

Today we're going to begin a new sermon series and I'm excited about being able to deliver this new series. It's amazing what we have gone through and are still talking about, because it so much affects our lives and has indeed caused us, in many respects, to have to address a lot of things in our life, or still addressing them. But anticipating May 27th was a most incredible experience for God's Church to live and each of you has your own story and your own experience.

May 27th has revealed what's inside of you. It was, is, and will continue to be, a spiritual mirror into your life – and we'll come back to that point later on in the sermon series.

But the truth is, the reality is, you have lived and are still living one of the most unique experiences of any of God's people through time. That's hard for us to grasp sometimes. When you live something it's so difficult to grasp the magnitude of it. We can go in the Bible and we can read about events and things that have taken place in time in people's lives and they're inspiring and they move us and we think, "How incredible it would have been to have been there at that time, to experience some of those things." But the very things we're going through we don't recognize, so often then, the magnitude of the time in which we live, of those things that God is bringing to pass at this time, and those things that we're experiencing that are going to be written about that others are going to be able to read about and be very moved by the very things that you're living.

And so again, when you live it sometimes it doesn't seem to have the same impact as when you read a story in the Bible and the impact that's there in your life because what you're living you're living day by day by day and sometimes it's very difficult then if even at all possible to really grasp the magnitude of what we're going through and what we're living.

So as you live this experience you'll come to appreciate far more deeply why God has done everything *exactly* as He has, and your ability to see God more fully, to understand Him more completely, to love His ways much more deeply, will come through *living this experience* that God has given each of us to personally encounter and witness. And we will learn that as we continue to go forward; we'll be moved by that as we continue to go forward through this time.

May 27th was the beginning of this experience, of what each of us would personally encounter in the Church, in our own individual response to God, to God's ministry, and of what each of us would personally encounter in the very revealing response from others in the Church and outside the Church. Lessons, experiences that will result or can result in proving to be one of the most important definitions of your physical life - in other words, it will define your life in a very powerful way. This long 'day' that we're in is going to define your life in a very powerful way as time continues on.

This new sermon series today is entitled *Between the Two Evenings* or in Hebrew, if you were to give it that...those who have gone back, who have read the Passover information and so forth, '*bane ha erebyim*' (*'ban ha arbayim*'). It's the Hebrew for meaning the very same thing although it just says 'evening' in the Bible.

Let's turn over there to where we've gone before and read this; it's over in Leviticus 23. We'll go there and consider the title then of this sermon today and *why* this particular title has been chosen...and if you're really on the ball you already know it anyway.

Leviticus 23:5 - In the fourteenth day of the first month 'at even' ; now, this is what is an awesome thing to me. Whenever I go back and I think of some of these things and think of some of the things that God has given to us, one of the most powerful things that God gave to us in the very beginning after the apostasy was information about Passover and then Pentecost, because of the counting and the various things and how they're tied in so powerfully to things that are revealed in Leviticus 23. Some of these words, or a couple of the words that we find here, the word 'even' is not just a word for 'sundown', 'at sundown' and as we've gone through in time's past in studies, but it's a word that means 'between...' in essence, the best way to describe it in English is 'between the two evenings' – '*bane ha erebyim*' ('*ban ha arbayim*').

It says, '**between the two evenings' is the Eternal's Passover.** And what's inspiring for me when you go through something like this, because it's about Passover, is to understand there was *much* that Jesus Christ was to fulfill between the two evenings, the Passover, at the very beginning of it to the very end of it. In times past, during Philadelphia, the first part of Laodicea - or all the way into Laodicea, candidly – there was that which was lacking in the sense of "Why did we have an observance of taking the bread and the wine at a particular time that was similar to the time that the lamb was killed and they ate of the lamb in that night." But then the meaning of the things that Jesus Christ fulfilled later on when He died, very powerful indeed, and it all has great meaning. That's why God said 'between the two evenings', because there are things that Jesus Christ fulfilled from the very beginning to the very end when He instituted the symbols of taking of the bread and the wine and then Himself fulfilling it later in that particular day.

Very powerful, to me very inspiring when I think of this and what God gave to us to more fully understand, because there were some that taught, or believed, when asked a question, "Then why did He die later on? Why didn't He die on the night of the 14th?" And that's because of not understanding the process of what Passover was all about and the sacrificing that took place in the afternoon preparing for that day later on, for the day later on, the High Day that was coming.

This is where the title, obviously, of this particular sermon has come from. So how does the term 'between the two evenings' apply to the subject matter of this particular sermon? Well, because at the beginning of May 27th when the sun went down on the 26th in Jerusalem, we entered one of the most important days of all human history. It was a prophetic day, one that's spoken of throughout the Bible, as I mentioned last week, Mr. Armstrong, as I wrote, commented on something he had written, how that he said there are over thirty places where this is spoken of, this 'day of the Lord', in scripture.

It is a 'day' that magnifies Pentecost. That's powerful to understand. It's a 'day' that magnifies Pentecost. It began on Pentecost 'at even' in Jerusalem, at the very beginning of the 27th of May, and it will end 'at even' in Jerusalem at the end of May 19th, of Pentecost, 2013.

So this prophetic 'day' is indeed, from even to even, on Pentecost, for Pentecost, and everything that Pentecost means. Obviously it's not a Holy Day that we're in, but it is a prophetic time that is very important to God and there is much revealed in this time period.

Let's turn over to another place where this is spoken of, over in Exodus 34. It is a 'day' prophetically, or defined prophetically as '*bane ha erebyim*' ('*ban ha arbayim*') or 'between the two evenings'. **Exodus 34:21 - Six days shall you work, but on the seventh day you shall rest:** and so God set it out that there are things that mankind is to accomplish, that people are to accomplish in the six days of the week, the first six days of the week, but the seventh has been set aside by God, again, understanding the meaning of the seventh day Sabbath.

And God says on that particular **day you shall rest: even in...** and the King James says here, '**earing**' **time**, but that's not a good translation. There are things having to do with agriculture and so forth that are here, but when speaking of agriculture in Hebrew this is a word that means literally 'to dig in', or 'to cut into the earth', to plow, and that's what it's referring to. There is much to do with raising crops when it comes to agriculture and things that, if you're a farmer, that you're going to be mightily concerned with. And so God is telling them, **even in the time of plowing...** and why do you plow? Well, there are a couple of primary reasons; if you're in agriculture the two things... one is to prepare for planting and the other is to cultivate, to prevent weeds or other things overtaking your crops. So these are critical times for farmers, especially if you go back into agriculture in times past and how things were done. Today we have huge machinery and all the chemicals that are put out there to kill weeds and all the things that take place out there. It's not like it used to be by the things were done by hand at one time.

But these are the things that affected farming and people who were involved in farming and the world was an agrarian society. So God's saying, **even in times of plowing**, even in times when you want to be out in the field, even at times when you feel the pressure and you've got to get your crop in because maybe you have a particular spell right now that's dry and maybe it's been raining and you've got to get out there and plant. It's just like at harvest time; there are times when rains are coming or bad weather is coming – like in the mid-west, you can have hail storms that can completely wipe out your crops overnight - so you have this pressure. I've witnessed this so many times when I used to be on harvest runs, where people we would cut wheat for, they would see clouds coming in the west and you hear a report of a bad storm coming in, they panic, and they want that wheat out of that field that night, even if it's wet, they say, "Take it to the elevator, I'll pay the penalty – get it cut!!" And I understand that.

But God said, "On the Sabbath, you don't do that." Which brings back a story... I do remember one individual in Oklahoma that wouldn't let us cut on the Sabbath. Interesting! And we thought that was quite weird, on the Sabbath day – I don't know what he was, whether Seventh Day Adventist or what – but no matter what was happening he wouldn't let us cut from Friday sundown to Saturday sundown, and boy, we thought that was *strange* stuff, because in farming, in agriculture, you want to get that crop in. And so that's why God said it this way. He said, **even in times of plowing and preparing to plant**, you're anxious, you want to get out there and do that, or things that are overtaking your crops, you want to get out there and take care of that, **but not on the Sabbath day**, God said. So you rest from all your work on the Sabbath day...**and in harvest you shall rest.**

And so that's why God stresses it this way, because these are times that people feel a lot of pressure and they want to be out there doing it, so God says, "Not then."

And you shall observe the Feast of Weeks, referred to in some places, the **Feast of the firstfruits**, or Pentecost, **and you shall observe the Feast of Weeks of the firstfruits**, and 'firstfruits' also carries with it the meaning of 'first ripe'. This really struck me the other day as I was going through this, because it's always bothered me a little bit that we talk about the spring harvest, and I know when we had the

opportunity to visit in Israel one time around Passover season, there was one area I wanted to go to and that was the area where Joshua and the Israelites came through, around Jericho. Well, that was under Palestinian rule at the time, basically, and it wasn't a real safe area to go into so I didn't get to go there, but I saw enough of Israel to realize so many of their crops are already in by Passover time – unlike the United States here where you might start cutting some things in Texas in May sometimes, but not around Passover time and not before Passover. And here crops or a lot of crops in Israel were already taken in by Passover time. But I really wanted to see that area because I know it was lower in sea level and the crops there tend to get riper faster, warmer faster than the higher areas of elevations of Israel, for this very purpose, of trying to understand and witness some of the things that happened during the time of Jericho because of what people have said about it and not understanding what God was giving to them at that time.

To make a long story short here, those of you who are familiar with wheat – it isn't an early harvest in the sense of a spring harvest. In some areas, like in Israel, you can cut it and it's early, yes, but if you look at agriculture and you look at wheat, as an example, as a young fellow I used to start cutting down in Texas. Some started in Oklahoma but I was still in school at that time, so by the end of May, beginning of June, they'd be cutting wheat in Oklahoma. Well, it's not ripe in Kansas by that point, so by the time you got through cutting in Oklahoma you could drive up on to Northern Kansas, and by that time you'd be able to cut wheat up there. And you just keep moving north so that by the time September came and it was time to go back to school again we'd be up to the borders of Canada. Most harvesters would go on into Canada; I'd have to go back to school. We'd get into Montana or North Dakota, and by that time the wheat had been ripe to there, but others would go on into Canada. And then by that time some of the ones from the mid-west, they would come back and they would start the crops that were prepared for, the milo, the corn, and other things, for harvesting farther into the fall.

The reason I'm mentioning that is because God isn't addressing the specific kind of harvest like wheat or corn or milo or barley or spring wheat, winter wheat, all the differences there, as much as He is in talking about the process, and this is a part of the process, that which was first ripe. I think of the firstfruits that God is calling; there are those who have lived through 6,000 years, but there is that which is the first ripe because that's what God is working with, that's the crop He's working with then. There is going to be the greater portion of it that comes later on, indeed harvested more toward the fall in the Millennium, and then, obviously, the Great White Throne. So, yes, there are the early harvests, that which is first ripe, and then that which continues on. The harvest continues on. During the Millennium the harvest continues on through that period of time, and an awesome thing that God is doing on the earth at that time.

But anyway, it says here... **You shall observe the Feast of Weeks of the firstfruits**, or the first ripe, **of the wheat harvest, and the Feast of Ingathering at the year's end**. And the primary purpose of the Feast was to celebrate. At this time here everything had been taken in. A lot of places in the world have great celebrations – not good one's always, obviously, but great celebrations – once the harvest is fully taken in because of fruit that's been taken in off of trees, grapes, vineyards, and so forth, the last parts of crops by the time you've gone...whatever, everything is in by that time and so it's a celebration of the harvest that God had given in that year before the winter comes. So it's kind of a wrapping up of the entirety of what's available and all that's been brought in from the very beginning to the very end, because in those in agriculture there is generally something going on all the time in that respect, in the sense of early harvest all the way through to the end until you can't bring anything else in, when it's not growing anymore and can't be reaped and brought in.

So again here, it's going through this story then, God is giving it. He says in **verse 23 - Three times in the year shall all men appear before the Lord Eternal, the God of Israel**, so again, we're familiar with that and other places we read that, in Deuteronomy when we talk about an offering that's above and beyond that of tithing, and here it's talking about the same time in the sense of the seasons of the year because this is when the Holy Days are, **shall all men appear before the Lord Eternal, the God of Israel, for I will cast out the nations before you and enlarge your borders: neither shall any man desire your land**. It's awesome here! I think of that which applied to them back then and what applies to what we're getting ready to go into now and how God is going to change the entirety of the earth and all that's of other nations, all that's foreign, it's not going to be foreign anymore, we're going to become one.

...neither shall any man desire your land; so He's saying here, in essence, during these periods of time when you obey God and you go to worship before God at this time, these seasons in the year, go, nobody is going to desire your land. They're not going to come in and take anything from it; you're going to be protected, you're going to be blessed. God is going to protect your land while you're away. So people can go away from there, go down to Jerusalem, and God gave them the promise that in obeying Him He would take care of things that were there. They didn't have to worry about being invaded or people coming in and stealing what they had at that time. That's what He's telling them.

He says, **neither shall any man desire your land; when you shall go to appear before the Eternal your God three times in the year**, in other words, in three seasons.

I think of us and that which we have gone through, some of this, again, and I think about the time we're in right now and when it talks about the 'Feast of Weeks' here, the Pentecost season, the firstfruits and what this means, and understanding now we're at a time of Pentecost. That's what this whole period is about, this last 'day'. That's the point of all this – is that this 'day' that we're in right now, everything 'between the two evenings' is about Pentecost. It's everything that God has brought to a fullness here, showing what has to take place in order to bring this day about, all that has to take place as far as that which we've always understood about the firstfruits who are going to be resurrected later on, but how God is going to bring it about – that's what this 'day' is about and we'll touch on that as we go a little farther in the sermon.

Let's turn over to Revelation 1, because what we're going through right now is a long period of time, it is a long 'day' indeed and it hasn't been easy for some to have to address some of this, and I understand that, making the changes that people have had to make. But one thing become obvious, it has tested people, it has tried people as to what is inside of us, and it defines who we are, it has defined who we are in a very powerful way, where you are in your relationship with God and what needs to be done to even make it stronger.

Revelation 1:10 - I was in the spirit on 'the Lord's day', and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, Now, in context here, in what's being discussed, it's setting the stage for what the book of Revelation is going to go into, and it's about this 'day'. It is about *this 'day'*, it is about this period of time 'between the two evenings', of things that God is going to work to bring about in order to fulfill Pentecost and the meaning of the firstfruits in Pentecost and the return of Jesus Christ and the establishment of the Kingdom of God on this earth. So again, this sets the stage for the entire book and what the entire book is all about.

So, **I was in the spirit on 'the LORD'S day'**, so it sets the stage - and we're going to go through a part of Revelation here, a lot of it actually, and talk about some of this because this is the thrust of what the

entire book is all about. If you remember this theme, if you remember what it's about, you'll see it popping up over and over and over again throughout the entirety of the book. So this 'Lord's day', or 'day of the Lord' is about a major transition in time. It is about the end of 6,000 years of man's self rule, and it's about how God will bring about this transition in this particular time...and He does so in His 'day' through all that He brings upon this world at this particular time.

Let's back-up here to verse 1 and just get all this in context now. So again, all this that He's going to bring about at this particular time, on this 'day', of a spiritual fulfillment, if you will, of Pentecost, 'between the two evenings'.

Verse 1 - The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave to Him, I love how these things are written, how God has inspired things like this to be written; again, showing order, showing government, showing what God has done and how God does it. But it says it's **The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him**, and so God had to give this to Jesus Christ. He didn't have it until *God gave it to Him. ...to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass*; you think, What does it mean 'shortly' if it's about the 'day of the Lord'? Well, in God's timing it is short, but again, what He's getting ready to reveal here - it leads up to *that* day, that's what it's about.

So it says, **to show unto His servants those things which must shortly come to pass; and He sent and signified it by His angel unto His servant John**: And the reason He talks about it, 'must shortly come to pass' is because it begins with Ephesus. It began with the Church era of Ephesus. *What* began then? Those whom God was working with in an organized fashion of the Church, the Body of Christ, to prepare them for 'that day', the day that they're going to be resurrected and become a part of God's government. And so everything leads up to that, to those who will become a part of that. So that's why God goes through and addresses these things in this exact manner.

And then it goes on to say, **Who bare record, or testified of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and all things that he saw**. So again, it's about what John has been given, about what God has given, what God has told him, what he's heard directly from God in vision or in this thing that John didn't fully understand what it meant to be like in spirit, in heaven even, before God's throne as things were given to him, things that he saw in vision, didn't understand but was told to write about. Because he was physically on the island of Patmos.

So again here, **who testified**, is what this means, **of the word of God**; and so John was testifying of God's word, of what God had to say, **witnessing of the words that came from God, and of the testimony, the witness**, again, **of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw** here. So that's what he's going to write about.

And he says, **Blessed is he who reads**, you know, what an awesome thing! It's not just about 'reading', we understand that. You read through something like this and it's an awesome thing, because I think of all the people through time, especially since the time of the printing press, who have been able to read that particular book, the last book, the book of Revelation, and that's not what it's talking about. That's not just talking about the ability to sit down and read something but the ability to know *what* you're reading, the ability to *see* what you're reading, the ability to interpret and understand and grasp what God is saying. That's what communication is about. But those who just read it as a story and don't understand what it means, why are they blessed?

We're blessed, especially now, because of what we see and what we know. Those in Ephesus who were able to read the book and understand the things that applied to them spiritually – which they did and different ones at different times could read through it and be moved by God's spirit that this was for them, that this was at least an admonition to them, that they could receive correction and would receive correction to the degree that God's spirit's working with them. That's how God's spirit works.

So, **blessed is he who reads and they who...** What? ...**hear the words of this prophecy**, so it's a matter of reading it, but with the understanding that it's a matter of knowing what it is you're reading, of what you're hearing; and you're able to hear by what you're able to see spiritually. ... **and keep those things that are written therein:** there aren't very many people, if you look through time... anyone can read through the different examples there of Ephesus all the way through Laodicea and learn lessons from it, some are going to apply more fully to people's lives than at other times. During the time I've been in the Church since 1969, I remember hearing sermons where people would go through and discuss the different things there and there are always lessons through all these different eras that you can learn from. But there are some that are more pointed, in that respect, to a specific people at a specific time, and we're to receive more instruction during that time... and by God's spirit, you know what? We do. It's an awesome thing, by God's spirit.

And so it says here...not just the fact that you're able to read, you're blessed if you're able to read and *hear* what's there, but you keep it. Well, what do you keep? You keep the truth that's there. You keep the instruction that's there. You listen to, you hear the admonitions of what God gives. There has never been a time in God's Church - never – in any of the eras in times past in God's Church where He's given greater ability to hear what's written in this particular book. Because *now* is what it's all about! We live in that time, the time when the Seals began to be opened. We're the ones that live at that time; the rest didn't live at that time. They didn't know what those things meant, but you lived it! It meant more to you when you came to understand what it meant that the 1st Seal was opened and you understood what happened to us as a Church, when you came to understand that an *apostasy* had taken place. That meant *a whole lot more* to you, because others who lived in the past, they didn't hear it, it wasn't for them. It was a story, but you experienced something that was unique to you and you *heard* and it impacted your life in a very powerful way, those of you who were in the Church at that time. Those since that time who have been called in, you can still, and are still, able to be inspired mightily by those things because it's a part of history now, of something that's happened in your lifetime that you can look back upon and visit with individuals or read about things that happen in the apostasy. It means something to you, whereas in times past for people in Ephesus, Smyrna, Thyatira, all the rest of them, it didn't mean much to them at all, it was a story. They weren't able to hear anything because it wasn't for them!

So, **blessed is he who reads...** so you're blessed! And the more you see, the more you understand, the more you're blessed! Right now, in this 'day', and even in this sermon series, God is giving us more to see and to hear and to understand *what's* taking place right now. We understand now what the 'day of the Lord' is about in a far greater way than we ever had. And, as a matter of fact, I think of one letter that's been written recently about some who decided to leave, couple of individuals – maybe I guess 3, actually, all together – and a letter which was written, which I'm going to refer to at different times throughout this sermon series and read parts of it, to show you some of the thinking and what can happen to you and miss the mark in what's going to define *your* life, if you're not careful.

Now, I know, I understand, as a whole, for all of us, we have things that are defining our life in a very powerful way because we're moving forward, because we understand this day we're in, we understand

there are adjustments we've had to make physically, yes, and we understand that we're in a great war and we're fighting that and we're listening to the past sermons here and desiring to throw ourselves into this with all of our being indeed. And God is giving us strength to do that! And so we are indeed blessed because we're living this!

This is an awesome time, it truly is, and the things you're going to witness throughout this 'day', the things you're witnessing right now, don't have as big an impact in your life as they're going to, as you're going to understand later on that they've had – truly. And so you hear the words that are of this prophecy and keep those things that are written therein. *Keep them* in our being. They are what help to keep us, the truth; the truth that God gives to you - the more truth He gives to you, the more you hold on to it, the more it keeps you. You not only keep it to yourself, you want it for yourself, you keep it and latch onto it, but it keeps you, if you understand. It's what solidifies your life and keeps you in this way of life, and we hold onto that with all of our being...and the more we see, the more we're able to keep close to us. It means more to us, it's a closer relationship with God.

That's why I mentioned what I did in the introduction of the sermon. The more we see these things, the more we're able to keep them, the closer we actually draw to God, the more we come to understand *why* God is doing things the way that He is! And that's an awesome thing!

Rather than finding fault, as a few have done, because something didn't happen the way *they* wanted it to – *we all wanted it to!* Join the club! We all wanted it to and there was disappointment! Absolutely! But God said, "You're not through yet! This isn't a normal 'day'!" and so what do we do? Get upset with the messenger, which some have done, and want to find fault with and tear down? I think, "What are you doing? What's defining your life right now? Are you going to throw it all away because it was disappointing to you and you don't want to go forward, because God says "Go forward! Move forward more because I've got more for you, because there's more to be done, because there's a great purpose in what's happening?" I marvel sometimes at these things and have pain through some of these things when individuals aren't able to latch a hold of it and *keep* what God has given them to keep – because those things will keep you if you will keep them, what God gives! 'The Day of the Lord!'

I marvel at some of the blindness of some of the things that have been said about the 'day of the Lord'. I'll just give you one example that comes to mind; criticized, condemned, said to be false, a lie, a liar, because... They might as well say those things to God! ...and they don't understand that. Because I have written about in times past about a 'day of the Lord' which happens in a day, that some in the Church used to teach that it has to take at least 30 days for it to take place. That hasn't changed! This 'day' that we're in right now *ENDS* in a literal day, and it *is* referred to as 'the day of the Lord'. It *is* a day when the 7 Plagues are poured out! It *is* a day when the 7th Trumpet blast takes place. We know when that is! We know when the 1st Trumpet blast was and we know when the 7th...but the ones in between, we don't know! God has let us know the beginning and He's let us know the end...and what takes place in between we live by faith, we wait on God.

Things *did* begin; a 'day' *did* begin on the 27th, but that's not good enough for some! ...but that's what God gave. That's what God gave to us; He said, "That's My Day. It is My Day! It is My day that I'm going to fulfill and it's a *year* in actual length...but it's My 'day'!" And I think, "What a horrible thing to tell God, 'I'm not going to accept that, that's just a little bit too much to accept Your 'day' and how You're going to do things.'" And people don't realize that's what they're saying, but spiritually that's what they're saying...and I feel for them.

So, we live in a 'prophetic day' that has to do with when, primarily, the rest of the fulfillment of the 1st Trumpet blast is going to be fulfilled, but also when the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th take place – *in this 'day'*, God's day. But also at the very end *is* a 'day of the Lord'. It is a literal day. The 7th Trumpet happens in one day! And the reason I've written about those things in the past is because that in the Church, again, some used to think that God can't do that in a day, it's going to take at least 30 days. That's what the teaching was; that's what the belief of some of the ministry was. God says He's going to do it in one day, the last day, May 19th, which we thought was going to be May 27th of this year...but He's going to do that in one day. That is a *literal day* of the Lord. The prophetic 'day of the Lord' 'between the two evenings' is the one we're in right now, but it ends in a literal day still called the 'day of the Lord'.

And so some look at that, because they don't understand, and they find fault with and say, "Well, what is it? You said it was one day, that it couldn't be thirty days, and now what is it?! It's a whole year long!! Lies-lies-lies!!" And I think... Do you all understand what I'm saying in the difference here? ...the difference between a single day and a spiritual day, a 'prophetic day'? That's what the explanation... that's what it is.

But because something happened in people's lives and they have to find a reason to justify what they're doing by stopping, by not continuing to go forward, these are the kinds of straws that human beings will grasp for. And I think, "What a horrible thing to define your life! Something so shallow! Something so shallow that has a simple explanation to it if you just wait and listen and hear." I ache over these things, I truly do. Nothing has changed! Since the apostasy began I have ached because people can't hear. I think of Jesus Christ who looked down over Jerusalem and He wept and He said, "How many times," speaking that which was coming from His Father, "I would have taken you in." That was God's spirit. "How many times I would have taken you in but you wouldn't have it." Incredible! I hate to see people suffer, but everybody has to make their own choices in life.

So again, **blessed is he who reads, and they who hear the words of this prophecy and keep those things which are written therein, for the time is at hand**. For those in the first Church era of Ephesus, the time was at hand. John was already into that period of time. What he was writing, what he gave, was for that era, that period of time that he was living in right then. It was 'at hand'. It was for them! And why? Because of what God was doing in preparing the firstfruits in an organized more powerful way than He'd done in times past, because God only individually, as a whole (maybe a few individuals at a time), but as a whole that's all you find in the first four thousand years. Not in a group of individuals who could come together and be preached to and learn Sabbath by Sabbath by Sabbath and grow as a body called the Body of Christ, the Church of God. God worked with people differently in the first four thousand years, individually, just a few at a time compared to what was taking place beginning on Pentecost on 31 AD, from then on.

So again, it's at hand because it's for each Church era that came along. But what's the message? The 'day of the Lord', because that's the fullness of it all, that's when it's completed. Their message, their ability to hear the warnings that were given to them, the admonitions in the different Church era's, to hear the words of the book, to respond, to live God's way of life, that which determined their being firstfruits and the fulfillment of that then when they return with Jesus Christ, when they're resurrected. That's what it's all about. All that will happen in that final day!

Pentecost was at hand for those alive when these things were being fulfilled in their life, for Ephesus, for all the different eras through time.

Verse 4 - John to the seven Churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace from Him who is, who was, and who is to come; I marvel now as we go back to this and 2005 and I think about how strong, how stable we are now in grasping and seeing things that are so clear now that at that particular time were not clear to the Church, of who it is talking about. Is it talking about Jesus Christ? Is it talking about God the Father? Who is it talking about? And we know by reading it who it's talking about – it's very clear - some of those things that were kind of like muddy waters in times past. How much has God blessed us? How much have we been blessed to be able to hear? Where *is* God's Church? Awesome, isn't it!

...and peace, from Him who is, who was, and who is to come; and from the seven spirits which are before His throne; And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness and the first begotten of/from the dead, so clear, the first of the firstfruits, the first begotten of the dead. He died. **...and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto Him who was loved and washed us from our sins in His own blood. And He made us...** this theme comes up later on again. What's it all about? The last 'day', that 'day of the Lord', if you will, that final 'day' that leads into the time when Jesus Christ returns, the time of that great resurrection when these are all resurrected, the 'day' that we're in right now, the end of this particular 'day'.

...and has made us kings and priests; so the purpose of it all, what God is doing – preparing us, those who are to be firstfruits, for that great resurrection. **...and has made us kings and priests unto God, and His Father** speaking about Jesus Christ, about those things about 'unto God' speaking of His Father, not God's Father. Awkward way it's said here in English. **...to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever.** So again, speaking first about God the Father, then about Jesus Christ, and then ending it up here again talking about what has been done, what Jesus Christ has done, that He's made unto us, made of us, if you will, those who have been called, those who become a part of the Body of Christ, **into priests and kings unto God, and to His Father,** speaking of Jesus Christ, **to Him be glory and dominion forever.**

Then it goes on to say, **verse 7 - Behold, He comes with clouds; and every eye shall see Him...** We have to be careful what we read. Sometimes people would read these things and we think about the time Jesus Christ returns and it's like every eye is going to see Him on that day and it doesn't mean they will. There are parts of the earth it says you can't even see through the atmosphere it's so clouded, there is so much thickness, the sun... you can't even see the sun, you can't see the moon. And so physically there are things that people *aren't* going to be able to see. That's not what this is talking about.

Behold, He comes with clouds; the majesty, the power, the glory that's going to be there, **and every eye shall see Him; and they also who pierced Him:** Well, how is that possible? That was 2,000 years ago! Well, that's the very definition; it shows what it means. In time everyone is going to come to know that Jesus Christ indeed *is* the Messiah, *is* the Son of God; everything that God ever said about Him that's written through time, whenever they died, they're going to be resurrected. For those who live on, it's going to be obvious to the whole world, through the Millennium and those who live into the Millennium. Those in the Great White Throne, they're going to come to know and to see indeed that He was the Son of God no matter what their choices become.

And so it says, **even those who pierced Him...** Why? Well, because they're going to be resurrected in the Great White Throne and they're going to see Him, they're going to know who He was indeed. And there is only one who pierced Him, but it's talking about those who were a part of it, those who put Him to death, the way He was put to death was He was pierced by a single soldier who rammed a spear into His side, as it says in John.

...and all kindred's - speaking of families, sometimes referred to as 'tribes' in the Bible, families grown large. ...and all the kindred's of the earth shall wail because of Him. Even so, Amen. And so again, those things that happen right up to the very end, those things that have happened through time, those things that will happen in time.

It goes on to say: **I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, says the LORD, who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.** Very clearly here talking about God Almighty, God the Father. And so again here, these things that are being said over and over in different ways, some from God the Father, some from Jesus Christ, some things John is saying of what he's witnessing and so forth. That's what it said from the very beginning of this chapter.

I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, I love that too, 'companion in tribulation'. Everyone has to go through tribulation, spiritual tribulation, tribulation in this world to become a firstfruit. It's by design. It is an absolute must. It has to be that way; there is no other way because of the world, because this isn't God's world. And so anyone who lives this way of life, who walks in this way of life, is going to go through trouble. You've lived it, you know it, don't have to explain it.

...and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, 'in the kingdom and the patience of Jesus Christ'. We have to have patience...come up to May 27th, you have all your hope at a particular moment in time, it doesn't happen that way and God says more patience. "May 27th is here; My 'day' has come, but it's a long 'day'." And so we adjust accordingly. We say, "Yes Sir." "Yes Lord." "Yes, God Almighty. Whatever Your purpose is, whatever Your will is." ...and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, **was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God,** that which God was going to give, that which is true and right that comes from God, **and for the testimony/witness of Jesus Christ,** those very things that Jesus Christ would give that it says here that God gave to Christ; and so His word, His testifying, if you will, is of what God gave to Him. He's testifying about what God gave to Him and He's giving this to John, so that's what it's talking about. ...for the word of God, that comes directly from God. There are times here that God speaks. There are times here that Jesus Christ speaks. But it all comes from God Almighty and that's what Jesus Christ is talking about – that's what the testimony means of Jesus Christ.

I was in the spirit on 'the LORD's 'day', thrust him forward in time. He's talking about that this is what it's all about, this is the whole picture of the book of Revelation, what it centers around, what it builds a story around, about God's 'day'. ...and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, notice again here, **Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What you see, write in the book;** so again here, repeated a portion of what was said in verse 8. So here God Almighty is speaking again and he's hearing this sound, he said, like from what he's hearing like a trumpet it's so powerful, reverberating through the air what he's hearing. ...write in a book/scroll, and send to the seven Churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea. And I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, so he saw things that were like a vision that were real, and he's seeing these different pictures of things, very rapidly so, and he's to write about what he's seeing.

And so he says, **I saw these seven candlesticks, and one like the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and fitted about the chest with a golden belt/sash.** It's kind of like this thing that goes around the shoulder here on one side and comes down the other side and it's this golden sash, if you will, or golden belt that's fitted around there that goes across the chest. And he sees this, this

awesome figure standing there and he goes on to describe... **His head and His hair was like wool and white as snow; and His eyes were as a flame of fire;** So he's seeing something here that God is helping him to see. It's physical what he's seeing. He's seeing something here that he's trying to describe that he's never seen before and it's showing the glory in the best physical way of something that's in a spirit world.

And His feet like unto fine brass, because obviously when He manifests Himself as a physical human being this is not how He's seen; but he is in the spirit, he is seeing things that are reflected in what you can say that exist in a spirit world, that you can best describe in a physical world. **And His feet were like fine brass and they burned like a furnace; and His voice as the sound of many waters.** Again, this... if you've been at a mountain stream and you hear this sound that's coming down, this rumbling and this power that's there, that's the intensity that God is showing here in a physical way. Again, all about the glory, the power, the might of Almighty God to help us as physical human beings to try to grasp something that is hard for us to grasp. We can't grasp the spirit world and that which is so much greater than us, beyond our understanding.

Verse 16 - And He had in His right hand seven stars: and out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword: so again, he's seeing things here that have meaning. We understand what it means, a 'two-edged sword', but to see some of these things, to describe them physically, how do you do this? **...and His countenance was like the sun shining in his strength.** In other words, difficult to look at, but this is what was there, there's power here and there's that which is so bright and powerful, hard to look upon but this is what it looks like.

And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. Can you imagine? That's a physical reaction. Especially today, because of technology, science, things we see on TV, things we see in Hollywood and is done, it might not have the same impact...but it probably would if something like that happened to one of us. **And He laid His right hand upon me, saying unto me, Do not fear; for I am the first and the last:** He didn't say 'Alpha and Omega', they're not the same words that are used to describe God Almighty. These are different words, they have more to do with, in the sense here, in the first one here, as before everything else. In other words, it's like when we went back and we started today in the sermon, the first scripture we went to is about Passover. It's the beginning. You can't enter into the Holy Days until you start with Passover. Jesus Christ is before everything else. Before you can do anything else that's where you begin, He is the beginning, in that respect, that's where you begin your spiritual life. You begin by being able to be forgiven of your sins because of what He did; because of His sacrifice for us we're able to be forgiven of our sins by His blood. And then a process begins whereby He can even begin then to live and dwell within us, Him and His Father. So this is where it begins and this is what He's telling him. **...and the last;** in other words the end, the completion of it all. It's all in Christ, Jesus Christ. And God Almighty is using Christ, in that respect, to bring everything to pass to where everything has been given to Him until the very end and then it talks about how that everything is handed back to God the Father. Awesome!

Then **verse 18 - I am He who lives, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore.** Isn't that amazing how we read it in times past? We would have read it like, 'I was alive forever and then I lived physically, and then I died, and now I live forevermore.' You know, really; you think how much God has blessed us with what we see and what we understand in this age. It's awesome! And where else do you go? I shake my head; Where do these people go who can't continue to walk with God one more 'day'. Where do you go? Where do you go for this truth alone? Where do you go to understand the relationship between God the Father and Jesus Christ and when His life began and what it means and

nothing with the trinity involved in any of it and that a life just started at a certain point in time when He was born... amazing! Think there is someplace else that split off that God is working with now? I don't know if people think that or what. I shake my head in disbelief sometimes.

I am He who lives, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore. Amen. ...and have the keys of hell/grave and of death. That's the completion of it all. If we receive Him into our life, the beginning, Passover, and continue on, He has that power – it's through Him. And as we live our lives and yield ourselves to Him and His Father living within us, through time we grow until the time we can be given that same eternal life. No grave, no death.

Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter; Here is the mystery of the seven stars which You saw in My right hand and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven Churches: and the seven candlesticks which you saw are the seven Churches. So again here, God has given us great understanding to understand that through time there would be seven eras of His Church, seven periods of time, and each one had a specific character, had a specific thing that they reflected more than anything else, that identified them. This is what identified them! I'm so thankful that I didn't live during Sardis, because not many came through that period of time. What identified them? What identified Ephesus? What identified Philadelphia? ...the name itself, there was a fraternal love but still lacking... still lacking in that which God desired for every individual to have. And that which followed afterward then because it was so rich in what God had given to us and we began to take it to ourselves. And what happened in Laodicea?

Let's continue on in the book of Revelation and see where it's leading again here. So after the introduction of chapter 1, again the message is given to all seven Churches for the purpose of the 'day of the Lord', the time that those who hear and live what was given over nearly 2,000 years in the Church, and then they would become resurrected on Pentecost. That's what it's about, the 'day of the Lord', in that day. The time comes. So again, the message in the rest that follows there is about each era; all for the purpose that they would be brought to fruition, to the 'day of the lord'.

And then chapter 4, we come all the way to **Revelation 4:1 - After this I looked,** (so we're not going to go through the messages of the seven Churches – we've been through those things at different times and those are different areas of scripture, easy to read and understand...at least it is now). **After this I looked, and behold a door was opened in heaven:** you know, if you want to talk about where do you go...what about Laodicea? Where out there are people going to go to have the understanding of Laodicea and what happened and what people have to do and what they had to do, what took place within the Church? Incredible! Where is it being taught? Over and over again, that's why I encourage people to go back to the truths, and like the individual I mentioned earlier, they pick out three that they try to say certain things about, and I'll read about those later on.

After this I looked, and behold a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were a trumpet speaking to me; so we're back to this again...so it began by some of these things being expressed, and now they're being magnified a little bit more. But it talked about the eras and what would follow that would lead to the 'day of the Lord', because they're all going to be resurrected at that time. That's what the purpose of the message was for, to prepare them for the 'day of the Lord' when they would be resurrected.

And so now it goes on and it's talking about this voice. It says, **the first that I heard was like a trumpet speaking to me; which said, Come up here, and I will show you things which must come to pass after this.** So again, word in King James says 'to be hereafter', but this is what it means: 'to be hereafter' literally means 'to come to pass after this'. The context that follows reveals the timing, at the end of Laodicea and all that leads into the 'day of the Lord', because the seals began to be opened during that period of time, during Laodicea. So it leads up to that period of time that thrusts us all the way to the end, all the way into this 'day' that we're finally in.

Verse 2 - And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne. Talking about, speaking about the glory of God that's being described here as you go ahead and read through all this and all that which He has created in a spirit realm that begins to be pictured there and shown to John; and all to the glory of God, to the might of God, of that which exists in heaven, that which is in a spirit realm and the things that John describes only in part here...all of the power, the glory of God Almighty.

And then finally in **verse 9** it goes on to say, **And when those creatures,** speaking of angelic beings, **gave glory and honour and thanks to Him who sat on the throne,** speaking of God Almighty, God the Father, **who lives forever and ever,** then it goes on to say, **The four and twenty elders fell down before Him who sat on the throne, and worship Him who lives forever and ever,** it says, **and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, You are worthy, O LORD, to receive glory and honour and power: for You have created all things:** Isn't that amazing? Very clear here who created all things, God the Father, speaking of God the Father. **...for you have created all things, and for Your pleasure they are and were created.** What's God's good pleasure? What's it all about? His Kingdom, from the very beginning what He planned and purposed, that which is going to be accomplished with and in and through Jesus Christ, all those things that will lead up to things that are written in this book all the way to the end.

So he says, **for Your pleasure they are and were created;** all a part of God's plan. So it's at this particular point as you read through the story here that the stage is set for the one to whom God has placed before Him to fulfil His will for His Kingdom that leads into this 'day of the Lord' that we're in now and what's going to happen during this period of time; into that time of transition from man's age to God's age, for ushering in the Kingdom of God on earth, when the Kingdom of God will come to this earth.

It goes on then into chapter 5 and we're thrust into the time that the Seals are to be opened, the Seals that culminate in the 'day of the Lord'. So, this is a beginning, this is a very powerful thing. Of all the things that God finally began to give, and what He began to show, was this 1st Seal, of something that was to be a sign to the entirety of the Church that now Jesus Christ is coming. Because for the past, before that, nearly 2,000 years, He couldn't return until this event took place, 2nd Thessalonians 2. You read through it and that's what it reveals; it reveals this is the sign of Jesus Christ coming.

And so again here, **Revelation 5:1 - And I saw in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne a book/scroll written within and on the back side sealed with seven seals. And I saw a mighty angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book and to loosen/undo the Seals of it? And no one in heaven, nor in earth, nor under the earth,** it's in essence here – when are you under the earth? Well, it's not talking about this little place in the middle of the earth.... anyway... it's talking about when you go under the earth is when you're in the grave. So no one who has ever lived. In essence, no one who has ever lived and died, no one who's alive now, no one's who's in heaven, he's

showing here, this angel is proclaiming, **and no one in heaven, nor in earth, nor under the earth was able to open the book, neither to look within.**

And I wept much, so at this point this is all that he saw. He said there is no one that had lived, who was in the grave to this point in time, no one who was on earth at that time, and no one who was in heaven that he saw at that point was able to open the book, and so he says, **I wept much because no one was found worthy to open and to read the book**, what an amazing thing here, to think here he's moved by God's spirit for whatever isn't fully written here, isn't all recorded here, that moved him so much that he began to weep, he began to cry because it was important to him that this book be opened up. Interesting. Why? Because of what God had to have given him, something to understand what this was about; it's about a time, it's about a purpose that God is going to fulfill about His Kingdom - for His Kingdom to come these things have to take place. The Seals have to be opened up for God's Kingdom.

It's kind of like where we are now. Isn't that amazing? We are at a time when we understand, we agree with all of our being that God is just and God is right. We have gone through that over a period of 3½ years to have that drilled into us, we truly have, that we agree with God. This earth, the only way to bring people to repentance is that this earth must go through a time of massive humility, of being humbled, yet the overlying key to it all that God has revealed, that's important above everything else – that's why I love the scriptures that talk about 'the weightier matters of the law, judgement, mercy, and faith'; mercy, such a *powerful* ingredient, such a *powerful* characteristic, if you will, of God Almighty, that He wants us to understand more so than at any time in the history of mankind, because of where we are. God is revealing the power and the might of His mercy upon mankind.

And so there is that need still, and so he wept because the Kingdom can't be here, Jesus Christ can't be King of kings, nothing about the resurrection of all those who have ever lived, the *hope* that everyone has, unless this is opened up, unless this takes place. And so he says, **I wept much because no one was found worthy to open the book and to read the book, neither to look therein.**

And one of the elders said unto me, Do not weep: for behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, so He's introduced to, there *is* one here, **the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David**, the offspring of David, just as the scripture said, in other word, just as the scriptures record, **has prevailed to open the book and to loosen the seven seals of it.** Now, of course, I understand you understand he knew about Jesus Christ, but here in heaven he's shown that He is the one who indeed is able to do this, the only one who can do this. And so again here, the focus of the book of Revelation continued, if you will, or it continues on, it leads into the fulfillment of Pentecost and states again what is stated at the beginning of chapter one here.

It goes on to say here in **verse 7 - And He came and took the book out of the right hand of Him who sat upon the throne;** so it comes back to this point here about God the Father, because God the Father is sitting on the throne, the book is in His hand. **And when He had taken the book, the four creatures/four angelic beings and the four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours**, which means incense, it says, **which are the prayers of the saints.** So it's just like when the incense was thrown upon the altar and that smell, that beautiful aroma that came up from the sacrifice; this reflects to us in a spiritual plane God's desire of what He receives from the prayers of those whom He has called, of those who desire a relationship with Him and how He receives that. It's a beautiful thing to God, it's sweet smelling. And so it says here, **which are the prayers of the saints;** so it's symbolic of that.

And they sung a new song saying, You are worthy to take the book, and to open the Seals of it: for You were slain. So why? Why is this symbolically showing this? Because, for what's going to take place on the 'day of the Lord' when they are resurrected, the firstfruits who are resurrected, this is what they're proclaiming, "We are able to be here, we are able to experience, to have this, because of what you have done." That's what it's talking about here.

It says, **and they sung a new song saying, You are worthy to take the book, and to open the Seals of it: for You were slain and have redeemed them,** or some have translated as 'us', but it's referring to the saints here. So if it be in the speech of what the saints are saying, in essence, this would be all of us, all of us, if you will, our sentiment, but it's being proclaimed by the angelic beings. So, it says, **You are worthy to take the book, and to open the Seals of it: for You were slain and have redeemed them to God by Your blood out of every kindred/family/tribe,** in other words, through 6,000 years of time, the saints, because the 'they', or the 'us', is referring back to the saints. **...to God by Your blood out of every kindred and tongue/language, and people, and nation;** It's not just Israel, the Israelites. For the past 2,000 years many other nations of peoples; before Israel ever existed Abraham wasn't an Israelite, Noah, Abel – so it's showing here all people whom God has called and worked with and chosen.

And you have made us/referring to the saints saying this, or the angelic beings saying it, it's **them,** referring back to the saints because that's what it's referring back to. **And you have made them unto our God;** so again, it's going all the way back to chapter 1 now, **kings and priests: and they shall reign on the earth.** When? In the 'day of the Lord', that's when they come. Awesome!

So, then the means, if you continue on here, by which they fulfill Pentecost, Pentecost's meaning of the firstfruits revealed in what follows. As each Seal is opened and the time and events lead up to the very 'day of the Lord'; so each segment here as we go through time, each Seal is opened.

So there is much more we're going to look at in this series about '*bane ha erebyim*' if you will, or 'between the two evenings'. But at this stage, because it's timely that I address some of this... I didn't get to address it last Sabbath. I was going to address some things last Sabbath in some of this area here. I want to make sure I have time to get through all this today because it's timely and I didn't have time to cover it in the last sermon series I want to jump ahead a little and consider where we are as a matter of the 7th Seal that Jesus Christ opened on November 14, 2008. In this series we're going to go back and cover a lot of things that are here, but at this point here I think it would be good to cover this.

On November 14, 2008 we understand, God gave to us, that this was the particular day that the 7th Seal was opened up. It was thirty days later, on December 14th, that the 1st Trumpet was blown and God gave us the timing of the 1335 days that began on Trumpets of 2008, because that's when it all started and God began to give us understanding then of the timing of these events that lead to where they do; and it leads up to the understanding of the timing of the 1st Trumpet that was blown 1260 days before Pentecost of 2012. So again, all these periods of time that we've gone through and talked about in past sermons.

And as was stated in the book, '2008 – God's Final Witness' we will not know (which I've already mentioned today) the timing of the next five Trumpets or Trumpet blasts until they occur. And the five? Because it's number 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 that we don't know. We know number 1, December 14, 2008... and I had someone write me a while back that said that they thought by something that had been said that well, we didn't really know when the 1st Trumpet blasts and we're still waiting for it. No, we're not! It was a blast already. It was on this particular day; things began on that particular day. And then the last

one that occurs on that final day called also the 'day of the Lord', that does happen in one day when the 7 Last Plagues are poured out – and that's on the 7th Trumpet.

But I want to read to you something first here before. I want to make sure I get all this stated. In past sermons we have covered what might best be described as the symbolic fulfillment that has been ongoing since the 1st Trumpet was blown concerning what is meant by the third part of the trees and grass being burned up. It is about those things that concern the wealth and prosperity of this nation; and it's about this nation, not other nations. And as has been stated, there is a greater physical, more literal fulfillment of this that would come to pass as we continued through to the end. It's similar to the 1st Seal when it was opened up. Because of what happened, because of the apostasy that took place on December 17, 1994, that has continued on because of what happened then, the power and destruction that took place there has only gone through time. It's gone all the way through all the scattered groups and it's still continuing on to this day, it's still there and will be there until the very end.

Similarly, if you take the 1st Trumpet, what happens there, the actual physical fulfillment of what fully completes it is going to happen all the way to the end. It's just like some of the other Trumpets; some of the things that happen, you still have the effects of them going on, they continue on. It's not just a one-time event, but the effects continue on; and the effects especially of the 1st Trumpet are ongoing. And that's why I wanted to mention some of this today, because to me this is awesome, when you see things that sometimes we don't think about, don't focus upon, we don't realize what's happening around us.

Revelation 8:7 - This is where we find ourselves. Not only have the Thunders become extremely loud (and again, this individual that wrote a letter here recently, want to read some of that, because it just bowls me over sometimes, because even the Thunders are mentioned there and I think, "They're there!" But anyway...) except for number 5 which I had said over and over and over again, number 5 hasn't taken place, it's not time. So, not only have the Thunders become extremely loud, except for number 5, but for this country the physical phase of the 1st Trumpet is growing much stronger. And I hope all of you see that. And number 2 is closing in. It'll be interesting to see the timing and how God gives the timing of number 2.

What we said last year also applies to this year because of where we thought we were last year. We don't know if we can keep a Feast of Tabernacles. We've signed up for it, we're signing up for it... I find it kind of interesting that some have the feeling this year that I didn't hear from last year, that we're not going to have it, we may not have it. We may not be able to get together, I don't know. Time will tell.

Revelation 8:7 - The first angel sounded and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood; like with so many of the things, through Seals and through the Trumpets, you have to be careful that you don't read things into a certain matter and just look at something fully just as a physical matter. Some things are symbolic in what they picture. It isn't just meaning literal fire and hail and somehow these are mixed together in some kind of a concoction with blood in it, or whatever. But hail and fire being mingled with blood is not a literal event but it shows what's reflected by what happens in a literal physical event.

So again here, some of what we've already gone through and talked about of what this means by a third of the trees, the grass and so forth; we've talked about. But they're literal, as I've mentioned in sermons, as well, and so today we're going to address that because that's going to become more pronounced as we go forward from this point on. So again, all this adds to the symbolic fulfillment of that fulfillment that started, I should say, over 3½ years ago having to do with our wealth and prosperity.

But let's look at this: hail. What does hail do? Some were talking about hail today, talking about this one area – is it Colerain area (?) – that got hit with, what was it(?) 3 inches diameter hail stones? And so they've had so much car destruction up there that some can't get their vehicles in until September. There are so many vehicles up there that have been so devastated by some of this. But anyway, when you look at crops, when you look especially at an agricultural society – because so much of what the Bible says is about that which is agricultural, if you will, an agrarian society, and it's addressed in those terms even in here.

If you've been around hail, especially in a farming community, you see what it does – it crushes and it strips life from productive crops, from grasslands. I remember a time out in Western Kansas – I've seen so many incredible hail storms out there – I remember this one time out west (I won't give the name of the area because you won't know where it was anyway), drove out there, and I don't know if you've ever been around buffalo grass; there's a grass there that kind of has 'vining' things to it, it's kind of like a Bermuda (I think that's a kind of a 'viney' type of grass too), but Buffalo grass is something like that. And anyway, it's a common grass through that particular part of the plain state of Kansas, named after the buffalo. Anyway, in that particular area there in the ditches one time, totally full of ice, little hail [stones]. But what was amazing to me was you couldn't see any grass. The fields were totally stripped, all that was there was dirt, and it pounded...it had pounded the grass that was there into the dirt, and this was just pasture land, the area I was in, and the ditches were flowing full of small hail stones. They weren't big ones, they were small ones. But small ones, a lot of it, that's the kind of damage, so it just pummels, if you will, pounds into the ground anything that's there. And things that are on trees, especially if you're in an area that has fruit or whatever, it destroys it.

So again here, this is what it's talking about, it's talking about the result; hail shows that. Hail is made up of water. Water is good in its due season but if it comes in that form it's not so good, it does a lot of damage. And so this is a part of what it's talking about because it's agrarian, so it's about life, strips life, crushes if you will, productive crops, grasslands, and other fruit of the land.

Again, it doesn't have to be literal hail that fulfills this even though this is what has happened in a greater fashion of late. I think of some of the things we saw recently – we were in some country and we saw the pictures back in Western Texas where somebody was standing up by piles their shoulder high of hail, it's just packed so deep in some of these areas. I couldn't believe what I was seeing.

The point being is that it's not simply a matter of rain that comes in due season but of moisture that comes in the form of that which destroys. So it's about that which destroys, and even when it talks about turning the grass, when the grass burns and so forth, it's about the fact that it's destroyed, or it's turned brown and it's non-productive, in other words. So again here, whatever causes something to be destroyed, to no longer have productivity in it, or that strips it – and that can involve a lot of things.

Then there is fire. I think of some of the forests right now out there in Colorado that were burning; I didn't realize there was such a large number of them that had already been destroyed – that's why some of the fire, especially out west of the Boulder area, went so fast, out by Fort Collins, Colorado, west of Loveland, was so destructive because there were so many dead trees in there because of, I think it was some kind of a...I don't know if you call it a weevil or whatever they call it, something that had gotten in the trees and destroyed so many of them anyway, so they were dry and kindling anyway let alone the fact it was dry in those regions, and it was very hard then to fight something like that when there's so much that's dead in amongst that anyway.

So it goes on to say, what I've written here: then there's fire, and it too does not have to do with that which is literal in the sense of fire, but it can involve that as well, it is a part of that as well, just like what's been happening. However, it has more to do with that which is abnormal; warm weather, even hot weather that's not good for crops. You know, when things don't happen in their proper season...just like right now, before we came down here we were talking about some of the corn in various areas in certain parts of the mid-west here where it's time for the pollination to take place and if things aren't just right it won't take place. And so if things don't happen in the right stages it becomes non-productive, it has no value in it. And that's what this is talking about here, or things that happen. This Trumpet has to do with things that have more to do with an agrarian world, if you will, of things that affect food, of things that affect fruit, of things that affect, yes, trees, pasture land, grasslands, hay – everything that has to do with an agrarian society, more so about agrarian here as far as literal fulfillment, which is going to continue to happen.

So again here, all these things that happen that are not good for crops, for fruit, for grasslands, for trees, again, matters of due season and things that are not flip-flop like they are.

And then it says the two are mingled with blood – again, about death, because death of animals, especially livestock and wildlife, and then of people too. We haven't seen – there's not very much of that at all, but because this continues to grow and become greater and greater it leads to that in time, because it's about food. I think of a time when trains no longer run, which they don't carry much anymore anyway, but it's the semis running up and down the highways and if they can't get their diesel you know how fast food comes to a screeching halt? And if you can't go out and get it in the land either you're kind of in a pickle – and that's where we are. And what we're going to see, what we're going to experience isn't going to be as easy as we thought it might have been last year, because these things have to come to pass to fulfill a greater purpose.

So again, **The first angel sounded and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood; and they were cast upon the land/upon the earth:** it's talking about upon the land, speaking of this land, this country, because it's about this country first... **and the third part of the trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.** Now, God hasn't revealed here fully what this is all about and in every respect about the sense of the green grass. It may be a part of in the context here of that which is with the trees, a third of that as well, and all that's with that, a third of the trees and a third of the grass, which seems to be the indication, but it's written in an awkward way so we really don't know until we're farther into it, until we look back and God says, "This is what it meant." Some things happen that way.

So again, having to do with grain, crops, hay, pasture, grass, and so forth, all these things are a part of it.

I want to read some news here. I've had several individuals emailing me about some of this but in this last series I was going to bring up some of these things as I was going through some of the news, but it really intensified, and I think because of all the fires and so forth in different states out west it was in the news more. And so I just wanted to mention a few things here, but you don't see much in the news. I only saw *one newscast* on this and it was just a blurb here last week, about drought. Anyway, I want to read some of this to you.

Chicago Tribune

Drought brings back memories of 1988 crop losses¹

June 28, 2012 | Christine Stebbins | Reuters

Chicago (Reuters) - Just one year ago [name removed] saw the worst flooding of his southern Illinois farmland since 1937. Today, [name removed] is watching his corn field shrivel from the driest season in 24 years.

You know, its part of what is talked about in the book, extremes. It reminds me of what happened in Florida. If you looked on a map of drought two weeks ago, or whenever it was here, the northern part of Florida had the most extreme areas of drought. And it was almost like if you drew the picture across there it was exactly where the greatest flooding went. At one point the most extreme drought in Florida was in this particular region, and a few days later you had the most extreme of flooding in that particular region. Crazy things that are going on out there; and this is a part of what this man is talking about. He's talking about a year ago, of what happened. He saw some of the worst flooding in Illinois in his farm land area and now the worst of flooding that he's seen since 1937, and now the worst of the dry season he's seen in 24 years in that particular area. He says...

"We've gone from one extreme to the other, from being flooded on three-quarters of the farm now to a drought...."

So, three-quarters of the farm flooded, and now this year a drought – a total flip-flop.

This article here says:

Climate Central

Ongoing Heat Wave in U.S. Rivals Events of the Dustbowl Eraⁱⁱ

July 6, 2012 | Andrew Freedman

Tens of millions of Americans continue to sweat out one of the most intense heat waves on record since the Dust Bowl era of the 1930s, with heat watches and warnings in effect yet again from the Plains to the Mid-Atlantic states.

... During the past 30 days, a stunning 6,439 warm temperature records were set or tied in the Lower 48 states, including 240 all-time warm temperature records.

In other words, what is being hit now are things that have never happened before. These are new records, period, for some areas.

For the year-to-date, warm temperature records have been outpacing cold temperature records by a lopsided 7-to-1 margin.

Amazing! From the L.A. Times, here's an article here, just came out yesterday.

Los Angeles Times

Heat wave: Mid-west Plain 'out of whack' as records shatterⁱⁱⁱ

July 6, 2012 | Amy Hubbard

It's not that the Midwest hasn't been extremely hot before, and it's not that it hasn't been incredibly dry.

But it's unusual for a vast swath of the Midwest to be so very hot and so very dry for so very long -- particularly this early in the summer.

Another article here:

Huffington Post – Green - Canada

U.S. Drought 2012: More Than Half Of Continental States Experiencing Extremely Dry Conditions^{iv}

07/06/2012 | Jeanna Bryner

The United States is parched, with more than half of the lower 48 states experiencing moderate to extreme drought, according to a report released today (July 5).

Just under 56 percent of the contiguous United States is in drought conditions....

Awesome! Amazing! Another article here:

The Economic Collapse Blog.com

[America On Fire: Why Is The Number Of Wildfires In The United States Increasing?](#)

As America watches large sections of Colorado literally burn to the ground, many are wondering why all of this is happening. There have always been wildfires, but what we are experiencing now seems very unusual. So is the number of wildfires in the United States increasing? As you will see later in this article, the answer is yes. 2011 was a record setting year for wildfires and this wildfire season is off to a very frightening start.

Later on down in the article it talks about how “New Mexico just experienced one of the worst wildfires that it’s ever seen,” and then it goes through and talks about 2011. You can’t get everything in 2012 yet because we’re not that far into it and records aren’t fully compiled yet so it’s not done like 2011, but I think it’s interesting just to go back and read what happened in 2011. To me, this is awesome, astounding – because we don’t think of things like this.

In fact, 2011 was one of the worst years ever for wildfires in America.

....

During 2011, a total of 73,484 wildfires burned an estimated 8,706,852 acres (35,235 square kilometers) of land across the United States.^{vi}

I just want to give you a little bit of an idea here; for those of you who live in the Netherlands, it’s about the size of the Netherlands just burning up, all of it. Belgium...more than Belgium because Belgium is a little smaller than the Netherlands. Nearly half of all of England, if you live in the UK area. So if you live in England it’s nearly half of all of England being burned up, fires clear across the country. If you look at Ohio, it’s half of Ohio being burned up; even though it is in comparison to some other countries, the size of them. If it’s Massachusetts, it burned up three times over. All of West Virginia.

Sometimes you put things in perspective like that and you think about the size of something that’s happened, just in fires alone. Incredible! The article goes on to say....

In the United States, where some of the most accurate wildfire statistics are kept, the six worst fire seasons in the past 50 years have occurred since 2000. In Texas, nearly 4 million acres were burned in 2011, double the previous record.^{vii}

If you remember some of the fires down there. It goes on to list some different areas here, but it goes on to say....

So what does all of this mean?

It means that the number of wildfires in the United States is increasing and wildfires are becoming more powerful and doing more damage.

So what is causing all of this?

The truth is that this is happening because we are seeing exceptionally dry conditions throughout the western half of the United States. In fact, according to the U.S. National Academy of Sciences...

And I also found this being said by the U.S. Geological Survey...

...the U.S. interior west is now the driest that it has been in 500 years.

Incredible! And we wonder if some people wonder sometimes what's happening. It's too bad we have to even have these things happen or even have to talk about them. But this is nothing compared to what's going to have to continue to happen to fulfill everything that we have talked about.

Anyway, going back to the flow of the sermon here... I want to go back to some statements made at the introduction of the sermon here as we continue on and I want to read part of the introduction again....finished with some of the news articles and what's taking place out there that sometimes we don't even grasp because it's not being reported as a whole. You have to go find these things, and like I said, I've only seen one blurb about some of this on the news here just the other day, that's all there has been in the last several weeks.

"Anticipating May 27th was a most incredible experience for God's Church to live. Each of you has your own story and your own experience. May 27th has revealed what is inside of you."

Everything that you went through and all the reactions, it's very telling; it's like looking into a mirror. That's what it's really like; it's like looking into a spiritual mirror. What is in 'my' mind? What is in 'my' being? Where am 'I'? What do 'I' think? Why do 'I' think that way? What is 'my' reaction? What is 'my' reaction toward God? ...and on and on it goes.

"It was, it is, and it will continue to be a spiritual mirror in your life."

So it's going to continue to be that way; we're going to be able to see things in ourselves. But in responding in a right way, in a positive way, there are those things we're going to see in a very powerful way that it's going to be those things that literally identify us, or come to a point of defining our life even more so than what we've lived in the past.

“The truth is, the reality is, you have lived and are still living one of the most unique experiences of any of God’s people through time, and as you live this experience you will come to appreciate far more deeply *why* God has done everything *exactly* as He has. Your ability to see God more fully, to understand Him more completely, to love His ways much more deeply will come through living this experience that God has given each of us to personally encounter and witness. May 27th was the beginning of this experience, and what each of us would personally encounter in the Church, in our own individual response to God, and to God’s ministry, and of what each of us would personally encounter in the very revealing response from others in the Church and outside the Church, lessons, experiences that will result, or that can result from proving to be the most important definition of your physical life. It will define your life.”

So sometimes by reading through something like this we don’t feel the sense of it, but I think when you go back and read some of this and think about what it said once it’s on the PDF file, to understand that there are things that define your life.

I want to turn over to Hebrews 11 and show you what I’m talking about here, what we’re being shown, of things that define our life. You know, there are things that can happen; sometimes you’ve heard the expression (I think this is correct, if I have it right), ‘15 minutes of fame’. There are things that happen that can define a person’s life, that can just be a *moment* in an entire lifespan that defines you, that you are known by. And we’re talking about some things here that will be a result of this year that are going to define your life into the future, into the Millennium and in the Great White Throne – for some because of your being in the God Family and those resurrected then because of different things people have gone through because of the apostasy. There are things that have defined people’s lives then.

I think of Daniel. There are a lot of things that define Daniels life. You go through and you see certain highlights but there are certain things that stick out in my mind too that define Daniel’s life. But let’s just think about that in those terms, of things that define our life, define who we are, things that we’re known by, and then meditate upon that and think about that. What is it that’s going to define our life? And that’s what this sermon is very much about.

So much of what defines your life is going to be what happens in this year, truly. In your life... is going to define you, define who you are more powerfully than a lot of the things you have already lived through!

Hebrews 11:1 – we’re going to go back to an example at the very beginning of mankind; to me this is incredible! What happened here has defined two people through time in just two quick moments of time, if you want to look at the two moments. But starting here let’s back up all the way to verse 1 here and begin here: **Hebrews 11:1 - Now faith is the substance of things hoped for**, I think of the desire that people had for the 27th. It changed but the hope for it is still the same; we’re there, we’re in the 27th, we’re in that ‘day’, it’s ‘between the two evenings’. We’re in it, we’re living it. This is defining us in a more powerful way than anything else we have ever lived – truly - and what God is going to do in this particular ‘day’.

So, **faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen**. And so we move forward. That’s what God’s Church has done. And it doesn’t matter what anyone thinks, it doesn’t matter what anyone says. To me that is an awesome thing done by God’s spirit, that we just continue to move forward and we’re living this ‘day’. We know the ‘day’ we’re in, we understand that prophetically everything was true, we just didn’t understand it, God hadn’t given it yet until we were there. And that tries us... *that defines us*, it truly does.

For by it the people of old obtained a good report, by faith, by what they lived, by what they went through.

Verse 3 - Through faith we understand that the worlds/ages were framed by the word of God, so there have been different ages of things that God has done, and indeed, it resulted in the universe, the things that are there, the creation of things that are seen as well. And that's what it goes on to explain, **so that things which are seen were not made with things which do appear**. We understand that. People want to... they're trying to find this 'God particle'. I think, "Give me a break!" There may be things you learn of that are out there that God has created, but it's still there and if it's physical God put it there and it's all part of a structure that God has created...and who is behind it all? Indeed, God is, because He sustains it all. That which is physical is sustained by that which is spiritual. We can't see it. We don't understand it. We don't grasp the power that's there. But man's constantly... and so... I heard some of these things last week, it's like basically this all disproves God and shows how the big bang really got started and they are still talking about the big bang. Anyway... got to shake your head, just like I do when I see the stock market.

Through faith we understand that the ages were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made with things which do appear. By faith we believe. God gives us things to just believe and you can't give it to anyone else. And it depends on our relationship with God whether or not we're able to keep it, just like the things of this book – not everyone's been able to keep it, and that's defined their life and they'll be known for that. I think, "What a horrible thing!"

Verse 4 - By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, I've given this in a sermon before one time talking about this and what took place; and not a whole lot that's said there but there's a lot said here too. Abel, righteous Abel, one who taught, believed God's way of life. **By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain's**, Cain's wasn't accepted by God, Abel's was. God was working with Abel, God was working through Abel, God was moulding and fashioning Abel and he is known by this, he is known by his response to God and what he offered up before God in a right spirit before God. Cain didn't have that attitude and spirit, and not only that, but because of something he saw that Abel received, in this case from God, he became jealous and he killed his brother. What a horrible thing, that just a moment in time that defined his life, both individuals – one defined an individual, Abel, righteous Abel, another one defined his brother, a killer, a murderer, murdering his own brother.

You think about the people on the earth – wasn't much population – toward the very beginning, incredible, someone to take his own brothers life, to kill him out of jealousy. That's what it was all about, jealousy, about something that Cain wanted from God but wasn't willing to live it, wasn't willing to do it, but still wanted the benefit from God. Incredible, human nature is.

So again here, it says... notice this, **By faith Abel offered up to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness/testimony that he was righteous**, Abel was righteous, lived a righteous life before God: **God testifying**, it's God's witness about Abel. Who was able to tell the story about him? God did. God testified about Abel and said he, in essence, was righteous, that what he offered up before God, God accepted, but He wouldn't accept what His brother offered up, because it wasn't right, it wasn't in a right spirit, it wasn't in a right relationship with God. He wanted the benefits, like sometimes people do, we want the benefit from God but we don't want to do what God says. **...that he was righteous; God testifying of his gifts; more than one - plural: and by it he being dead yet speaks.**

Powerful what God says from the very beginning of time, from the very beginning here of one who was righteous before God and walked righteous before God.

So again, simply two quick moments in time defined the life of Abel and defined the life of his brother Cain. I think of this incredible time 'between the two evenings'... What is going to define your life? Because this will be one of the most defining times of your entire life. That's *hard* for you to see right now, but as time goes on you'll be able to come to understand that. This period of time we're in right now is going to define, very powerfully, your life.

Verse 7 - By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not yet seen, moved with fear and prepared an ark to the saving of his house; incredible things that happened. We don't know fully how all these things took place, what God did in all these situations and how some things were given. But here, Noah was moved by God's spirit, indeed, living a certain way of life before God. He found favour in God's sight, he was living a right way of life, God was moulding and fashioning him for this 'day' when he's going to be resurrected. It says, **by which he condemned the world, and became heir of righteousness which is by faith.** So again, because mankind had to start all over again; this is where mankind started all over again and it started with Noah, his family, his life, and then finally to Abraham and the story continues on. It started again from here.

I think of all of you; most of you listening today prepared yourselves for May 27th, and have continued to do so in this 'day of the Lord'... because you're still preparing yourself but now you have a different understanding. And by doing so you are in agreement with God concerning His condemnation of the world and the judgement that must come to pass upon it; because that's where we are. We thought, felt that if God wanted to scrunch everything into one hour, so be it, but it didn't seem to make sense in that respect, and didn't seem to fulfill things in a broader way as to what the purpose of it is all about, because it's about bringing people to repentance.

A few others have not done this though, but have rather condemned me and have sought to find reason or justification to do so by what they have judged to be in error, or evidence to them that I am not of God and not God's prophet and not God's apostle to His Church – because those are things that people have to decide, that define their lives.

And so as we go through this series I'm going to bring out some of those things that will now define the lives of some very few who have chosen to leave fellowship and not live this final 'day' 'between the two evenings'.

Faith is a matter of experiencing what you believe. What one believes either comes from God or it does not, and that's why I have stated some of the things I have as we started through the sermon series here today. I think of some of those things that show clear to us today, that we can read about what we first learned in 2005 that the Church didn't understand before about Jesus Christ not eternally existing. I think of something so simple as that. *Where do you go to hear that?* And I marvel that people can so easily turn away from such things, from such evidence that God gives.

And so again, such things define our lives, and it may be only a moment in time as with Cain, as with Judas Iscariot. How would you like your life to be defined like that in a Great White Throne, to be resurrected? It's going to be a very humbling thing, but it's going to be a different world too and it's going to be easy to receive. But to be defined like that because of choices that were made then?

That's why I think about the scriptures that says there's 'going to be weeping and gnashing of teeth', and I didn't really understand that until after we went through the apostasy; and realized what was going to happen and we didn't really understand some of this until a few years into the apostasy, into a year or two, or whatever it was. I remember coming down to Cincinnati and preaching about some of these things at that time... and thinking about some of these very things here, about what we have experienced, what we have gone through, what we saw. I think of an individual who is known for a moment in time, Joe Tkach, Sr. A moment in time (and it was about 3 hours long... I think his sermon was even longer than that) but that's what he's going to be noted for; it's what defines him and will define him throughout the Millennium. That's what he's going to be known for. You think, "What a horrible thing that this is what's going to define your life."

Now, those are bad examples, and we're going to continue to look as we go through some of these things, good examples, things that have happened as we talked about Abel, and we're going to come back in this series next Sabbath here and continue on with some of these examples. Because as these begin to hit you even more so there are those things that define people's lives, like Noah, like what he went through. Now, he lived what he lived for over a hundred years, but his time was defined finally at the very end, wasn't it, when the animals came, when he went into the ark and the things he did, and his whole life is summed up in that moment in time. And we're going to look at some of these examples about different ones as we go forward here. So I want to stop here today and we'll come back to it.

Again here, it's going to become an awesome thing as we continue to go forward, to understand the things that are defining your life in this period 'between the two evenings'.

~~~end

- <sup>i</sup> [Drought brings back memories of 1988 crop losses](#)
- <sup>ii</sup> [Ongoing Heat Wave in U.S. Rivals Events of Dust Bowl Era](#)
- <sup>iii</sup> [Heat wave: Midwest plain 'out of whack' as records shatter](#)
- <sup>iv</sup> [U.S. Drought 2012: More Than Half Of Continental States Experiencing Extremely Dry Conditions](#)
- <sup>v</sup> [America On Fire: Why Is The Number Of Wildfires In The United States Increasing?](#)
- <sup>vi</sup> [Article is quoting from another website - EarthSky](#)
- <sup>vii</sup> [Article is quoting from another website - Earth Island Journal](#)