area to area and some of the things that are the same; sometimes almost the same way you'd say it in some weird spellings! And so just a little bit of a change. Incredible! But people get all twitter-pated and bent out of shape and sometimes even upset with me. 'Allah' is not a bad word, it's a name in another language for God, specifically referring to the God of Abraham, the one God. Something you've got to hand to them; at least they knew it was *one God* and they held onto it. Traditional Christianity didn't do that, they wanted to have three – one in three and three in one – the spiritual musketeers. Sick! Perverted! The distortions that Satan has done!

So again here, things that they're going to have to come face to face with and address concerning God Almighty.

ⁱThe peoples of Arabia were predominately polytheistic...

It's really interesting to go back and see what happened; many gods. So if you go back to 300, 400, 500 leading up to the time of Mohammad and his life and what he went through and what was in his region, it's really incredible what happened and why he did some of the things he did and why he wrote some of the things he wrote, and knowing how he grew up and what area he grew up in. So that whole region was polytheistic, meaning that there are many gods.

...and Mecca was the place of their most important sanctuary, the **Ka'ba**. Its ancient origins are unknown...

Can't be found. Some think they know what it is, their ancient origins, but just like you go back to Jerusalem, the old city; some think that Christ was buried in one spot and that's sacred to them, and others outside the city think that's where it is, which has a look of a skull. But the Catholics and some of the others have a place inside and they take people down this little place here and, "That's where it was." Pfffft! It's like the Catholic church, if you had all the pieces of the splinters that they have of the 'cross' you can build a house.

So people have these ideas they bring through time because they want to push their ideas and... anyway, going on here, speaking of the Ka'ba:

Its ancient origins are unknown but since all accessible deities were represented there, All deities known. It's like bringing *all* that could be known in the world at that time there. Christianity – Christianity was there as well, ideas of traditional Christianity, of the Catholic church, the main one. Ideas of Balaam, ideas of Ishtar, all the different gods of anybody that was travelling...and that was a major area of travel, of commerce. And so this was a sacred spot because all of them could be represented there, all of them could have their own...and it was protected. I'll read this to you, going on here...

Its ancient origins are unknown but since all accessible deities were represented there it was a place of annual pilgrimage for all tribes. At one time there were said to have been as many as three hundred and sixty idols in and around the Ka'ba. It contained idols representing Arabian tribal gods and other religious figures, including Abraham, Jesus and Mary. This, too, was under the control of the Quraysh...

...the prophet Mohammad's tribal family. So this area was under their control, that family.

...who wisely established a non-violent zone that was *Haram* (sacred, forbidden), radiating for twenty miles around the sanctuary, and made Mecca a place where any tribe could enter without fear and where they were free to practice both religion and commerce.

What an incredible thing! To understand some of that history and to understand how certain things evolved, things that they need to come to understand and acknowledge about their history, things that traditional Christianity has to come to understand about their history, where it *really* came from, that every protestant church out there really should give their allegiance to the pope, because that's where their beliefs came from – even though they reject the Catholic church. Incredible! Because that's a part of being made free, to understand your past. And when people go back here and understand why things developed and how they developed they're going to be made free. It's a part of that process.

The Ka'ba was the most important holy place in Arabia even in pre-Islamic times; it contained hundreds of idols representing Arabian tribal gods and other religious figures, including Abraham, Jesus and Mary. It is a massive cube believed to have been built by the Prophet Abraham and dedicated to *al-Lah* (*The God who was the same God worshipped by the Jews and Christians*); it stands in the centre of the Sanctuary in the heart of Mecca.

In time, Muhammad came along and began to write, and the beginning of new religious teaching of Islam began to emerge. After his death in 632 AD, divisiveness didn't take long to set in, as different ideas of succession emerged on the scene, and has caused opposition and upheaval within Islam ever since.

They've had wars over this, of who they thought the succession should come from – Shia and Sunni. They don't have a unity there in belief, each thinks they're right, just like every other religion. Everybody thinks their right. Judaism believes their right – well, which one of Judaism? The orthodox? Are they the ones that are right because they're orthodox? And if they are then why don't the rest follow them? The liberals? Because there are all kinds of teachings within Judaism that don't agree

with each other. You go read about the Messiah and what Judaism teaches, it's amazing! The different ideas out there about a Messiah! It's astounding! You'd think there would be some kind of unity and harmony but there isn't and there wasn't 2,000 years ago either.

The argument of true leadership has existed between Shia and Sunni since Muhammad's death.

But as with Judaism, there is the exact problem within most of the Arab world and Islam because of the teachings in the Qur'an about Jesus Christ. Either these things are true or they are not. If they are true, then what Christ said and taught also applies to them as to the Jews.

ⁱⁱIn Islam, Jesus (Arabic: عيسى 'Īsā) is considered to be a Messenger of God (a Messenger of Allah) and the *Masih* (Messiah) who was sent to guide the Children of Israel (*banī isrā'īl*)...

That's a convenient thing. Jesus Christ was sent, He was a Messenger of God, He is the Messiah, but He was sent to lead the children of Israel with a new scripture, new teachings. They call it the Injil, I believe it is or gospel.

...with a new scripture, the *Injil* or Gospel.

"Because if it was a new message for them it wasn't really for us...it was for *them*."

The belief in Jesus (and all other messengers of God) is required in Islam, and a requirement of being a Muslim.

The Qur'an states that God sent the message through the angel Gabriel to Mary.

And this they hold in importance because of Gabriel, because of a messenger being sent from God, because of what happened with Hagar and because of what was supposed to have happened then with Mohammad. But as with God everything is in agreement, there's no conflict in the word of God. Incredible.

The Qur'an states that God sent the message through the angel Gabriel to Mary, that God had honoured her among the women of all nations and told her that she would give birth to a holy son named Jesus, and that he would be a great prophet.

This is their belief! But they basically believe that although He was born of Mary that it was not as God's Son but as one like Adam who was created and made there. Does that make sense? It makes sense to them. So it's more of a creation type of thing, it wasn't a matter of this actually *being* the Son of God, it's a matter of a created being who was a great messenger of God, who was a great prophet.

Although Islam teaches that Jesus was a great prophet, a holy Son born of Mary, the Messiah sent to guide the children of Israel, they do not grasp that by such admonitions that His words then should be seen as *from God* and heeded accordingly. Judaism picks and chooses what they want to obey in God's word and how they want to interpret it. Traditional Christianity has done the same and it's even worse when it comes to self-serving interpretations of God's word. So Islam has followed suit, especially in

that they do not heed the words of Jesus nor make any real effort to do so. Islam rejects the Christian view that Jesus was the Son of God.

And I understand that. Do you know why? Because they have it from the Catholic church! They have rejected what *is* wrong in the sense of the trinity. That's what upsets them about Christianity, because they are very strong about there being one ever living, all mighty, eternal God – Allah! That is *deeply* ingrained in them that they *did* receive through Abraham, through Hagar and the descendants who followed afterward. And they held onto that truth! And so they have hated, in essence, when it came down to it, the ideas of some of the teachings there, and yet they're conflicted because of certain beliefs they have obviously about angelic beings and how God has worked with mankind, how God worked with their *mother*, going back to Hagar, and so forth.

Islam rejects the Christian view that Jesus was the Son of God...

It's primarily because of the doctrine of the trinity and what's taught there, not because of this, but they still have to deal with this as well, otherwise they would have to obey that and follow it, but so much of it is intertwined and made easier for them to do because of the trinity – they see it's wrong.

...that He was crucified:

They don't believe He was crucified.

...or that he was resurrected from the dead. The Qur'an says that Jesus himself never claimed any of these things.

See, that's a *lie*. They stumble at the stumbling block. Incredible!

Let's go over to Luke 2, because you see, everything we read earlier in John 8 where Jesus Christ was talking to those of Judaism about being Abraham's seed, the exact same thing applies to those of the Arabic world. See? The same things He said there are words to them as well that they're going to have to come face to face with to be made free and it's *not* going to be an easy thing. That's why it's written in Zechariah there about Egypt and about whether they come up to the Feast, because it's about a peoples, not just the nation or area of Egypt, it is about the peoples of that part of the world who have received these doctrines and these beliefs.

Because it's going to be a very difficult thing for some to humble themselves; still, because of the prejudices about the name 'Israel' and about Jesus Christ, and some of the beliefs that exist there. It's still going to be a stumbling block; so they're going to have to conquer. Because you don't just change your mind and the things that are deeply embedded in you overnight when it's so deeply embedded in you. Because this takes a special spin, a different one than Judaism and a different one from traditional Christianity that is in essence easier for the human mind to turn from, to be freed from.

So again, they claim that Jesus was a messenger from God with a new message to the children of Israel and that He was a prophet. He was *before* Mohammad. They have it a little reversed. It's not a matter of the importance of the last prophet, they think, it's the matter of someone who came before and what He had to say. And so again, they speak of the importance of Gabriel's message from God; so what

about what God said first of Jesus Christ from Gabriel that we read the other day, yesterday, as a matter of fact.

Luke 2:8 - And there were in the same country shepherds dwelling in the field, keeping watch over the flock at night. And behold the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were deeply afraid.

Verse 10 - And the angel said to them, Do not fear: for, behold, I bring you good news; So they acknowledge the messages of Gabriel, they acknowledge the things that he said about Mary and so forth. **I bring you good news with great joy, which shall be to all people.** See? That which God is now going to begin to more fully reveal that this is indeed for all people. It doesn't say just for Judah, says for all people, and this thing about Gentiles and the words that are used over and over again that Christ Himself used.

Verse 11 - For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour who is Messiah the Lord/Christ the Lord. So it's good news for all people, not just to the Jew. And the Lord of whom? The Messiah? The Lord? It wasn't just of Israel, it wasn't just of Judah, it doesn't say that; it says to all, including those of the Arabic world.

Let's notice here Matthew 26. It's going to go through some different things said here and this is a struggle within Judaism, it would be a struggle within Islam as well, those who have this beliefs. But again, things that they're going to have to address. Grasping and understanding the battles that are going to be there and the opportunities to work with them. I look forward to this! I look forward to people who are being freed from this, an ability to be a part of helping to shed light on the truth, helping people to come to grips with different things to see in themselves. That's a great blessing to be able to have such opportunities. Some of you that well may have some of those opportunities, not just in places like this, because these things are worldwide.

Matthew 26:62 - And the high priest rose up and said to Him, Will you not answer anything concerning what these witnesses speak against you? So here it is, Jesus Christ is brought there, all these things are being said, and so the high priest... because in Judaism at that time especially, you better answer the high priest. That's the concept; and if someone doesn't something is really deeply wrong with them. And so even the high priest gets worked up about his authority, his perceived authority that he has in this conversation here. **But Jesus held His peace.** He didn't answer. One far greater, *the* High Priest, the one who would become indeed High Priest, the one who was Messiah is standing right there, and he doesn't even know it. **And the high priest answered and said to Him, I demand of you by the living God;** it's like, "Don't you know who I am?! I call upon *God's name* in my authority and I demand of You..." Arrogance that was there, pride-filled arrogance. You give authority to people sometimes... anyway. I think of border crossings sometimes we... anyway.

I demand of you by the living God that you tell us whether you are the Christ, the Son of God. Now what good is it going to be when He comes out and says it? You think... what are they going to do? If He says, "Yes." Kill Him! Blasphemous! So no matter what happened He's not going to win because they've already judged it.

Tell us whether you are the Christ/the Messiah, the Son of God. And Jesus said to him, You've said it. That was His response, "You have said it." Now, because there are situations here where God has led people to see, such as the disciples at times. We're going to read an example of that as well where they

respond but He didn't correct them. And when He said something like this, "You have said it." Because He didn't come out and say, "Yes, I am the Christ! I am the Son of God!" and then people could say...then someone, in here, we just read about in Islam, they would have to deal with that because He said it specifically, but so now they can say, "Well, He never said that. He never *claimed* to be the Son of God." Yes. He. Did. Powerfully so! But who listens? And here is a good example of it.

So He says, **You have said it.** He didn't say, "No." He didn't say, "No, I'm not." But He answered in the best way, the most incredible way that this could be answered to such a spirit, to such an attitude of the high priest. **You have said it: nevertheless I say unto you, After this,** "I'm going to tell you something more." **After this you shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.** Whew! "You have said it and I'm going to tell you more!" in essence is what He really said. "I'm going to tell you more..." This did not go over well.

Then the high priest ripped his clothes, saying, He has spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of these witnesses? Behold, now you have heard His blasphemy. That's all they wanted, something they could say was blasphemous and have reason to put Him to death because this is not of God, He's claiming things that are of God but the high priest thought himself as the authority, *he* was the high priest. Incredible attitudes sometimes.

Judaism, will it accept this? Islam, will it accept this? No. *No!* He's a stumbling block to both! And yet it's very clear what is recorded here and what He said. Even more so with Islam than Judaism, because Judaism doesn't acknowledge those things but Islam has an acknowledgement that He was a prophet, a great prophet of God, and a Messiah. They even have prophecies in the future about a Mahdi and about Jesus Christ, or a Messiah, the Messiah – which they can't even put together there.

John 6:66 - From that time many of His disciples went back and walked no more with Him. This is that occasion where He says "...you have to drink My blood and eat My flesh or you have no part with Me."...and those who couldn't grasp or wouldn't... You know, there's a good lesson here. There's an *awesome* lesson in this. There were those who still followed that still didn't fully grasp what He was saying. Do you think that the disciples at that point in time knew that He was talking about the Passover and the taking of the Passover? We're in John 6 and those things aren't revealed until John 13 when He told them on Passover night what He was instituting, what He was giving to them.

Paul recognized that later on, you know, when he refers to those things in Corinthians, referring back to what Jesus Christ instituted, the taking of the bread and the taking of the wine and what they picture. And Jesus Christ gave this to them, the first beginning of an understanding here, of taking of the bread, taking of the wine, the foot washing ceremony and so forth. And so it was done a lot later. Do you think those disciples knew about the bread and wine at this point, what it meant of 'drink His blood and to eat His flesh'? No, they did not! They didn't have the slightest inkling but they continued to follow Him. But others became offended at Him because you know what *they saw*? Their own interpretation? That was the problem – *their* interpretation. And their interpretation was, "God tells us we can't drink blood! God tells us – it's very clear – you're not to eat human beings! It doesn't get much worse than this, to break the health laws when it comes to food. Man is not food." And so they quit following Him. That's what it says, many of His disciples, many of the students at that time quit following Christ. It's a lesson for all of us to understand, truly. If you don't understand something...see... you wait. If you *believe* where the truth is, of how God gives the truth you wait until you can see, until you can know, until you can learn.

See, there are things written in a book that I haven't understood all of. Do you think you understand all that's written in it? I'm talking about '2008 – God's Final Witness'. There are things I have learned in there that I didn't understand fully, of things that God works out. But if you know certain things – first of all, the truth, where God is - you'll know what to do. You *wait on God*! Everything is in God's time, it truly is. This is an incredibly powerful lesson to understand in life. God will show you! Don't get twitter-pated, don't get bent out of joint, don't go off on a tangent, don't leave the truth – because this has happened through time. I can think of instance after instance in Mr. Armstrong's time where these things happened over and over again.

I think of Pentecost and how he took a year to determine the truth of a matter, and there were people who would not wait. "How could he be God's *apostle* if he can't make this decision *right now*?" And Mr. Armstrong didn't take it lightly to change the date. If he's going to change something he wanted to make *absolutely certain* in every way, through prayer, through study, through others researching it, and then to look to God for Him to make it crystal clear to him in his mind, because he had the responsibility of giving it to the Church. He knew that. He took a year to do it. There were people who left in the meantime, they wouldn't wait a year because he wasn't quick enough to decide. God will show. God will show us. See?

It's like the Trumpets. That's why it's written the way it is, which I didn't understand fully, but now I understand even more fully, making it very clear *we will not know what they are specifically until they occur*, and so much of what God gives to us is exactly that way. There are things that we don't know until it's there, *then He shows us*. It's a spiritual matter. Then He *reveals* it to us, He helps us to see. Anyway, we'll get back to this later on.

But it's a powerful lesson, because you see, the disciples didn't leave Him, they knew who He was, they were *convinced* of it, they were *convicted* of it even though they heard something here that just seemed *so wrong...SO WRONG* - to drink blood and eat flesh – but they didn't leave because they knew who He was; they believed He was the Messiah. They believed He was the Son of God.

Then Jesus said unto the twelve, that's what the story is... Will you also go away? Then Simon Peter answered Him, Lord, to whom shall we go? I asked that some time back in a sermon, "Where are you going to go? What group? Where are you going to receive the truths?" **You have the words of eternal life.** That's what they said to Jesus Christ, **You have the words of eternal life.** This is what their response was, this was what Simon Peter's response was. **You have the words of eternal life.** For the Jew only? **You have the words of eternal life.** That's pretty powerful, that's pretty far reaching.

And we believe and are sure that you are the Christ/the Messiah, the Son of the living God. Now, because Jesus Christ didn't say these words...People can say, "Well, He didn't say it." Islam can say, because He never said it, He never claimed to be the Son of God... Yes, He did. This is very powerful. Over and over again! Because if He wasn't He would have told them immediately right then and there, and they gave the answer that was true.

And Jesus answered them, Haven't I chosen you twelve, and one of you has a demon? It even goes a little farther...**and one of you has a demon? He spoke of Judas Iscariot the son of Simon: he was the one who would betray Him, being one of the twelve.** That was said pretty early on here in part of this here, before some of these events started taking place where he did what he did later on. But again, as we went through this past year here, Passover season, there's so much that happened toward the very end that was very quick – but still, even before the end, he did the betraying.

John 11:19 - And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary, so this is when their brother died, and we went through that story earlier in the year, to comfort them concerning their brother. Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming went and met Him: but Mary stayed seated in the house. Then Martha said unto Jesus, Lord, if you had been here my brother would not have died. But I know, that even now, whatsoever You will ask of God, God will give it You. Jesus said unto her, Your brother shall rise again. And Martha said unto Him, I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day. She knew the truth; **I know he's going to rise again in the resurrection at the last day. And Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection**, isn't it amazing, things that He did say like this and other things that He taught.

I am the resurrection and the life: Why won't people accept that? Why can't Judaism accept that? Why can't Islam accept that? But they can't, He's a stumbling block, disagrees with their ideas and their beliefs. They're going to have to come face to face with that real soon.

I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me, Jew only? ...though he were dead, yet shall he live: See, people have different ideas about what happens when you die. You go off somewhere. So many of them; Satan has done an incredible number there on the mind of human beings. There is this paradise or this heaven you go to when you die, and people won't accept some of the most basic of things, 'you're from the dust of the earth and dust you return.' Abraham knew that, his children knew that. This is a very basic thing from God. They have no excuse.

...though he were dead, yet shall he live: Did He say this to others too? You remember the woman at the well? She was in Samaria. She was a Samaritan, she wasn't a Jew. Talked about her being able to have living water and so forth...because people don't understand the spirit, and God has to give that to them after they're humbled, but it takes a long time to come out of spiritual captivity, it truly does.

And whosoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this? And she said unto Him, Yes, Lord: I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who should come into the world. Over and over and over again. So sadly, people don't try too hard. The reality is, the truth is, whether it be of Islam, Judaism, or traditional Christianity, they don't try too hard to understand some very plain words from Jesus Christ, and the reality is they need help to do it because they don't understand their captivity.

When you're in captivity, just like yourself, every one of you has things in your mind you do not yet see – every one of us! If time were to go on, through time there's more that God gives and helps you to become freer and freer, the longer He's able to work with you, because it's a constant thing, this matter of coming out of captivity, things that are locked in your mind and in your being, of who you are, of why you do the things you do, why you act the way you do, what motivates you, what your true motives are in life – and it's a constant learning process. See? A *constant* learning process and you'll ever be digging those things up...or God will help you dig them up. It's not always a fun thing either, it's a tough thing, and oftentimes to be able to come to see some of those things we have to go through some pretty hard things. It is difficult, it's not easy. So hopefully that gives us even greater compassion on those who are being brought out of these things, and I know it does, and I know it will; but the more we grasp the basics of some of these things the more we can help others to grasp the basics of some of these things.

I do want to end in one area here; 1 Peter 2 has beautiful scriptures of a process here talking about who we are. Let's notice part of it quickly.

1 Peter 2: All of this, being encouraged here to **lay aside all malice, all guile, hypocrisies**, again, easier said than done. It's a need we have and sometimes when we come into God's Church we think we did that at baptism. No, we haven't. It's something ongoing because they're *deep* inside of us. There are things of hypocrisy that we don't know, that continually come out of us, because it means that ability to judge something because we see it for what it is, we acknowledge it truthfully because we see it truthfully. But we don't see everything yet truthfully because of prejudices, because of things deeply rooted in us.

The simple sermon that's coming about men and women! It's coming! Okay? God helps us to dig deeper and deeper, and you'll see some things that you maybe thought you dealt with or see but you haven't yet, that are so deeply rooted in you you would be working on that from here on as well. *I'm still working on it!* You think *you are working on it, have need to work on it?* Until you die or until you change you'll be working on those kinds of things that are in your mind, deeply rooted, and if you think they're not you're in for some real tough awakening.

Verse 5 - You as lively stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood... beautiful things that are taking place here but you're still coming out of captivity to do this, it's a building process, it's ongoing, building, building, building.

And then it says **verse 6 - Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner stone, elect, precious:** because it just told us in the previous verse we're living stones, lively stones that are being built up a spiritual house. It's a building process. That doesn't mean that all of a sudden we're just stacked there, it means that there's construction going on inside of us, in the mind. It has to change, it's being transformed to something else so it *can* be put in place. So we're lively stones, we're like rocks, we're hard-headed, and it takes a lot to work with that stone to get it to where it needs to be so that it can be put into place. That's what it means, 'a living stone'. It's an ongoing work.

And then it talks about Jesus Christ and he says, **wherefore also it's contained in scripture, Behold, I lay in Zion a chief cornerstone, elect, precious, and he who believes on Him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore who believe, He is precious: but unto them which are disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same has become the head of the corner, And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them who stumble at the word,** That's why Jesus said what He did back there in the beginning scriptures. 'It's My word.' 'It's the words I speak to you that God gave Me to give to you.' Other, it goes on there talking about a royal priesthood and the blessing of being in God's Church and so forth.

But the descendants of Abraham through Hagar have stumbled at the Rock, but the truth is that the greater offence is that of the Jews. When the Jews come to understand it's their greater offence and they humble themselves accordingly that's going to help those of their brothers embrace them, of Ishmael. And it's going to help those of Ishmael when they see that change of attitude and their acceptance of them and what they have gone through and how difficult that had to be through life, to have great compassion on them. It's a healing process. It's a beautiful thing.

So again here, we briefly noted some of the problems of Judaism and so forth here but I want to go to one other scripture here before we're finished; it's in Malachi. Because although all these peoples are deceived the greater fault is with Judaism, the greater fault is with the Jewish people.

And you know where some even greater fault lies? The Church of God. That's why I mention this. What we did during Laodicea is a greater fault than the Jews because we had the impregnation of God's spirit. We have the greater repentance to do. But the Jews have great repentance as well on a plane below that spiritually but yet far more as far as being guilty than those of Islam, if you understand. And that's why it's important to notice this particular scripture in Malachi, of a people that have elevated themselves to a level so great by ostentatiously brandishing or flaunting the name of 'Israel' in an exalting manner – the children of Abraham, the seed of Abraham. That 'Fiddler on the Roof' mentality that I mentioned yesterday, of a downtrodden people that are constantly being oppressed by others and taking *pride in that* as 'God's special people'.

So they pride themselves in the law and the prophets and in this very last book, in the book of Malachi...it was written long after they were brought back out of captivity in Babylon through Judea and Jerusalem. It's about 400 BC that this was written. God inspired Malachi to write a prophecy concerning Judah, of what they would become, 400 years before Jesus Christ came, and the prophecy came true and they haven't changed since.

Malachi 2:11 - Judah has dealt treacherously, They haven't been faithful, that's what it means in Hebrew here 'to deal treacherously', haven't been faithful; and it's about the Rock, the cornerstone. It's about Jesus Christ, it's about Passover; and literally this word – 'to deal treacherously' - having to do with 'deceitful in practice'. The rabbis have been horribly guilty of this, guilty of betrayal. That's what the word means.

So, **Judah has dealt treacherously and an abomination is committed in Israel**, 'to prevail with God' – see, it's spiritual. **...an abomination has been committed in Israel**; because it's not about primarily physical Israel. It is within Israel but as far as a nation is concerned it's very much about Judah. But again here, on a spiritual plane, this is a great abomination; **and in Jerusalem**, 'saalem', 'peace', because it's done just the opposite; **because Judah has profaned**, notice this, **the holiness of the Eternal whom He loved**, it's about the Messiah, it's about the Christ. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the one He said that He loves, 'This is My beloved Son.' On the day that He was baptized. Very powerful!

...and has married the daughter of a strange god. Judah has. It's not of God. They can call it 'god' just like traditional Christianity can say it's 'Christ' and it's not Christ, it's false...it's a different Christ, it's not Jesus Christ, it's not about Christ at all. It's not about God, it's not the truth, it's a lie.

So the religion of Judaism, of Judah, is not of God, not of God's Church, because that is where what is true exists. But again here, they've received paganism just as everyone else has things mixed with paganism.

I was going to go into a long span of time here of some of the events contained in the book of Chronicles, about how they went through this process and why they believe what they do concerning the Passover, but that's what it's about. It's about the Passover. They rejected the Passover.

So what an awesome time, that by this time next year the descendants of Abraham will have been freed, if you understand, it's the *beginning* of freedom. It will be their choice and their battle through time...and some a long time to truly be free, but what a beautiful thing. It's beginning.

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<sup>i</sup> <http://www.humanjourney.us/Mohammad2.html?gclid=CLnV4cKD8KoCFRBTfAodQirvQg>

<sup>ii</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jesus\\_in\\_Islam](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jesus_in_Islam)