

Between the Two Evenings – Pt. 3

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We are jumping right into the sermon today, there is much to cover. This is going to turn out to be a larger sermon series than I thought it might be or had originally perhaps even wanted it to be. I'm not a fan of real long series but I think God's made it very clear this is going to be a larger series for important reasons.

Today we're going to continue on with the sermon series entitled *Between the Two Evenings* with this being *Part 3* today. As was mentioned at the beginning of last week's sermon...

"Anticipating May 27th was a most incredible experience for God's Church to live. May 27th has revealed what is inside of you. It was, is, and will continue to be a spiritual mirror for your life."

And as we continue through this series you're going to understand that more and more because of what you receive from it individually, spiritually in your relationship with God. And even today I have been working on that which is yet in the future in this particular series continuing forward, and the message is becoming stronger and stronger and it truly is an awesome thing that God is giving us to look at at this period of time, a time of reflection, a time of being sobered even more so, if you will, at our own lives, and understanding the seriousness of the time in which we live and how God wants us to look upon it.

It needs to be repeated a third time, what was stated in the first two sermons, that this year we are in, this 'day of the Lord', this period of time 'between the two evenings' will be the most meaningful period of time in your life and it will define your life. And that's awesome the more you come to understand what this series is all about, as you begin to see it more and more. Because I would say, as a whole, we don't see fully yet what this series is really all about, and as we continue to go into it we will see it more and more, only because I know where it's going and know some of the things that are going to come out and continue to come out in this series, does a larger overview come into focus. And as we continue through this there are things you're going to begin to see on a spiritual plane because of what God's giving to us.

To me it's an awesome thing to go through a story like this, of the exodus, which I don't think I've ever heard, nor have I even done before, in this manner. I remember in times past here having a stronger focus upon the Passover period and the things Jesus Christ has gone through; we've done that a couple times in a couple of different manners even. But when we've done that it has revealed so much more at that period of time because of what God was giving to us to see, to learn, and to understand, especially about the life of Christ and things He went through.

This is a period of time that we're looking at that we're able to focus on things on a physical plane that God led the Israelites through, and even the *timing* of events and *why* He did the things He did in the way that He did to me is an awesome thing. And as we begin to see this more and more, of what God was doing with a nation of people as He was leading them, and especially if we begin to learn the spiritual lessons of the journey, it's very much about our journey spiritually. Theirs was very physical, ours is obviously spiritual, and that should not escape us because of where we are in time.

So again, we're going to pick it up where we were last Sabbath, backing up just a little bit to get the context back in Exodus 16:1; picking up the story flow as the children of Israel were leaving Egypt and

then entering the land of Midian, in *Arabia* - to me that's just an awesome thing too having been in the Church as long as I have and not really focused in on just the areas where they traveled and why they traveled there, to come to see them now in a deeper way brings in even that much more meaning. Awesome to see some of the journeying and where they went and that they actually journeyed up by the area of Petra, which I had never really focused upon or seen in times past. And some of the journeys and some of the places where God took them, truly awesome, truly inspiring when you see the direction they went and how God led them.

Exodus 16:1 - And they took their journey from Elim, and all the congregation of the children of Israel came into the wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after their departing out of the land of Egypt. This is in the second month now, just a month later after having observed the Passover and starting their journey out of Egypt.

Verse 4 - Then said the Eternal to Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day that I may prove them and whether they will walk in My law or not. And so again here, a lot of this had to do with a manner in which God was going to do it – not just an immediate thing as to how they were to gather, because there was a certain way they were to gather on certain days of the week, and then on Friday, an extra portion they were to gather and they weren't to go out and gather on the Sabbath. And so again, this process of moulding and fashioning their environment into one of obedience, and candidly just focusing upon the Sabbath and the importance of keeping God's Sabbath, because if they didn't do it that way, in the way God told them to do, they were to be corrected, they were going to be corrected, they were corrected. And so it was a matter of getting them... because they were leaving Egypt, they were leaving an area where they had not been accustomed to God's laws, God's ways, obviously at all. In that respect, God was starting to work with them, to mould and fashion them, to teach them things along the way, and began to do so very early on. And a part of this is by what He fed them... and the way that God feeds us too. God feeds us spiritually and we are to learn lessons from that process, of how God does it, what God does, and so forth.

Because if people will remember those things there's awesome value in that, because it's when they forget that people go astray. It's when people do not hold onto those things when people go astray. And for me, as I've looked out upon what's happened during this period of time, it's frustrating and yet it's always been a part of God's Church, that there are those who will not continue in God's way when tried, when tested in various areas of their life. And that's heartbreaking in many ways because it goes back to the same song I've referred to so many time, the Psalm that says 'we walked to God's house side by side, and council blended sweet'. We were at one and we believed the same thing, but something happens at times that will test people in their lives as to what they will do, and this has certainly tested some – and is *still testing* the Church.

You're going to be tested. This isn't over with by a long shot, of where we are, and where we're going, and what we're doing. And we need to understand that and be sobered and understand what are the most important things in our spiritual lives. And the more we're focused, the more we're at one with God, the more we stand in God's way of life the stronger we'll become and it will, indeed, define our life very powerfully so. This year more than any other year of your life is going to define your life! Truly!

Verse 5 - And it shall come to pass on the sixth day they shall prepare that which they bring in; and it shall be twice as much as they gather daily. It's the preparation day; you're not to go out on the Sabbath and gather so they're gathering twice as much here.

And Moses and Aaron said unto the children of Israel, At even, then you shall know that the Eternal has brought you out of the land of Egypt: How many times...? How many things did they go through? I marvel at this statement, and as you grow through this story, to see what they did over and over again. Its like, how much does God have to show you?! How much does God have to *prove* to you that He is God?! ...that He is all powerful? ...that He is there with you? ...that He's there to fight your battles for you? ...that He leads you all the way? ...that He guides you all the way and that He is the one that brought you out of the Land of Egypt – so that you *know it*.

Sometime we think we know it, and yet there are things that come into our life that will try us – just like 'between the two evenings', 'the day of the Lord'...and some who walk to God's house side by side. On the contrary, some people can turn very ugly and vicious. That's a horrible thing to be a part of, to see, and to experience. I have a respect for – I'll just be real candid – of something I've seen over the years, many years, of being in God's Church, those who remember or at least hold onto the friendship, that at least out of friendship will not turn evil against someone else. There is a lot to be said for that, because *at least* they have learned something from that. *At least* there is something in their character that has been moulded there to where they don't turn venomous against a brother just because they've gone a different way or believe something differently. And I have appreciated that when I have seen some people with some dignity, with some maturity, even if they don't see nor understand or something else has pulled them by the side, for whatever reasons, maybe a pull in family, or whatever else it is and it just becomes too weighty for them and they have become weak – but at least to hold onto the most important thing we should all hold onto, is how we live our lives towards other people.

That's the most important... this is about a way of life. It's not about the *timing*; it isn't about the *timing* of events that's important to God, it's about *how we live our lives*! I have appreciated email that I've seen come in over the past few weeks here where people have made those comments. "I'm not in this for the dates; I'm in this because of a way of life." And that's what it's all about! That is the bottom line! That is the thing that should be the deepest thing inside of us, because if it's not then we're *flawed* in our character, we're *flawed* in our purpose and our direction and what we're doing. And some have been flawed and have not been there for the right reasons. We have to be here because *it's God's way of life*, of how we live.

One of the first things God did, that we're coming to here, He took them up to Mount Sinai to give them His law of how to live life, of how to live toward Him in a relationship, how to live toward each other in a relationship! That's what is *spiritual* in God's Church – it's how we live toward each other! And yet it's the biggest problem of human nature – how we live toward each other – because that's where trials and problems and heartache and frustrations and things come from; it's in how we think toward one another and how we treat one another.

And so I think of this verse here...**then you shall know that the Eternal has brought you from the land of Egypt.** At what point in our lives can we say that? ...**then we know.** Because sometimes we're tested in it to see if we really do know – 'then do we know.' How many *truths* does God have to give us before we can *know* that indeed God has brought us out of the land of Egypt? How many do we have to have? Amazing! For us it's spiritual! Sometimes we read physical, or a story like this, it's very physical, and we shake our head and think, "How could they have *been that way*?" But they didn't have God's spirit! We have God's spirit and that spirit is what God wants us to see. He wants us to see what's deeply imbedded in the mind! And that's what we need to do, a mirror, to see ourselves and what we are.

Verse 7 - And in the morning, then you shall see the glory of the Eternal; for that He hears your murmurings against the Eternal: and who are we, this is what Moses is saying; Moses and Aaron and Miriam, **who are we that you should murmur against us?** And the point being is that their murmuring was actually against God. I can't help but when I read through verses like this, I go back and think about things I heard about Mr. Armstrong, things I heard members say after they'd hear a sermon from Mr. Armstrong, things I'd hear deacons say, things I've heard ministers say, about Mr. Armstrong, of things he had to say...not understanding, "Don't you know what you're saying? Don't you know that this isn't about them, it's about you and your relationship between you and God?"

And Moses said, This shall be, when the Eternal shall give you flesh to eat in the evening, and in the morning bread to the full; for that the Eternal hears your murmurings which you murmur against Him: And so sometimes we deceive ourselves as human beings and we think that by speaking... and it doesn't have to be in the ministry too, it can be against each other. We're all a part of the Body of Christ – all of us in the Church! And we need to understand that the things we say about each other, that we can put ourselves in a position at times when we do this, of actually judging God! But we don't think of it that way...but that's the spiritual essence of what we do, and God gives very stern admonition in the scriptures about judging that which is not ours but His! Who are we to judge someone else's servants? That's what God tells us! And yet we tend to *do* that in the Church and we have to learn that that isn't God's way of life, that we *aren't* to judge one another in that respect, in the sense of condemnation, and we're to judge things in how things are done and what people do because we have to make our choices and we must be able to see when something is done right, when something is done wrong. We have to have that maturity and that ability of growth about us. But in the sense of condemnation? God has some very stern warnings against those things. How much more when it has to do with God's leadership? Because that's what happens in the Church, and that's what happens when people go astray and they forget the friendship and then they have to strike out at that which... anyway, not understanding they're actually striking out against God.

Your murmurings are not against us but against the Eternal. Valuable, valuable lesson to learn, truly is. Since 1969, every year I've seen this, this here broken as far as what God has said how we should live our life. I've seen people go against what God has said here not understanding what they have done and what they are doing. And when that happens, God does not take it lightly.

Verse 9 - And Moses spoke to Aaron, Say to all the congregation of the children of Israel, Come near before the Eternal: for He has heard your murmurings. A word meaning 'complaining, judging, fault-finding' and so forth, because that's what's involved here in this word - complaining, judging, and fault finding – whether it be done individually to one another in the Body...and how much worse?

And it came to pass, as Aaron spoke unto the whole congregation of the children of Israel, that they looked toward the wilderness, and, behold, the glory of the Eternal appeared in the cloud. And the Eternal spoke unto Moses, saying, I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel: speak to them, saying, At even, it's the word here meaning 'between the two evenings', **you shall eat flesh, and in the morning you shall be filled with bread; and you shall know that I am the Eternal your God.** Interesting, this word isn't used very often like this but I think of the period of time we're in, that this is a period where God in a spiritual plane makes this so very powerful in all the world, truly.

Verse 13 - And it came to pass, that at even the quails came up, and covered the camp: there's another period we're going to read of later on where quail came in. This is the first event, this is the first time that this happened along with the manna that God had given and so forth. And so it says, **it came**

to pass that at even the quail came up and covered the camp, and in the morning the dew lay round about the host. And when the dew that lay there had evaporated, behold, upon the face of the wilderness there lay a, it talks about a word that means 'small flakes'. It's like small flakes that they went out and were able to gather, **as small as frost on the ground**. That's what this manna was like; they had to go gather it.

And when the children of Israel saw it, they said one to another, It is manna: that's how it got its name, 'What's it?' 'What's it?' – that's what it means, 'what's it'? What is this stuff? What is it? **...for they did not know what it was.** So in the Hebrew it's 'what's it?' Manna. **And Moses said unto them, This is the bread which the Eternal has given you to eat.** So as far as anything having to do with that which was from a grain product, that which was to replace those things that they no longer would have, God gave them the manna, things to bake with, things to cook with and so forth here that they were able to eat. So again, theirs was physical, ours is spiritual, what God feeds us. There are things to be learned from this: God took care of feeding them. Everything they needed God took care of. For us, God takes care of everything we need when we need it – it's totally in God's hands, and the *timing* is totally in God's hands, when He gives it, what He gives in His time in His way.

I marvel thinking about some of the things that sometimes bother people. I think of some things in prophecy that sometimes bother people, and the reality is, the lesson you learn is *wait on God!* There are *many things* that we're going to learn in time and we're going to be able to look back – which we should see in a greater way anyway – but there are many things that happen through time that there is not just one way of doing something. There are things written that give God *great flexibility* and ability to still bring something about, to fulfill what He has said – sometimes to fulfill something physically or spiritually, and/or both as a part of a process. We have gone through things like that in God's Church and we live in a time now where that is multiplied many times over. And timing of events...God gives Himself great flexibility and ability to move things, to adjust things according to what He has said and for it to be true according to what He gave prophetically through all the prophets through time. And we're going to learn that as we go on through time here. It's so easy to find fault with, to say something is wrong, to say something is incorrect. Wait on God! It all comes from God and God will give what He wants in His timing, and He will clarify or He will make known His definition at a particular time, what it is we're to see, what it is we're to know.

So it's a matter of understanding we are in God's hands, our lives belong to God, and God will lead us if we are convicted that indeed He is who He says He is, that He is where He says He is and what we become convicted of through time... or have we? Because that's what it always comes down to.

So again, God continues to feed us with bread as this identifies *His* greatness and power and it identifies those whom He chose to lead as His people, those whom He chooses to lead as His people. But sadly, even in time people can become weary of manna from God.

That's why I mentioned last Sabbath; what would it have been like if we had only been given two truths after the apostasy? What if? ...whatever those two truths were, were to be? What if God only gave us two truths? This Church, I believe with all my being, *would not be here today*. You would not be here today if God had only given two truths. Seven? Awesome! Ten? Twenty? How many does God have to give us? And sometimes because of what we live through, what we go through He's very merciful and He gives us a lot to get us where we're going. He's been very merciful.

Exodus 17:1 - And all the congregation of the children of Israel journeyed from the wilderness of Sin, (in Arabia), after their journeys, according to the commandment of the Eternal, and pitched in Rephidim (in Arabia): and there was no water for the people to drink. If you've seen some of those areas of the world, they are desolate! It's just like mountains of dust and of gravel and rock, and if you've ever seen pictures of some of those regions of the world and some of the places out through there all the way up through that part of the world, you have to get quite a ways north, you have to get quite a ways away from there before you get into areas where you see much grass, of anything growing. Things are sparse, they truly are! And so it says there was no water to drink.

Therefore the people chided, means 'made complaint', or 'to strive against in opposition' **with Moses, and said, Give us water that we may drink. And Moses said to them, Why do you strive against me?** Why do you complain against me, he's saying. **Wherefore do you try the Eternal? And the people thirsted there for water; and the people murmured against,** complained or spoke against **Moses, and said, Why is it that you have brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst?** Look at what we've done! Look at what we've committed ourselves to and now we're just going to die out here in the wilderness.

And Moses cried unto the Eternal, saying, What shall I do with these people? They are almost ready to stone me. Sometimes we do shake our heads and think, man, after seeing all the things they saw, after the miracles of things they saw, the Red Sea. You'd think after walking through the Red Sea and water standing up on both sides, you'd think that would be a vision of something you would *never lose in your life*, to realize you're following that kind of power and you know, you've been told He is the creator of all that exists, that He is the one who has led you out from the army, that He is the one that brought the waters back upon the Egyptians and upon Pharaoh himself and killed and destroyed them all... that's the power you're following out of Egypt... and then things get uncomfortable after a while and we... You know, human nature can turn; it can turn so quickly, so easily. We're fickle that way.

Thank God we have His holy spirit...that's what makes us different and that is a powerful, powerful thing, yielding to God's spirit. Because the reality is this is what our battle is! This is *our* battle in our being; these are things we battle on a spiritual plane because it's about the mind and it's about how we react sometimes to things, sometimes in anger, sometimes in frustration, sometimes in whatever it is, but God has us deal with that! He wants us to address it, to address it in ourselves, to be in control, to learn control through the power of His spirit, to bring everything into subjection to His ways, to His law, to His purpose, to His will. It's a beautiful thing! It's a beautiful thing when we're able to do that, when we make the *right* choices, when we do the *right* things. And that's God's admonition for us at this time in our lives, because this is not over.

Verse 5 - And the Eternal said unto Moses, Go on before the people and take with you of the elders of Israel; and your rod, wherewith you struck the river, take in your hand and go.

Verse 6 – For behold, I will stand before you there upon the rock in Horeb; and you shall strike the rock, and water shall come out so that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the children of Israel.

Verse 7 - And he called the name of the place Massah, and Meribah, because of the chiding/complaining/finding fault of the children of Israel, because they tried the Eternal, saying, Is the Eternal among us, or not?

Chapter 19, jumping on down a ways in the story flow here. So here they are all the way up in the area of Horeb and God begins to provide them water. Other places talk about some of the flow of the water, made the streams overflow that it ran into. Awesome what God gave to them, fresh water to drink, to have, in an area where there was no fresh water. Exodus 19:1 - Notice the timing here; now we're coming up to the third month, almost Pentecost. Here God has led them all the way. He took them out of Egypt, they're encamped now just on the other side into Arabia, the area of Saudi Arabia, to the very western portions there of Saudi Arabia, and now they're beginning to move a little bit more to the north as they're going along there, going up toward Mount Horeb, Mount Sinai area, and God is leading them to the Mount Sinai area where God began to work with Moses, because this is the area of Midian where Moses went after he was cast out of Egypt and lived there forty years until God sent him back into Egypt. And so this is where God took them back to, to that same region where the burning bush was. And so God brings them up to this area to mould and fashion them, to work with them as a nation; and this wasn't something that was going to happen overnight.

So their being taken into the promised land to become organized as a nation of people wasn't something that was going to just happen in a straight path, to go from here to there. That wasn't God's way of doing it. He was going to give them His ways first. He was going to organize them, mould and fashion them before He took them into these areas of the world where other nations and armies were located. He was going to take them in in a very powerful way once He chose to do so, and so this is a part of what God was giving them as a part of a fulfillment.

Exodus 19:1 - In the third month, approaching Pentecost: after the children of Israel had left the land of Egypt, the same day they came into the wilderness of Sinai. For they had departed from Rephidim, and had come to the desert of Sinai, and pitched in the wilderness; and there Israel camped before the mount. And Moses went up unto God, and the Eternal called unto him out of the mountain, saying, Thus shall you say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel; You have seen what I did to the Egyptians and how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you unto My place.

Interesting terminology that's used here because it's used later on as well for the Church, in essence, of that which God gives protection to the Church, and it's basically talking about power and deliverance and protection that God gave as He did this.

Now therefore, if you will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then shall you be a peculiar/special treasure unto Me above all people: for all the earth is Mine:

Verse 6 - And you shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation. Now, this is prophetic, because they couldn't do this. God had a plan of how He was going to work with a physical nation and later on a spiritual nation, the spiritual Israel, the Church of God. This was not time for the Church of God. This is something that is quoted later on (I believe it was quoted by Peter) where he makes those comments, you are a special people, a peculiar people, if you will, a special people, a kingdom of priests and so forth as it talks about some of that. It's quoted in **I Peter 2:9 - And you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people;** in other words, a special people before God, **that you should show forth the praises,** I love this verse because that word 'praises' in the Greek has to do with, 'virtues, the character, the moral excellence'. That's what it entails and that's what we're to show, that's what's to be reflected through our lives toward one another and toward the world in how we live, **that you should show forth the virtue, the character, the moral excellence of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvellous light:** and so again here, Peter has been inspired to take that portion of that to show indeed what God has been doing in the Church to the Church, but this is something that in time Israel would receive. It just wasn't meant for right then. So this is very prophetic

in that respect as far as what God was telling the children of Israel, that **you shall be a special treasure unto Me**, and they were in the sense of a physical nation and how God worked with them and what He offered them. We know the history of things that took place and the kings and the chronicles and so forth through time.

Exodus 19:6 - And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation. And so we understand that the only priests that came about through all this was the Levitical system and that was a very physical thing, that wasn't a spiritual thing at all as a whole, God just worked with a few through time. **These are the words which you shall speak unto the children of Israel.**

And Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before their faces all these words which the Eternal commanded them. And all the people answered together, and said, All that the Eternal has spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the Eternal. So, again here, akin to not knowing God's way of life – and there are so many different kinds of lessons that come out of stories like this, but where we're looking at this in the context of God leading us as a people and where He has brought us to at this time and yet here are analogies as well of things that we come to when God calls us out of the world, calls us out of spiritual Egypt and we come to a point of entering into a covenant relationship with Him and these things do become a part of something that's spiritual for us in a relationship with God.

But again, we're focusing on this more from the aspect of where God has brought us in time and where we're going, that God has brought us up to, His desire is to take us into, indeed, a promised time, a promised period of time, the Kingdom of God ruling on the earth. For some, part of the 144,000, for others, a part of living into that age, the Millennial period.

So from the beginning God made it clear that He was going to deliver the Israelites out from the bondage of Egypt and take them into a promised land that He declared by oath to their forefathers. So that's what He was fulfilling, this oath of taking them into the promised land, and they began to leave Egypt after Passover, they traveled to Arabia, specifically to the Mount Horeb area here, Mount Sinai region. We come up to chapter 20 (not going to go through all this), because this is where God then did give the commandments to them on the Day of Pentecost. So here they had observed Passover in Egypt, began to come out during the Days of Unleavened Bread, finally were delivered on the last of that period of time out of Egypt, out of the hands of Pharaoh, and brought into Arabia, and God brought them up to Mount Sinai then by Pentecost to give them the law.

And again, awesome, the stories here; they couldn't keep it, they couldn't live it - because God was going to give His spirit later on to show how you're able to keep the law when the Church began. So then on Pentecost we read that story there of the 10 Commandments being given and what happened there as God gave the law from Mount Sinai that's recorded there.

Let's jump ahead to chapter 24 because we're looking more at the journey here and what God was doing along the way and why God was doing it in the manner that He was. He wasn't just going from point A to point B. He wasn't just taking them from Egypt directly into the promised land – there is a journey.

Exodus 24:12 - And the Eternal said to Moses, Come up to Me in the mount, and be there so that I can give you the tables of stone, and a law, and commandments which I have written; that you may teach them. And Moses rose up, and his minister Joshua: interesting story here how you see Joshua come in

as you go through the story here, of Joshua working with Moses, being trained along the way, being worked with along the way. God had plan and purpose so very early on, to mould and fashion and prepare even Joshua, and there's even an account at one point here where Moses recognized a portion of what God was doing, of why Joshua was there. But anyway, going on, and it says, **and his minister/servant Joshua: and Moses went up into the mount of God.**

And so again here, the story being that after Moses went, and Joshua went, up to Mount Sinai, God continued by giving different ordinances. I'm just reading this as a part of this showing here what was taking place. Joshua was with him, they went up into Mount Sinai and God continued by giving different ordinances and laws at that particular time that were broken down even more specifically than just the 10 Commandments, and that's followed by instruction of building a tabernacle. God began to give instruction early on then about building a tabernacle and about the vessels of the tabernacle and the altar of sacrificing, the establishment of a priesthood with Aaron as High Priest and so forth. So this is what He did the first time as he went up on the mountain. And then some of the system of instruction of offerings and sacrifices was also given.

Then we come all the way down to chapter 32. So again here, we're just catching a flow of what was taking place, of a sequence of events.

Exodus 32:1 - And when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mount, the people gathered themselves together unto Aaron and said unto him, Rise up and make us gods, make us elohim, which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we don't know what has become of him. Now, there is a lot more to the words in the Hebrew here than what's given right here. We'll come back to that as we go along, but I think it's interesting to go back to the story in the book of Acts.

Let's go back to Acts 7 and read what is recorded here and then we'll come back to the story in Exodus 32, because there is more to the story and the attitude that is behind what they said as an excuse to do what they wanted anyway. This was what was in their heart. It wasn't just a matter that Moses had been up there for a time, but this was something that was deep inside of them that God allowed to come to the surface here to be dealt with. So, this entire verse here, when you look at it in Exodus 32:1 here it is very poorly translated, with not only some of the wrong words translated but even adding words that aren't even here.

Acts 7:37 - This is that Moses, who said unto the children of Israel, A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; and you shall hear Him. This is He, who was in the church in the wilderness with the angel/the messenger; so again here it's this message, it's about Jesus Christ and the coming of Jesus Christ, things about Jesus Christ; but then he brings in the story here about Moses and what Moses had to say pointing to a future time and those things to be learned there. So going back in history here talking about some of the things, the children of Israel in the wilderness.

Verse 38 - This is He, who was in the church in the wilderness with the angel/the messenger, who spoke to him in Mount Sinai, and with our fathers who received the living/lively oracles to be give unto us: To whom our fathers would not obey, but thrust Him from them, a word here in the Greek meaning 'rejected' or 'pushed away'. So, even in Hebrews it brings this point out that it was more of a matter that the law was too much for them. What was given to them at Mount Sinai was too much for them; this is why they reacted a little bit later when Moses was gone for a little while, they started reacting in a different way because they really didn't want God's law. That was the bottom line; they

didn't want such strict life to have to be led. They wanted to live something different, a way of life *freely* without the way it was in Egypt, but the *way* they lived in Egypt without God. They wanted to have that and they didn't want all the things that God had told them.

It's kind of like in the world today, when we come into the Church and God convicts us of the law, of His way of life, of the Sabbath, of the Holy Days and so forth, we embrace it, we want it because our minds have been opened up and we make choices about grabbing a hold of it, but not everybody in our family does, or not all of our friends do, or people that we work with – they receive it in a different way. Because until God calls someone they're not going to have that kind of a response, and so we learn that early on. We want to share this, we're excited, and we think it's something simple that everybody should be able to see, and *you're* able to see it. I marvel how – I'll never forget, it's something you're to always hold onto – when God gave you the ability to see His truth, it's just there! And that's why I loved the magazine, the name of the magazine, 'The Plain Truth', because that's the way God makes it in our mind. It's not that we're so intellectual or intelligent; it's just that it's there. It *is* plain, it *is* clear, and it's a beautiful thing, and it's so plain sometimes to you that you think that *surely* you can have a conversation with someone else and they're going to be able to see the same thing you see! And you learn a little bit later, "Man, that doesn't work that way!" People don't respond the same way! Some of them, matter of fact quite a few of them, begin to respond in kind of a bad way and they really don't like what you believe anymore – especially when you get into things about Christmas and Easter...now you've gone a little bit too far.

And that's the way it was with the Israelites – it's going a little bit too far to leave all their gods behind, to leave all their different ideas, because they had been in captivity for a long time, and the way of the Egyptians and the things that were around them, that's what they grew up with and it began to be a part of their thinking. And how they lived their lives? It wasn't according to God's law! It wasn't according to God's way of life! They weren't trapped somehow in this nation and living God's laws! Those last six commandments there at the end, the last six, they weren't living that way, they were living the *opposite* of that way in so many respects! And that's what they wanted to carry with them! Because this was repeated over and over and over again, things they do in the wilderness and how God dealt with them *because* they were breaking His laws in such a hideous way.

And so there was a way of life they wanted to take with them and God wasn't going to allow them to do that to be His nation, to be His people. Just like for us, we're not to take Egypt with us, we're to get rid of it; we're to get it out of our mind and out of our being. We're to reflect God, we're to reflect the virtues, the character, the moral excellence of God in a weak body, because we are, but we're to strive to do that. And how is that reflected? By what we live, by how we treat others, by especially those last six commandments. You treat others in the world by those last six commandments... you're a unique person to do that. People don't experience that in the world from one another – patience and mercy as well that goes with that. Love, care, concern instead of selfishness; because that's what the world experiences from others, selfishness – the attitude of I'm right, you're wrong.

To whom our fathers would not obey, but thrust Him from them; so they didn't want His laws, they pushed Him away, pushed it out of their life; **and in their hearts:** see, deep in the mind, it's what's in the mind. That's what God seeks to save; that's what God seeks to change, to transform, the renewing of a mind that has to take place to think differently in how we think about others and treat others and work with others and so forth. **...and in their hearts turned back again unto Egypt,** that's what they wanted to live, that's what was in their heart. They didn't really want God in their heart. Oh, they loved deliverance, they loved being taken out of Egypt, they loved not having to be under bondage anymore.

And even that began to wan because even that wasn't so bad if they could have that life again. Isn't that amazing? If you can have that life back I guess it's not really so bad to have to live in Egypt. That's the spirit that was there and that happens to people who've been a part of God's Church, to go back into Egypt, because "It's the world, and yeah, it's not perfect, but you can kind of do what you want to do, you don't have to have someone telling you that you have to do things a certain way."

Verse 40 - Saying unto Aaron, Make us gods to go before us: You know, we have got to *want* the Millennium *with all our being!* God is taking us into a different age, a different world, and to be at the forefront of that, to be those who are going to be a part of helping to change that, to be used in helping to change that... well, God's offering to mould and fashion some awesome things inside of us right now. And some aren't going to be able to receive those things, they're not going to be able to be a part of that, may not even be able to live in that – because once you're given something that's so precious and so great it's not a small thing to reject it before God.

Saying unto Aaron, Make us gods to go before us: for as for this Moses, who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we don't know what is become of him. They had to have something; in other words, what is being said here in essence, they had to have something to justify what they wanted to do anyway and this was their method of justifying, "Moses is up there, nobody else can go up there...he and Joshua, they may be dead, they haven't come back. They've been up there for a long time so let's put a little pressure on Aaron." That's what they did, en masse!

And they made a calf in those days, there's more to the story here of things we really can't grasp, that attitude and the spirit that was there and how even Aaron can cave under this. It's hard to grasp even on a physical plane, it truly is, and one day we'll be given more of the process and the story to see it. But this is the spirit of it and this is what is under it all, and it goes back to attitudes and thoughts and what's deep in the mind and in the heart – that's what God's bringing out here – what is the core, the crux of it all?

And they made a calf in those days, because they wanted something different, *they didn't want God,* they wanted it to be a different way, to be after their own moulding and fashioning. When people leave, when people give up this way of life, it blows my mind because I think, "What calf are you making? What calf are you going to go to out there? What are you going to do? Can't you be honest and truthful with yourself? *What are you going to do* and how much more... it's just 'between the two evenings' here – what are you going to do? Where are you going to go? How on *earth* can you justify something, that now it's just you and God?! Is that how God works in life? Is that the history of the Bible? Is that the history of Israel? Can we do such things and somehow mould God into something different than what He has given to us and what He has brought us to, or did He bring us to the wrong thing and is there something else out there then that we can find and search for and..." Anyway...

And they made a calf in those days, and offered sacrifice unto the idol, and rejoiced in the works of their own hands. You know, God calls things what they are. And even spiritually this is what happens whenever – I don't care when the time period has been in 2,000 years of the Church's history – when anybody has gone in a different direction than what God has brought them to, than what God has given to them, then they've made something in their own ways, in their own hands, of their own ways, and to God it's like making a molten calf.

So, we can understand something like that. We can see what the Israelites did when they made a molten calf and shake our heads, but for us sometimes as human beings we don't see the same thing

when someone leaves and goes and does something. *Spiritually they're doing the exactly the same thing* – making a molten calf. And I hate for people to make molten calves! I think what they've done to themselves, what they do to themselves spiritually.

And you have to be careful you're not giving in to doing that in your mind in part, because there's still some molten calf stuff going on out there, spiritually. I know that! God's given me that to know, to cry out about. As we go into this sermon series farther there are things He wants you to search your own life about, that you know and *know* that you know God is God, He's able to deliver you *exactly* the way He said He would. Nothing has changed as far as deliverance. Time? Yeah. Deliverance? Still the same.

You see, you may think you are through this. You may think since you are through this; you may think since you've gone past that particular day and you've been told this is the 'day of the Lord' that you're through this. Don't be so quick! Don't be so sure! If you *know*, that's another matter...if you know that you know then that's fine... but sometimes the knowing can be a little deceptive too.

This is the time to be sobered. This is a time to understand that there are things we need to search out in our lives because *God Wants Us To Stand!* ...stand firm and stand fast, for this not to just be words and say, "Yes, that's what I'm going to do." But to know that you're doing it because you are in unity and harmony with *everything* He has fed you, with every bit of manna that He has fed you and that you're not desiring something else to be fed with...some other kind of food, some other kind of meat - because it's out there.

Going back to Exodus 32 and reading it again here. The word 'when' shouldn't be here. **Exodus 32:1 – And the people saw**, not the word 'that'. **And the people saw Moses 'delayed'**; an interesting word. Later on it says something about what their response was, but this isn't what this word means. This isn't what this word means at all in the Hebrew language. They have translated it thus because later on it talks about, indeed, because they used a certain excuse, "Because Moses up there, we don't know if he's coming back," or whatever, but this is not what this says in the beginning here. This sets the stage for what's coming. This sets the stage of what's in the heart and what's in the mind.

And the people saw Moses, the word means '**ashamed**', 'disconcerted', 'to throw into disorder or confusion'. They *simply did not like the way Moses led them and felt things should be done differently*. A lot said here. So it's a matter of how they felt about Moses. It's how they thought about Moses; because when various things were given to them... now, they couldn't get away from the reality of the voice they heard from the mountain, and I believe I even have that later on in Hebrews to go to, because that was very powerful as far as it wasn't a matter of the sound as it was what was said. That was their battle! It was the law! It was what God told them; that's where their battle was. But everything else had come through Moses, and so this was the only time, in that respect, that they heard the voice of that which came from Mount Sinai and God in a very powerful way working with the children of Israel. But again here, it was about their feeling and their attitude.

And so it says here, **The people 'saw' Moses** – it's how they *saw* him, it's how they *looked* upon Him, it was their response and their reaction of being disconcerted, of finding fault, of being ashamed, and so forth. And so again, it's an attitude there, and so the next part of the verse here where it says ... **'to come down out of the mount'**, that's not even in the Hebrew here. It's just setting a factor in the beginning of what was in their eyes toward Moses. It wasn't one of embracing him and loving him because they loved God's law.

And that's different in the Church, isn't it, because we embrace each other. Someone new comes along and what endears us to them, there is something unique in a Family relationship, that we're drawn to them because it's the same spirit, it's from God, and that's what we recognize. When we see God, when we recognize God and the conversation is about this way of life and we're in unity that's what draws us closer together, that's what makes us a Family, brothers and sisters in the Body, and those are the things that God wants us to hold onto with all of our being, but those things can try and test us, because sometimes the more we get to know one another and we see faults in one another, we see human weaknesses, we have to be careful, like I mentioned earlier, that we not judge each other in a condemning way, because to judge in a condemning manner like that, God does not take lightly, because we're all *His* and none of us belongs to any individual. We're all God's, God's servants, God's children, God's subjects.

And then it goes on to say, **the people gathered themselves together unto Aaron, and said unto him,** so the reason they did this is because of their response to Moses. They didn't like the way Moses was leading them, they didn't like what was coming from him, and so this is their response and this is why they went to Aaron then. This gets to the heart and crux of the spirit of what was taking place here. **...and they said unto him, Arise/Up, and make us gods/make us elohim,** well they already had Yahweh Elohim, but it was too much for them because it wasn't spiritual. For us it's hard, we shake our heads and think, "Well, how can they reject Yahweh Elohim, the God Almighty, the Eternal God?" Because they didn't see Him! We see Him. That's something that is made so clear in the New Testament there, of things that Jesus Christ had to say. He told the disciples, 'Have I been so long time with you and you haven't seen the Father, you still don't see Him?' It's a spiritual thing!

So we're able to see something spiritually that they just couldn't do. It's like you trying to talk to people in the world about God and the truth and they just can't, they can't do it! This was an awesome, awesome thing God was doing in working with a nation of people and separating them from another nation of people and to teach them a different way of life and to be an example of the things they were going to be an example of – which I pointed out didn't turn out well.

And so they said, **Arise up and make us gods to go before us; for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt,** it wasn't Moses who brought them out of the land of Egypt, *God did!* And that was the focus, the vision, the ability to see that they were missing, and lacking. It wasn't Moses, it was God Almighty! **...we don't know,** and the words there 'what has become of him' aren't even there; but **we don't know, we don't know him.** That's what they're saying here though in essence, it's basically saying the same thing. So Aaron, again, we don't know all the pressures of what had to be there, of the pressures they put on Aaron to cave in like this, even on a physical plane; there's more to the story here that's just a little hard to grasp.

Verse 2 - And Aaron said unto them, Break off/take away, take off the golden earrings which are in the ears of your wives, and your sons, and your daughters, and bring them unto me. And all the people took off the golden earrings which were in their ears and brought them unto Aaron. And he received them from their hand, if you will, and fashioned it with a graving tool; after he had made a molten calf they said, These are your gods, O Israel, which brought you up out of the land of Egypt. And you think... "Now they see a golden calf here and you can say that is your God that brought you up, that it's easier somehow to look upon something physical like this and worship before it and offer a sacrifice before it than something that is by knowing?!" Well, again, that is spiritual and they didn't have that which is spiritual in their minds, and so sometimes we can read through a story like this and it's hard to understand what they went through. It was all very physical, fully physical, if you will.

So, **Aaron went ahead and made the golden calf: and they said, These are your gods, your elohim, O Israel, that has brought you up out of the land of Egypt. And when Aaron saw it,** in essence, saw them, what they were bent on doing, that's what it's saying here in the Hebrew; **When Aaron saw, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation, and said, Tomorrow is a feast to the Eternal.** So, how do you deal with so many people that are turning in this spirit? Because this was a hard thing to deal with. Moses had a hard time dealing with it and Moses saw far more than Aaron ever did, and yet Moses had a difficult time dealing with some of these things, as you go through the story on a physical plane, with so many people. But you get a lot of people like this coming at you and it's a little easier to cave in, because just like Moses said, 'they're ready to kill me/they're ready to stone me.' How do you think Aaron felt if they came up to him and told him, demanded of him what they wanted him to do? And he caved in, he gave in, he did it. How much more was behind it? Would they have taken his life if he hadn't? I don't know, it doesn't say.

And brethren, the reason I'm mentioning some of these things again and going through some of this is sometimes we think these stories are so far removed from us. One thing I've seen in God's Church over and over and over again, which I think is a little harder for some who have been called since 2007, 2008, especially 2009, to see certain things on a spiritual plane that are sometimes difficult.

We hear stories about an apostasy and we're able to visit at times with people who lived through that apostasy, and if you've had that blessing – because it is a blessing if you've been around more of those individuals who have gone through it, who can relate the stories, then there is oftentimes that which we gain in a stronger way in understanding of some of the things that people went through, what transpired, the spirit that was there. And even then it's difficult to grasp because not having experienced it you can receive certain things by knowledge but there are some things that you have because of experience that are unique to you. That's the way life is. We can learn a lot of things about God's way of life.

I learned that so quickly early on, I think in some of the things at Ambassador College. I was an older student and when you see younger people come along and they receive certain things about child-rearing and so forth and then they go out – I think most of our class was a unique class because it was an older class. And there was that lacking of maturity of some because they didn't have certain experiences in life yet, and that's understandable. But to try to understand certain things in here about family, about children, about marriage – until you're there, if you hear stories about it, you really don't know yet what it's like until you've done it, until you've lived it. Until you have lived this way of life in that environment there are certain things you can know by knowledge, but to be convicted of in the deepest part of your being, there are certain things you can never have until you have the experience of it.

That's why I have cried out to the ministry at different times; that we can be given certain things and we feel like we know it, we understand it, but until you've had certain experiences there are certain things you cannot *know*. You cannot know with all of your being, even about yourself, until you've been tried in those areas. That's why I love the example of 'trying the oxen', a farmer will go out and he'll try the oxen, to prove them, to see what they're capable of doing. And our lives are like that. Until we're actually in a situation to be tried, to be proven, in other words to actually *live* it, you don't know fully what you're going to do. You don't know fully how far you can go with it! *You don't know fully how strong you are* and how much you are able to accomplish until you're actually there! And then the moment reveals it. Then the moment reveals what's inside of you, the moment you're living it, the moment in a marriage, the moment in dealing with children, the moment in dealing with a certain thing

on the job, the moment – just like preparing for the Feast of Tabernacles, you first come along and you hear people talking about going to the Feast and you don't know fully what that is but you get excited too because they're excited, and until you're there, until you've had that experience, you don't fully grasp all that, and you don't fully grasp what it's going to be like to go to your employer and address some of those things, and how to address it. And some people wrestle with those things all their life, because it's a battle! And so sometimes until you're in that situation you don't know what you're *fully* going to do and how you're going to address it! ...how *strong* you're going to be for God's way of life. Does that make sense? I know it does in varying levels. But it depends on where we are, doesn't it, as to what our experiences are. And that's the way so much of life truly is.

And so, coming back to what I was saying a little bit earlier; in the Body, and especially being new, God has given such awesome opportunities for things, to become a part of something. I'm not speaking, as a whole, to those who are going to be a part of the 144,000 – yet I don't know who all of you are – but I know that there are those who definitely went through that period of time of the apostasy and lived that and they're going to be a part of that...and they're already set. Others have an awesome opportunity to begin building a new age and have an opportunity to be a part of the limelight of that, where God's going to lift you up in an awesome way. For you to come across people, to be in contact with people, and they say, "You were there?! You lived through that?!" That's an awesome opportunity to teach! It's going to be an awesome opportunity to pass along things that they don't have, in the spirit of humility, and God intends to use a great deal of that in the future, and also moulding and fashioning for other things that God has given along the way, wherever He plugs people in – because God does the moulding and fashioning, God does the drawing and the calling and we're just to yield ourselves to it and then He will give us what He's planning. And we just continue to follow and do what God gives.

But having said that, those of you who are going to be given those opportunities, the more you're going to be given or what you're given, or what God does finally give to you has a great deal to do with what you do now and what you're going to do in this following period of less than 10 months now, especially at the beginning of this period of time. Because this is the time to look deeply into our lives, this is the time to cry out to God for *mercy* and for *help*...to truly cry out to God to become something different than what we are even right now!

Because I'm just going to tell you, the last year that led up to May 27th wasn't our best, it wasn't what it was supposed to be; it wasn't what it needed to be, truly. You are to look back at that year and say, "What is it I should have done differently that I did not please my God? What is it that I must do now to do it differently? ...to be different?" Truly, that's what we're to do now. "What is it that I must do differently now?" Because I'll tell you, if we do the same thing – it isn't owed to you. It is not owed to you and we are being measured by a very great measure, if you will, as to what God is doing and how He's doing it in our lives.

And so we can go through some of these stories sometimes and think that we're there. You've got to *know* that you're there. You've got to know by your ability to look into a spiritual mirror, to see what you're doing and how you're doing it each day of your life. This is where we are in time, indeed, in a very powerful way!

And so as I was saying, we think that we would never be among anyone, or of anyone who would ever turn against God's way or turn against God or against one another in the Body... it happens...still happening. Still happening! People within the last year that my wife and I in travelling have sat down with, side by side, council blended sweet, eaten meals together, had good fellowship together, have not

only turned but have turned vicious, venomous, ugly, hateful. *Where* does that come from? *Where* can such a thing...? *How* can such a thing happen? Do you believe that nothing like that could ever happen in your being, in your life? Be careful! God says, 'He who thinks he stand, take heed lest he fall.'" Know what we're capable of doing as human beings. Understand and fear that! Understand that if we're not close to God, if we fail to address and ignore what we didn't do as well last year and we aren't convicted and on fire to do it differently *this year* repenting before God, seeking to draw closer to God, then why should God give us what He plans on giving us. Why should we be delivered? Why should we be given so much?

God wants us to take this seriously, with all of our being, and to understand ourselves, and some of these things have happened as examples so that we can learn from them, so that we can be sobered by them, because in some cases you have known of different ones who have gone by the wayside and have made bad choices and have turned venomous and ugly and hateful and say despicable things. And I understand that because I've seen it from the beginning; some of you have never experienced that but you need to understand it's true and real and where it comes from. And that's a lot of what this series is about. This year is not over. This month is not over. This period of time is not over and it's not a cakewalk - truly isn't!

And so to me this is a very sobering series we're going through, I'll just be real candid with you. To me it is incredibly sobering and one we need to take in a sobering manner because that's how God wants us to look upon it, to take a deep, strong look into our own spiritual lives and say, "How am I living my life? ...toward each other, toward people at work, toward people in the community. How do I really think? What is being reflected in my life, in my thinking?" Because where it's not right *we need to change, indeed.*

And so again here, it says, **verse 6 - And they rose up early on the next day, and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings;** still going through the motions. See, people can leave and still deceive themselves into thinking, "Oh, I'm still going to study the Bible on the Sabbath! I'm going to draw closer to God on the Sabbath! I'll save my tithe, but I don't know what to... but somewhere God will show me where to put my tithe..." And on and on. You think, "I can't be that way." It's been that way! It's been that way *every year* I've been in God's Church! *Every year I've been in God's Church I've seen those attitudes and spirit come through* and people make those choices in life. And it hurts, because we love each other and we don't want to see each other trip and stumble and fall and go a different way and begin to be enemies of what they were enemies to before God called them. Because that's what we're called before – enemies of Christ, enemies of God! Paul calls it that in Romans – until we're a part, we're fighting against! The world is fighting against and they don't understand that. But when God gives us the opportunity to be a part of, to live it, and then we fight against it?! How *horrible!* How *sick* is that?!

So...**they rose up early the next day, offered burnt offerings and brought peace offerings...** you think, to God? You're going to... No, it's to their god because they're going to do it now their way and somehow deceive the mind into thinking it's okay to do what they're going to do and to reject the one who brought them out of Egypt, and look at a golden calf and say, "He did it! He did it!" To me, that's just mad! I mean, that's just mad, madness! How could you build a stupid thing, and made out of gold, a piece of metal, and say, "He brought me out of Egypt, let's offer burnt offerings to this god that brought us out of Egypt." There wasn't any spiritual understanding there whatsoever, it was very physical obviously, and sometimes it's hard to even grasp how physical it really was.

It says, **and the people sat down to eat and to drink, and they rose up to play.** And when they played they played! It wasn't like when we go to the Feast of Tabernacles and we enjoy ourselves and we enjoy fellowship and so forth. This here is not such good play, okay, in how they acted. A lot of it had to do with how they lived and their attitudes toward each other and lusts that went with it and the things that took place that are so vile that is a part of this world.

Verse 7 - And the Eternal said to Moses, Leave and get down; for your people, notice what God says... **whom you brought out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted/perverted/destroyed themselves:** look what they're doing to themselves, corrupted themselves, *perverted* themselves! That's what people do when they begin to go away from the truth. That's the lesson from the very beginning of time of what God told Lucifer, "You've perverted your mind." And for him, because it was spirit there was no desire to go back; it was spirit, it's set. That's what he chose, a perverted mind, a mind to choose something other than God because he believed that there's a better way, "I don't like that way. I don't like Your way. I don't like what You're doing. I don't like how You're doing it. I don't like what You tell us You're going to do! We liked it the way it is. We think it can even be made better for us!" That's what they're saying; that's what he said. Pride! Awesome, incredible mind, of things God wants us to see in our nature that we're to repent of.

Verse 8 - They have turned aside quickly; it didn't take long, did it? ...**out of the way,** out of God's way. They turned aside *quickly*. Sometimes it doesn't take too long. I think of some who have left and I think, "It didn't take you too long. When I was visiting with you last time and we had good conversation, did you think you would ever do that?" Well... "Yeah, but it's you who changed! It's you who are corrupt. It's you who have misled us. It's you who led us to this day and what you said didn't come to pass, and look, even your own country, they're putting you down. You've got to be guilty of something to be so treated, surely! What have *you* done wrong? *You misled* us!" Incredible!

They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them: because that's *exactly* what's going on in some cases, what's taken place, **and they have made themselves a molten calf, and have worshipped it:** Sadly, there are some who would have been happier if two of us were dead right now, to have been killed literally in the streets of Jerusalem. And do you know, just to think about it, God could have had it done that way and be fulfilled and done exactly as He, if that's what He wanted, a physical thing, that that was still an option. Do you understand and know that that still could have been an option as far as something God could have done in His way but God chose not to do it that way for whatever purpose and at whatever time He deemed that? I don't know when/whether He did that, and neither do you. And if you can understand those verses and things in there in that context, that God has *great ability!*

I am so in awe when I think about some of these things. I think about being a part of writing two books and I think, "That is so piddly!" Especially when you know where it came from, because I didn't have much to do with it! And I think, He is the author of authors, because he says things are going to be a certain way in life and He writes a story ahead of time and then He *moulds* the world into it. That is *awesome!*

What He gave to Daniel of the periods of time that would lead all the way up to the end of time...God moulded the world into His book, into His word. Now, that's awesome! He didn't just write it, He's moulding everything into it. He moulds and fashions everything to His will and He can do that because *He is God Almighty;* and we exist because He gave us life. Didn't owe it to us! We are so blessed to have this experience, and then we choose how we're going to live it. What an awesome thing when God

gives us the ability to live it in a more noble way, in a better way as far as humanity is concerned. And who doesn't rally behind and cheer for that which is noble in life? I think of seeing different movies and that which comes out of you because it's automatic, you think, "That's noble! Awesome!"

Like the movie Braveheart. That came out during a period of what we were going through in Worldwide, the apostasy, and to think this is what life is about, this is what you're to do, you're to stand, and when you know what is true you're to stand for what is true and what is right, no matter what the consequences, no matter what the outcome. That's how you live life, that's the richness of life, whether you live or die in it. To die in that is what is best in life.

And we have to make choices and decisions like that in life, what we're going to do under different circumstances in life. How are we going to live our lives under different situations and circumstances? That's up to each individual, isn't it? And yet God gives us this way of life to live, to be a part of - it's awesome - but that's about a personal relationship between each one of us and God.

But I've experienced too often people who turn against it, who perhaps...not just perhaps, a year ago or two years ago if I would have asked them, "Are you ever going to turn against this Church?"

"Oh, no-no-no-no!"

"Are you going to turn against me as a pastor of God's Church?"

"Oh, no-no-no, I would never say, do anything to hurt."

"Are you ever going to say anything against the truths that God has given to you?"

"No! No, I wouldn't; it's the farthest thing from my mind!"

And yet through my being in the Church since 1969 I've seen in year after year after year and I so look forward to a new age, to where that alone will no longer exist in the same fashion, in the same manner, because it cuts and it cuts deep, it hurts. Because we should indeed love each other with all of our being and want to see everyone succeed and come through this.

But we all have personal choices and decisions to make and this is the time to look deeply into our lives. Before God makes us to stand He's going to *know* that you stand! Truly! ...and that you're standing with Him! ...and *nobody* is going to slip by. That's God's message in a very powerful way 'between the two evenings'. Some have pulled back. Some pulled back before – and I understand tithing, that there is certainly that desire within this nation to hold onto it for a period of time, for different ones. I've heard that. But some pulled back before that ever came out. Why? What is it you're waiting for? Why did you make such a choice and such a decision? If you don't repent deeply you won't be at the other end of this, at the other end of the 'evening'.

These things are not small with God. When God gives you the truth there's much expected, because He's given such incredible opportunity.

So again, a very sobering sermon series to be given; that's why it's a longer series, because there is much that God wants us to glean out of this, to get the full picture of where we are in time. And the sermons that were given ahead of time, about standing fast and standing firm, they were sermons on the subject but did we really, fully, deeply, with all of our being, hear what was said there – because God is giving us more opportunity to truly focus and to see those sermons in a greater way.

And the Eternal said to Moses, Leave and get down to your people; talks about that they have perverted themselves, their thinking, in other words, They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them and they have made them a molten calf and have worshipped it and have

sacrificed before it, and said, These are your elohim, that's what they were saying, this is your elohim, O Israel, which has brought you up out of the land of Egypt.

So again, incredible stories as we continue on here. I wanted to interject at this point in time how that you don't want to be one that turns aside quickly in any fashion or form at any point in time out of the way that God gives. But it happens; it has happened to people through time and sometimes we think that can't happen. That's where God wants us to be very sobered and sober-minded and realize what we are as human beings. We need God! You see, the more *convicted* of what we're capable of doing as human beings even with God's spirit – because you see, the lesson of the apostasy should be so deeply etched in all of our minds, but it's not yet because most of you never lived it. See? That should be so deeply etched that *EVERYONE is ABLE to turn against God. EVERYONE is able to let down spiritually! EVERYONE, without exception, is able to become lukewarm and stagnant*, and God says, "I will not accept that!" ...and He spews it out of His mouth. The term is vomit, because it can't be a part of God. It's repulsive to God! To be lukewarm, to kind of go along with the flow, in one respect, as far as what is seen, to go through the motions, but it *has* to be inside, it has to be in the deepest part of our being by conviction, by God's spirit, because this is the very thing that should draw us to our knees and we should cry out all the more to God, "*I need Your spirit every day because I know what I'm capable of doing without your help everyday! I can become stagnant and lukewarm and begin to drift and not even know it's happening.*"

Because someone who is lukewarm doesn't know they're lukewarm. They think something else about themselves. They can think they're rich and increased with goods and on fire as far as they see it, and they pick others who aren't on fire, the way they think they're on fire, and say, "See, I *know* that I am!" comparing ourselves amongst ourselves as we sometimes do as human beings, and God is saying that's very unwise.

So again here, God wants us to look deep in our lives and be honest with ourselves and say... Indeed, do you cry out day by day and cry out because you know what you're capable of as far as your nature is concerned, and that's the very reason you drop to your knees and say, "Father, forgive me. Father, give me more of Your holy spirit because I can't do this without you! I *can't live this* without You! I *can't keep focused* without You!" If I have to do that, *you* have to do that; and I have to do that or I cannot be where I am. Every one of us has to do it, don't we! And if we're not then we're kidding ourselves! If that's not your routine day by day, to cry out to God, to say, "Father, I need Your holy spirit, don't let it leave me! If I'm deceiving myself in any area, please correct me, chasten me, help me to see it!"

Because I know what I'm capable of doing...because I've already done it! I've already been fast asleep and I know what it's like! I *know* where I thought I was, see! I didn't think I was asleep, and it took me some time after God began shaking me to finally admit it. I thought, "Well maybe I was kind of dozing off on occasion here but I wasn't one of those who fell asleep." Took me a few months to come to the point where I said, "Father, forgive me, *I fell asleep just like You said! I need you! I need your spirit! I need Your strength to keep me alive and awake and on fire every day of my life, for Your way of life.*" We all do, and if you're not doing that, well, this isn't going to be a good 'day' for you 'between the two evenings' when it's all said and done.

So I thought I wanted to go back here and read to you a part of something that someone wrote, that I've already mentioned a part of in two other sermons here, just to show you where thinking can go so quickly. You think, "How is this possible?"

Anyway, in this section here this individual was writing (it was in a family), and this individual is writing about one of their family members and they're now going to talk about some of the truths that were given and it says here in this one section under a heading this person entitles, 'Incorrect Truths', the 43rd Truth, and then they quote this: "The remnant God is awakening will consist of 10% of a third of those in the Worldwide Church of God, before the apostasy began." And then the person recalls, "If you recall, *this* has been changed to 63,000 people, so therefore I guess the evidence is the 43rd truth is incorrect, isn't it?"

And I think... if that number of 10%... and I also think of what I told you earlier, it could have been indeed that and fulfilled everything God said exactly that way to that point exactly. But I think if that number of 10% would have been around 3200, which is what the number was roughly around, why would anyone find fault with God adding more to the number that He will deliver into the Millennium? And if God reserved the revelation for that larger number toward the end of the 1260 days, the end of 1335 days, does this make the revelation of the 43rd truth untrue? *Who are we?* This just kind of blows my mind! Because it doesn't come out to that exact number somehow this is wrong because God's going to add to it or give more? But is it possible that by God's judgment this is what He had determined would be a proper judgment upon His people? ...of 10% of a third?

Anyway, I want to read the whole section here. It says about the 43rd Truth:

43 (22) The remnant God is awakening will consist of 10% of a third of those in the Worldwide Church of God, before the apostasy began. The prophecy in Ezekiel 5 tells of both the scattering of physical Israel (in the coming few years) and spiritual Israel (which has already occurred). This and other prophecies also speak of a tithe (ten percent) of a third of both physical and spiritual Israel that will survive as a remnant.

God's promise....*God's promise!*

The past several years have been a time of tribulation on the Church, but it is nearly over and the physical tribulation is about to begin. Over the past many years, the spiritual remnant of the Church has only been the size of a tithe of the tithe.

I think of what we lived through and I think of the strength that gave to me during that time period, to realize God has given a tithe of a tithe. Now, maybe that didn't mean the same to others, but it did to me, of a third, a tithe of the tithe. Incredible! But I want to read what I wrote down here as well: If God had chosen to reveal truth in the manner that He has, then who has the right to find fault with God? If God has done this to keep Satan's focus off of God's scattered people, then who can judge God? Because that's what this person has done. If God has done this to magnify His great *mercy* who can say He shouldn't do so in such a manner? So it's amazing what we can find fault with sometimes as human beings, to take something of it's minimal stage and for God to add more, to say, therefore it isn't true, therefore God isn't true?

Then the person goes on to talk about the 47th truth in saying, "**The day Christ returns is the same 24 hour day when all seven seals [they say seals, it's vials on the website] (Seven Last Plagues) are poured out, once this Seventh Trumpet is blown.** It is on this day that the battle of

Armageddon both begins and ends. There has always been speculation concerning this prophetic Day of the Lord. Many believe that this prophecy cannot be accomplished in a single day, and many believe that this is a period of time that will last for at least 30 days.”

That’s been in the ministry in the Church and so forth in the times past.

And so it goes on to say, they say here, “Now the ‘prophetic day of the Lord’ is a year long. Also, note the description for the ‘day of the Lord’ is also the same description as the 6th Seal.” And I shake my head; I think you’ve got to be kidding me? I don’t know if you know what they’re saying here, what’s being said, but to me this is so incredibly shallow. That’s why I went through in talking about the ‘day of the Lord’. The Seven Last Plagues *is* in one day and it’s referred to as ‘the Day of the Lord’; it has that definition. That’s why I made comment here, we are in a spiritual ‘day of the Lord’, a year long, but it ends in a literal day when the Seventh Trumpet *does* blow and when the Seven Last Plagues *are* poured out. That’s something that different ones in the Church have talked about in times past, that they didn’t feel it could happen in one day, that it had to be 30 days or whatever.

Anyway, I want to read to you **Revelation 6:12 - And behold, when He had opened the Sixth Seal, because this is what this individual is referring to, and, behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood;** so talked about in the books and in sermons how this is a transition in time, something happening between the Church and the world that begins to take place that God is showing.

And then in **verse 15** it says, **And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains;** Not at that moment! How many times have I explained this? ...that this is about a transition in time. It’s like the towers, of that being symbolic of something that was to take place later on. This is something that is showing a time that it’s entering into that will lead up to an eventual thing that *does* take place literally, but it’s not happening at this point in time. Anyway... **And they said to the mountains and the rocks, Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?** So it’s like, well, it’s mentioned during the Sixth Seal so I guess nobody really knows... I don’t know what they’re saying because I know what I’ve said about this in the past and it’s still true today.

So the 47th truth isn’t true? Blows my mind! Yes, it’s true!

Then they say about the 49th truth... and these are all reasons and justifications for leaving and becoming venomous in spirit.

49 (28) The Seven Thunders have been revealed and will happen precisely as foretold.

Then this person quotes the Seven Thunders and finally the person quotes the 4th Thunder and makes a single comment...

4) Global Economic Upheaval.

And then they say, their comment – “Still hasn’t happened.”

[Congregation laughs] ...Well, that’s my response... and I think, since 2008 there hasn’t been a global economic upheaval? I mean...if you’re looking at the finality of it, no, that hasn’t happened, but what has started, just as much as what has started in the Sixth Seal has started. But that hasn’t happened yet. And what’s happening here, the global economic upheaval, yes, it’s in the world, it’s where you’re able to see... we’re able to see in a magnified way a spirit in the world that is being magnified many times over – haughtiness and pride. Bad news comes along – push the stock market up. They just *ignore* things out there now. The worse the news sometimes, the more sure you can be the stock markets are going to go up some, and some frivolous thing will come along and it’ll go back down a ways. Mindboggling!

Then the person went on to say about number 5...

5) Death in addition to destruction (divided into three separate phases and with random order).

“Still hasn’t happened.” Well, I agree with that. It doesn’t mean it *won’t* happen.

6) A growing revelation of God's two end-time witnesses, in both the Church that was scattered and in the world.

And then saying here, “The job of the two witnesses is finished as stated by Ron in His first post on his website on the 28th or 29th of May (from memory). If their job is complete *then this can’t happen!*”

And I think... why not? A growing revelation of God’s two end-time witnesses? Definitely hasn’t happened during the 3½ years. When will it happen? Not until God begins to do certain things on the earth. 2nd, 3rd, 4th Trumpets minimal, and they happen during the ‘day of the Lord’.

7) An accelerated revelation of God to man, in both the Church that was scattered and in the world.

“Still hasn’t happened.” *Duh!* That’s my response, and I think, sad, you pervert your mind and you don’t even know what you do in order to justify what? Doing something else, leaving what God drew you to when He gave you the truth. Where did it come from? Where did you get it?

Then the individual went on to say, “And note the 50th has been changed as often as Ron feels like.” And then the individual says behind that, “Lies!” I didn’t know that the thing from Trumpets to Pentecost had been changed. Indeed, it’s been magnified – Pentecost to Pentecost – ‘between the two evenings’.

Then this person goes on to talk about the court case and reveals their complete lack of knowledge of what took place, saying that basically my wife and I have lied to them in times past about various things that have been said. And I think, “Where did you get your information? What would you rather believe? You won’t believe your own...?” Incredible!

Let’s go back to the story in Exodus... My point for reading those things is, to me I feel they are so incredibly shallow, but the mind can do that, to pick out things, to find something, to try to see something to say, “This isn’t true, therefore that’s why I’m not with you any longer. That’s why I can do something different...because God isn’t working here.” Was He ever working here? That’s something

they're going to have to answer. How many of those truths...? How many of those 36 truths are true? Are *any* of them? And if they are, where else are you going to go? Where are they being given in a greater way? It blows my mind!

Exodus 32, returning to the story flow of the children of Israel. God gave His law on Mount Sinai, then shortly after when Moses was on the Mount, as we just read here, Israel had Aaron make the golden calf. And due to what Israel did when Moses went on Mount Sinai God spoke to Moses about destroying them and making of Moses a great nation, and Moses and Joshua... and Moses pleaded with God, obviously, at that time... and things that were for Moses learning because he had a long way to go in working with the children of Israel and things that were being moulded and fashioned in Moses himself.

See, a lot of this that happened was for Moses training, because unlike the Church today where God is working with the entirety of the Church, at that time God was working with specific individuals. There were things being moulded and fashioned in Joshua. God placed Joshua in a strategic place with Moses, to experience and learn certain things that he couldn't learn any other way. He had to learn them by the experiences. That's why God put him in the places where he was. Joshua was always there being moulded and fashioned beside Moses, learning things from Moses that God was going to use in him later on in a very powerful way. It's awesome, it really is, when you see all this unfold and how God works, because God gave him those experiences. He didn't leave Joshua down there with Aaron where he couldn't have this experience, instead he was up there with Moses and he *witnessed* what took place – and this was moulded in his mind in a way that nothing else could mould this in him, this experience. *Awesome* how God works! *Awesome* the experiences that God gives us in life as He moulds and fashions and prepares us for things in the future, as He's moulding and fashioning things in you to prepare you for your future a few months up the road here, of things you don't fully know now, just as Joshua didn't know then, nor did even Moses fully know then where things were going and what was going to happen and what was going to happen in Joshua's life. You just wait on God and you keep yielding yourself to God and God takes you there and God gives you then that which He's planned for you.

There is no greater thing! There is, candidly, nothing else, save to yield ourselves to what God moulds and fashions. God builds the building. It's His Temple! He puts us where He wants us, and it is in that *exact* position that we're going to be the *strongest* and the most *fulfilled*...and that's awesome! *Awesome!*

Exodus 32:17 - And when Joshua heard the noise of the people as they shouted, here they were coming down from the mountain; **he said to Moses, There is a noise of war in the camp.** To hear something so strong, to be up there that all of a sudden you hear this noise as you're coming down and it sounds like there's a war going on, that they've being invaded or whatever by other nations. That's what came into his mind. **And he said** (Moses said), **It is not the voice of them who shout for mastery**, meaning strength or power as in battle, in things that might be done in battle when they're given, whether the victor or the loser, or both in the confusion of the noise that exists at a time of battle, he says, **neither is it the voice of those who cry because being overcome/conquered**: in other words, it's not because of the mastery or the conquering or the ones being overcome here: **but the noise of those who sing is what I hear.** Not just normal songs, but it's that festive Mardi Gras, New Orleans type of spirit that they hear. That's what he heard because that's what it was. It wasn't a Feast of Tabernacles noise, to praise the Eternal with a song. It was their own and it was one of a raucous celebration, just as like when people do when they party-party-party. But this was a big, big party. Incredible!

And it came to pass, as soon as Moses came down into the camp he saw the calf, and the dancing: and the dancing wasn't good, okay, **and Moses' anger was kindled and he cast the tables out of his hands, and he broke them beneath the mount/under the mount,** at the bottom, the base of the mount, meaning when he's down there this is where they were broken. So he broke the very tables that God had given Him of the commandments that He brought down from the mountain to give to the children of Israel. Incredible!

Then this is followed by **Exodus 33:1 - And the Eternal said unto Moses, Depart and go up from here,** the area of Mount Sinai, in other words, leave this area; **you and the people whom you have brought up out of the land of Egypt, and go to the land which I swore/which I gave oath/gave My word unto Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, saying, Unto your seed will I give it: And I will send an angel before you; and I will drive out the Canaanite, the Amorite, the Hittite, and the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite: Unto a land flowing with milk and honey: for I will not go in the midst of you;** I will not go up in the midst of you, in other words basically what He's saying is, He was not going to travel with them in their midst but "I'm going to fulfill My promise to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and I'll go up there, I'll send an angel up there and they're going to destroy these people's before you and you can go right on up there into the promised land, but I'm not going to go with you and I'll not be with you, and I'll not be among you any longer." That's what God was telling them. So, "I'll fulfill My promise, but I'm not going to be with you." What a *horrible* thing! And Moses understood that.

He says, **for you are a stiff-necked people and unless I should consume you/bring you to an end along the way,** because of what you do and how you live, and because of these things that continue to happen since I brought you out, just out of the land of Egypt, brought you up here, and this spirit continues on... **lest I should destroy you** it's better that I just sent the angel up there and he destroy everything in your path and you just go on up and do your thing as another nation apart from Me, because I'm not going to be among you. **And when the people heard the bad news they mourned:** so this spread throughout the camp, that God's not going to be with them, they're not going to have protection anymore. Oh, yes, God's going to send an angel up there but what does this really mean? And so this unknowing, this uncertainty...and again, more to the story here than what we understand or know. Got to the point where they didn't like hearing that part, they wanted God's favour, God's protection, God's help and the cloud by day and the fire by night, and all this to lead them along the way, but...

Well, it was at this point here that Moses pleaded with God and the story continues and God had mercy upon them and continued with them.

Again, more for Moses' learning and for our learning and things that are here for us, that we learn from these things on a spiritual plane, of what human nature is capable of doing, and that we should indeed be abhorred to think that God would not be among us. What a *horrible* thought, that we could do something where God would not be... shouldn't that be our *sobered thought*? *Exactly* what I said before we got to this point – that that is the thing that should sober us to the core of our being – the *thought*, to know what we're capable of as human beings. To understand because of that, that's the very reason we drop to our knees and cry out to God to change us, to forgive us, to give us strength of His spirit every day, to help us keep focused and keep on track like we need to be, *because we know we weren't that way last year?! Do you know? Do you feel convicted* that you could have done more last year? ...that you could have been stronger last year than what you were? Or did we get into a mode of coasting and doing exactly what God said about Laodicea? Because you see, in looking back in retrospect I believe with all my being *that's where we were* – coasting, lukewarm, not making some of the changes we should have been making because after all, we're almost there. And certain things we

ignored and didn't address, didn't address in our families, didn't address in our own personal lives, because after all, we're almost there.

So, certain things that are harder to do – and if they're harder to do out there are they hard to do in here too? You bet! And so it's easy to ignore, it's easy to just allow certain sin to continue and certain things to continue and not address them and God says, "No-no-no-no...you missed the mark! You missed what this is all about!" And that's why now God is sobering us and helping us to look at this in a sober manner, of going back to this message again and again and again here at the beginning of this 'day', 'between the two evenings', of looking deeply into our lives and saying, "What must be different? ...that God demands be different?" That we stand with Him, that we stand in Him, that we *are* at one.

Only *you* can go back, if you want, in what I'm saying here, through 57 Truths and say, "*Do you believe it?* Is this your life? Do you believe it came from God? Do you believe it's of God?" And if not, which ones aren't? And if so, if any of it's not there, *why* do you stay? *Why* do you hurt this Body? Just go. Just leave. That's God's message to us because He wants the Body to be strong and at one, and it will be.

Do I want that? No! I want everyone to make it! I want everyone to succeed. I want everyone to be able to change and continue on, but I've seen some go by the wayside recently and it hurts. It's always been that way.

So, don't be so sure you have it fully made.

So God then instructed Moses to go back up on Mount Sinai, we finally come to that point, to meet with Him again, and God gave him more instruction to be given to Israel. So they stayed there. So, he came down, broke the stones, God was not going to go with them, they finally changed their attitude and spirit and Moses pleaded with God again, and God said okay. He took Moses back up to continue on with what He was giving him already. So He actually took him back up there and continued with some of the same things, just adding more, giving more as far as instruction and so forth. And the two tables He was going to write upon Himself, it says. We'll come to that as we go along here.

But notice here; **Exodus 34:27 - And the Eternal said to Moses, Write these words: for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel.** So again, they've gone through all this and He's telling him now of certain things to be written. He says, **after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel. And he was there with the Eternal forty days and forty nights;** so now he's going to be there for a longer period of time. He's there for forty days and forty nights. Awesome! And it says, **and he didn't eat bread, nor drink water.** God sustained him. God gave him glory; God gave his strength and performed some awesome things here as you read through some of the story and more of it. **And He wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the Ten Commandments.** Not Moses, but God did, because it's what God said back in verse 1, if you go back and read verse 1, God told him to bring these tables and "I will write with My (basically), My finger again on the stone." So that's what He was saying.

So again, going back through this process again – he was up there for this period of time and while on Mount Sinai – I'm just going to give part of the history here – God gave more instruction to Moses along with things pertaining to the building of the tabernacle tent. And when Moses went down from Mount Sinai he gave God's instructions to the Israelites and they built those things concerning the tabernacle

tent. So as you're reading through Exodus here and you read the story, this is what's happening. He went back down after this period of time, they start building the tabernacle tent, the ark, the many vessels and so forth that went along with it. He's already given certain things about the Levitical system. And so all these things that happened before and now being added together. God is giving all this as He's working with a nation of people before He takes them into the promised land. And so He continues with this process of teaching them, and more about the service of the Levites and so forth.

Then at the end of Exodus the tabernacle is fully set up and all these things are anointed. So God had them all to be anointed, meaning set apart for special use and purpose, basically, anointed for God's service. And on the first day of the first month, nearing one year after their departure from Egypt, now they did this. He went up on the mountain after the 10 Commandments had been given. He'd been up there for a time; they messed up like they did. I don't know how long a period, it doesn't say fully, I don't think, what period of time that was. He came back down, broke the stones, the tablets, went back up for forty days and forty nights... so here we're passing through time. And then they come back down and they start the construction then, the building of the tent, all these vessels and so forth. This period of time is going by, almost a year has elapsed now. That's what we're at, we're at a period of time where almost a year has gone by since they left Egypt and so we're coming up to the first day of the first month, Abib, almost a year. And so we've gone from Exodus 20 where the 10 Commandments were given on Mount Sinai on the Pentecost, all the things I just mentioned here, and now we come to the book of Numbers.

Actually if you go through Leviticus, that's a part of what was given on Mount Sinai there as well. The book of Leviticus, it's about the Levitical system, the Holy Days and the Sabbath and the things we read about in Leviticus 23, but most of it's about the offerings, the priesthood and so forth. So all this information has been given to Moses while he's up there, he brings it back down and we come to the book of Numbers here and what God is going to do with them. So they've gone through this period of time, right at a year. So we come next to the book of Numbers and I want to start here so we get a little bit of this under our belts today.

Numbers 1:1 - And the Eternal spoke unto Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, so they're still there, **in the tabernacle of the congregation**, it's been built now; it's been constructed. Notice... **on the first day of the second month**, so we know when that is, that we've already passed the Passover period here, we're now in the second month. We'll actually go into the book of Numbers a little way and go back in time, because God's going to take us back to the Passover period, but right now it's jumping ahead because of this event that took place, that is *why* this is called the book of Numbers in the first place. There's a reason why Leviticus is called Leviticus; it's about the Levitical system, the priesthood. Numbers is about what's addressed here at the very beginning and this is when the event takes place.

On the first day of the second month of the second year after they came out of... meaning one year has now gone past, they're starting into the second year; **after they'd come out of the land of Egypt saying, Find the sum of all the congregation of the children of Israel, after their families, by the house of their fathers, with the number of their names, every male for their census; From twenty years old and upward**, so God gave an age of twenty for a state of accountability. That's why sometimes in the Church when people come to baptism, twenty and up especially, but nineteen, little younger depending on their background and so forth, don't like it as much when they're eighteen, sometimes we do, but nineteen... because it has to do with accountability, it has to do with what we're able to receive and what God holds an individual toward. But here was just a number in that respect that God gave specifically, twenty years old and upward.

If you remember later on when they went into the promised land at that point in time it talks about all these that had died, twenty years old and upward, because they were accountable at this point in time, from here forward, and that's why, because of their accountability they were a part of those who died. Those who were younger and grew up during that forty years, they were then the army and the peoples that went into that land.

So, **From twenty years old and upward, all who are able to go forth to war in Israel:** in other words, of an accountable age, able to be in battle, to fight, **you and Aaron shall number them by their armies,** or their hosts, or their divisions; because God was going to divide them up by their divisions, as tribes, as families.

Verse 4 – And with this there shall be a man of every tribe; that word that means 'to branch' as the branch of a vine. So that's how the tribes or the peoples were looked upon, each tribe; **and every one head of his house of his fathers.** In other words, someone is going to be the head of each tribe, each branch here, noted as such; forefathers in other words, one who is the head, the most notable representative then of that division. **And these are the names of the men who shall stand with you: of the tribe of Reuben; Elizur the son of...** anyway, it starts going through here, just lists all these different ones, who is a notable one, then it was broken down from there.

Jumping on down to **verse 16 - These are the renowned men of the congregation, princes of the tribes of their fathers, heads of the thousands in Israel. And Moses and Aaron took these men who were expressly noted by their names: And they assembled all the congregation together on the first day of the second month, and they declared their pedigrees/lineage after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, by their census.** And so God was having them become a very organized people, a nation of people that He was going to take into the promised land. And so this is a part of this story about the numbering. And you'll find other places in the Bible when Israel numbered themselves that God condemned them. This is why I don't like to number. This is one reason numbers aren't important. I have generally had a vague idea of the numbers, of where we are, of who we are, but to get specific about it I abhor because I've seen what's happened in God's Church when people become number conscious and begin to use it. It begins to become a matter of pride, or of power, or of esteem. And some of you know *exactly* what I'm talking about; some have gotten into trouble here for not counting enough, people in the bathroom, in their count, because it was being misused in the Church. And that's what happens. That's what can happen in time. Israel was condemned for having done this, for taking numbers, because it had to do with their might then and what they were looking to as *their* might rather than looking to God. God was doing this as a matter of organization, as a matter of something to be recorded, and when God does it it's for a different purpose. When man does it... it's generally you can just count on it being the wrong person. Well, don't 'count' on it.

Verse 19 - And the Eternal commanded Moses, so he numbered them in the wilderness of Sinai. So again, a year had gone by and for most of this time they'd remained obviously in this same region of Sinai in Arabia. **And the children of Reuben, Israel's oldest son, by their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, by their census, every male from twenty years old and upward, all of who were able to go forth to war; Those who were numbered of them, of the tribe of Reuben, forty and six thousand and five hundred.** So again, every tribe, it went through in numbering them. They were divided up, knew exactly the different lineages and so forth, it was all recorded; it was all a part of the entire system here.

I want to finish with this chapter here. Let's go on down and read the last few verses here just to set the stage for what's to come later: **verse 46 - Even all who were numbered were six hundred and three thousand, five hundred and fifty.** Amazing! Males, twenty years old and upward. So there were a lot more because of all the families, children, wives, women, and so forth. This was those who were actually able to go to war, twenty years old and upward. They were the ones who were in the actual number of the count, **six hundred three thousand, five hundred and fifty; But the Levites, now it says, after the tribe of their fathers were not numbered among them.** So they weren't numbered a part of that because they weren't to be a part of battle, of war, they had a different function, a different job as far as what God had given to them.

For the Eternal had told Moses, saying, You shall not number the tribe of Levi, neither take the sum of them among the children of Israel: But you shall appoint the Levites over the tabernacle of testimony, and over all the vessels thereof, and over all things that belong to it: they shall bear the tabernacle, and all the vessels thereof; and they shall minister unto it, and shall encamp round about the tabernacle. So again, just wanted to set the groundwork for all this so we can jump ahead in some of the other chapters here.

But again here, what an awesome story as you go through this. So here we're almost up to right at a year now has passed since they left and God's getting ready now – what we're getting ready to go into – is to take them on out into the promised land. That's what He's going to fulfil and this is where He's at. And it's the rest of the story here that becomes even more awesome in what God gives and what we're to learn from it.

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