

Today we're continuing with *Part 3* of the sermon series entitled, *Late into the Night*.

I thought I'd mention, as quite a few people have remarked about history and trying to keep up with various things, trying to understand some of the dates and the people and so forth, candidly that isn't as important as just an overview of the importance that some of these have in history. That's what we need to glean from this, the importance of what, as an example, Constantine played as a part in Europe in bringing the entire Empire together and how he is the one specifically who gave modern day Christianity, if you will, it's push forward, it's recognition and power.

And again, that's important to understand the beginning of that being in 323 AD, and then of course the importance of that being given even far more power just two years later, which continues on to this day in traditional Christianity, which started with the Nicene Council in 325 AD. Very important events in history, something we really haven't focused on in the same respect of understanding what was taking place. You don't have to know all the individuals, you don't have to know all the people, you don't have to learn who they all are, you don't have to memorize all the dates. Just a couple of dates are sufficient beginning with 323 AD because of what God's showing us at this particular time, sharing with us, giving us the encouragement to understand how He brings everything together in His timing, in His way, and how those things are really very inspiring when you recognize that God's in charge and He does this.

Last Sabbath we went through quite a bit of history that concerned the rise in the power of the Roman Empire that merged with false Christianity as the Empire under Constantine was declared to be 'Christian' in 323 AD, and it was at that time that Constantine had restored both the east and the west parts of the Empire under one rule under him. This 'Christianity', this type of Christianity then became the state religion in 323 AD.

This was the beginning of the first beast, the first head, as we discussed last Sabbath, of Revelation - we'll start here again this week in Revelation 3:13 just to drive the point home - the first beast, or the first head, as it's referred to in Revelation, that was wounded and later healed under Justinian. It's important to note that it was wounded but not destroyed, and as the church continued to grow in power throughout the Empire although the government itself collapsed, the Roman Empire in that respect, in 476 AD. But that gave the church 150 years to become strong and powerful in Europe. They had 150 years to accomplish that and then, of course, a tremendous revival under Justinian later on in the 500's AD.

Revelation 13:1 - And I stood upon the sand of the sea and I saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and again, we understand that period of time, what that's about that's prophetic that takes place at the very end. ...and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. So on all the heads was the name of blasphemy which has to do with the kind of religion that became the state religion and that began to take shape and has been a part of the system ever since.

Verse 2 - And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him power, and his seat, and great authority. And I saw one of his heads, which we understand, as we've mentioned here, was the first head, **as if it**
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were wounded to death; so it wasn't dead but that's the appearance that it gave because of what happened to the Roman Empire. **...one of his heads, as if it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed and all the world wondered at the beast. And they worshipped the dragon;** mankind hasn't understood what he's done; but again, this is a system that Satan set up to mock God, to mock God's truth, to mock God's true way of life, to mock Jesus Christ, and yet through that very system is the very one that became so powerful that they didn't understand who was behind it and who they were actually worshipping. So it says, **they worshipped the dragon who gave power to the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? ...and who is able to make war with him?** Tremendous power given in specific times at the various revivals of the Roman Empire.

And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; so everything that was done by it was against God; that's the purpose, that's what Satan did. His whole purpose has always been to fight against God, basically even going before that, not just a matter of that which is false but a matter of fighting against God's purpose, against God's Church because this is about that which was against God's Church.

And it says... **and power was given unto him to continue forty-two months.** 1260 years, a period of time that would continue on from 323 AD, specific power given to that false religion.

Today we're going to go through more history; I guess we'll go back here and do a little bit of a reminder of what we discussed last week as well just to get an overview once again, to get us back into the swing of the sermon here.

Though wounded for a time the power of the church continued to grow and exert a great power and influence upon Europe where the true Church had fled and become dispersed. God's Church, all the things that have taken place through time, the battles God's people have gone through, this is a part of that history. It's going to be exciting one day not too long from now when we're able to know what the true history is of God's Church, of what truly took place at different times, because of all the history that's out there that's the one that's been fairly well stamped out, that doesn't exist, just a little bit of an inkling here and there of certain things that might have been a part of God's Church.

I was thinking the other day, which I mentioned to someone, they did find literature going back to, I believe it was the 1700's, back into the area of New England where they did find some old churches and some stuff that was part of what they believed to be a part of the Church at that time. Some of the names of the articles they found were the exact same names of what Mr. Armstrong gave his articles, which I thought was interesting, which they didn't find until many, many years later, back, I think it was, the last 60's when they found some of those booklets, some of that literature.

From the beginning the great false church persecuted God's Church. It's the way it's always been. Satan has always been doing that from the very beginning, trying to thwart God's plan, starting with Adam and Eve and then of course the Church later on - and we've read some of those things in Revelation as well - so much so that God had to give protection to the Church during this specific period of time when this great church was emerging, because what was taking place here was as authority was being given to a false church they had tremendous power to do what had been happening to them through a period of time leading up to Constantine, which was - we mentioned Diocletian who his major push to destroy, to kill anyone having to do with anything called Christianity. And so the Roman Empire, upon all who were to call themselves of Christ or Christian, were being killed and in some very hideous ways to stamp it out.

And so, when this church gained power it did exactly the same thing as Diocletian; they used hideous means. When you read things in history of what this church did to people... we talked about some of it last week, people being burned at the stake, some of the things that took place. I'm not even going to go into some of the kind of torture that they did; it was incredibly sick! They practiced the same things that had been being done to them, but now this church had power to destroy God's true Church. That's what they tried to do; that was Satan's intent from the very beginning.

So that's the story behind the scenes of things that have happened throughout history - a desire by Satan, a desire by governments, and especially those governments because of their influence, to destroy anything that threatened them, and certainly God's true Church has always threatened other churches in the sense that they felt it was a threat. That's why I go back and think of the things that took place when we used to put out 'The Plain Truth' newsstands and how that there were some churches, their entire mission was to destroy, to get rid of, they printed literature against Mr. Armstrong, against the Church, trying to defame, trying to tear down everywhere they could. They would go into grocery stores or wherever these stands were and they weren't content with just taking 'The Plain Truth's' out of the stands, they would take the stands out back to the trash bin areas and try to destroy them to where you couldn't use them anymore. And this was a common practice of two main churches, the Church of Christ and the Baptists, who did this for a long time; the Baptists being one that probably printed more literature about Mr. Armstrong, against the truth, against the Church through time than any other single church that's out there as well.

These things are a part of our history, but these things have been going on through time where it's perceived as a threat because the Catholic church didn't want people to know the truth. They had Latin and they tried to keep people in ignorance by using a particular language, and it wasn't until - I wish I could remember the years... I didn't grow up a Catholic...but I lived through that period of time when they started changing that and it seemed like it was in the 70's if my recollection is correct here. At some period in the 70's I believe the Catholic church began to change in the United States as far as reading or doing the whatever it was that the priests did in Latin. Does anybody know what that's called? I don't know what it's called. Some of you that have been called out of some of those things, you know what I'm referring to, but a change did take place in the States and I believe it was in the early 70's when some of that was happening.

A lot of that was to keep people in ignorance, just like the teaching, in a sense, from different ones, "You don't need to open your Bible because we'll tell you what you need to know and we'll teach you in our catechisms, but you don't need to go to a Bible." Because if you go there it becomes a threat to them, the truth becomes a threat to that particular church, especially when you see what happened during the Nicene Council. They certainly don't want you to go back in history.

This period of time corresponds to a period of time when God granted special help and intervention to keep His Church alive through this period of time, and that's what is recorded here in Revelation 12:6. When you go through Revelation 12 it takes you through basically the entire history of what Satan has done against God and what he did -basically brings you on the scene, bringing you to a picture here of a child that was to be born and there Satan was on the scene to destroy, from the very beginning! And so it goes through this story here in Revelation 12 and it even takes you down to the very end in Revelation 12 talking about what we have gone through in the end-time concerning the scattering of the Church and concerning how God had to protect the Church for a period of 3½ years, otherwise we wouldn't be here, if God hadn't intervened and gave special protection to the Church.

There is also a period of time that corresponds to this in history and that's in verse 6.

Revelation 12:6 - And the woman fled into the wilderness, that began in 323 AD when this power was there, of when it began to give greater power to this particular church. **And the woman fled into the wilderness where she had a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand, two hundred and sixty days;** so again, this 1260 days, this forty-two weeks spoken of; this power that was given to this organization, in a sense, to have power to accomplish what it did throughout Europe, and now specifically about God's Church and God needing to feed - which has to do with that which is spiritual.

So again, God gave special help to the Church. We don't know fully what it is because it's not recorded anywhere, so those things we wait on God to reveal after Christ has returned. From 323 to 1583 - that's what God is giving to the Church now - God gave special protection and help whereby His Church was spiritually fed through this period of 1260 years, as much as He did to *this* Church after the apostasy occurred, after the scattering had taken place, until we were set and established firmly by Pentecost of 1998. (I don't know if it was the last sermon or not but I don't know if I corrected that or not but it sounded like 1988 - it was a slur on my part, it's barely there - but it is 1998, Pentecost, when we were established as far as God's Church was concerned.)

That 1260 years... and this brings us up to the period of the reign of Queen Elizabeth I; that's why we're going through now, things about Queen Elizabeth I of England who was sitting on the throne of David over the house of Joseph, if you will. Though we do not know the exact event that took place in God's Church, as I said earlier, I believe that God is giving us part of the answer to these things and that's exciting, to understand an importance of timing and how God does things.

As was mentioned last Sabbath at the end of the sermon, although these events we're reading about are about the governments of this world and the great false religion that became fully established in the Roman Empire in 323 AD, this is still first and foremost about God's Church. That's what it's always been about, God's Church; it with whom God is working first and foremost, and God's plan that He's working out. So there is more to this than just God's Church because there is another phase of God's plan that He is still working out that's a matter of something prophetic that's awesome.

As God works in an orderly, timely and exacting manner, if you will, with His plan there are patterns from which we can learn, just like you do in your life, or like we have in the Church. There are patterns in how God works with us in our life. That's why so often within the ministry, when someone comes into the Church and they start telling us certain things we can finish the sentence for them, because there is a pattern of certain things you just have to go through, there are certain things you have to experience in life in how God is working with you, how things are happening with you in your life, and sometimes it dumbfounds people in some respects, but it's just the way that we've all experienced these things. There are patterns of how God works in our life, an overall pattern, if you will, from calling and growth and so forth that takes place.

Here is a pattern regarding the Church. The Church was established in 31 AD on the Day of Pentecost. That happened to also be the beginning of Ephesus, the Ephesian Era, if you will, or the Era of Ephesus. I think of the pattern as well, the remnant of God's Church, God has blessed us to understand that it was re-established during Laodicea on Pentecost of 1998. We know that Jesus Christ is returning on a Pentecost of 2013.

I'm going to add something else here that I found interesting, because I believe that God's showing us a pattern here of things that He's done through time, as far as He counts it, as far as what's important to Him and what He gives to the Church through His Son Jesus Christ, but in going back and reading some of the things about the history of Mr. Armstrong, there was, in the beginning, toward the beginning, a day where he kept Pentecost on the right day - somewhat by accident, if you will. Because at that time he went through a process before he finally came to a time where he began to teach the Church that it was to be observed on a Monday and how to count that from the Days of Unleavened Bread, and corresponding in large part to how the actual reasoning of some of the things concerning Easter also and the timing following that, to how Pentecost was counted in Europe. To make a long story short, in the beginning some of his practice was from some who have recorded history about it in the Church, is that he began to keep it on Sivan 6th which was when the Jews observed it - many of the Jews observed it on that particular day - and that lands on different days of the week at different times, and there was a period in the early 30's when that day happened to land on a particular Pentecost. Whether or not that's important or not, I tend to believe it is because God works by patterns.

The establishing of the Church... I think of Laodicea, Laodicea wasn't established, there is no date that corresponds to anything that happened with Laodicea in the very beginning because God was not going to bless, He was not going to bless the leadership from the very get-go, of what took place after Mr. Armstrong died. There was no establishing, in that respect, of Laodicea, because of what was taking place. It really wasn't established, Laodicea, in the sense of what God was working as far as a Church was concerned, until 1998. That's a reality! ...even though the Church was spewed out of God's mouth, it talks about, because of the apostasy that took place. That process was already in the wind, if you will. Mr. Armstrong, before he died, talked about how he wondered if even 10% were Philadelphian any longer.

Interesting history; sometimes things we go through and don't think about that in time we learn what God is doing simply by looking back and learning from the patterns of how God works in our life - and He inspires us to see those things too.

The 430 years spoken of in Exodus 12 is about an exact time in which God is going to lead the world, the physical nations of Israel, and the Church, fully out of spiritual Egypt. That's what He's revealing to us, that there is a period of time - if you go from 1583 you come up to 2013 - that's not by coincidence...that you go through 1260 years and then you go through 430 more...especially when you see what God did with Israel, primarily with Ephraim, the house of Joseph, if you will. It's awesome, it truly is, what God began to do through Queen Elizabeth I and what He brought into being at that particular time. Because we're going to go back and read more than just Exodus 12 that has to do with this 430 years and what God was doing. It's inspiring! It's awesome! It truly is! And we'll do that toward the end of the sermon.

But this history here first is important to understand, that there are things that God has been doing through time and some of it has to do with a fulfilling of promises, some promises He gave in the very beginning to Abraham...to Abraham from the *very beginning*. What happened when England became great and became an Empire was a part of a fulfillment of a promise that He gave to Abraham that was to be fulfilled in the end-time, a power they were to begin to exert on the earth, and it is awesome to go back and see when these things began to take place.

I was talking to Greg here earlier and he mentioned that some others have mentioned too that some in history actually use 1583 as the date that the British Empire, in that respect... became as the date for

the Empire to actually begin with it's power to be exerted on the earth. Not by coincidence, because the reality is it is...it is. And that's awesome to understand, that God is using a time period here to fulfill something exactly in a pattern that He set out so long ago, because God has been giving to us in the Church that there are patterns, just like with Exodus 12, that are about us, our coming out of Egypt and our journey through the wilderness, and all those things that have patterns in them of something that was very physical but for us is very spiritual that God is fulfilling in our lives. It's inspiring!

Anyway, going back into this. So even as there was a great European power who gave the Roman Church it's influence and power throughout Europe - because it's primarily about Europe - it was another great ruler in Europe who was the primary force to begin changing or reversing, if you will, the control of the Roman Church over Europe, and that was Queen Elizabeth I; that's who it was accomplished in.

So again, going back to some of the things we discussed last Sabbath, I'm going to do a quick review here of some of this because as we looked at some of the history that led up to Constantine gaining control of the Roman Empire and establishing the Roman Church throughout the Empire, and especially, again, over all Europe, that power of the Roman Church began to diminish in the *exact* same manner. So as you see Constantine gaining in power and finally having that power fully in 323 and declaring that Christianity is the state religion and all the things he did at that particular moment in time, the very same thing as far as a decline that led up to Queen Elizabeth having that kind of power that diminished from the Catholic church in 1583 is a kind of pattern as well.

Last Sabbath we spoke of... I'm going to go back through here again about some of the years, because again, when you see these things it's awesome how they transpired and how they came to be. But we spoke of John Wycliffe, who was a lay preacher, a translator, and a university teacher at Oxford in the mid-1300's. So basically this is when some of these things began with a greater power, but this was in the mid-1300's in England, and then the Lollard Movement, if you studied anything in history...some people like it and have.

The Lollard Movement that followed him, which was, again, a precursor to the protestant reformation. So this started in the 1300's; and a part of what he did was he translated the Bible into English. He began to translate at that particular time, clear back then, but he began the influence of what is referred to as secular power in the sense of a separation of church and state. Now, this is awesome, because that's what this country is supposedly noted for, a separation of church and state; and so to begin that in a period of time when the Catholic church...there was no such thing as separation of church and state, and to see what was happening in England itself, there was this movement to begin separating the two and it began primarily through this individual, and he is noted for that through history.

And then there was, some time later here now going all the way up to the early 1400's, Jan Huss who was a Czech priest and a professor at the University of Prague. We talked about that, how he was burned at the stake in 1415 after being labeled a heretic by the Catholic church, and this led to the Hussite wars in Bohemia and Moravia, in that part of the world. It's all across Europe these things were taking place through the... especially beginning in the 1400's at different intervals and gained momentum in the 1500's; that's where it gained its momentum.

And then we move forward in history talking about the century that followed, a century later in the 1500's. We spoke about Martin Luther and some others at that time but we didn't mention something

that was the fueling of the emergence of a powerful force that would begin to work against the control of the Catholic church over Europe. It's awesome, it truly is, when you begin to think of the timing!

The most powerful tool that began to accelerate the loss of power by the Catholic church came as a result of the invention of the printing press by the German Johannes Gutenberg in 1440. The primary thing that they began to do was to print religious material - Bibles! The first thing that was printed was the Gutenberg Bible, in that respect, written in Latin; so before that, the Latin Vulgate, now they were able to print en masse rather by hand through this system of the printing press and so this is where it first began to be used, and so they began to print them.

You jump up 60 years plus and Martin Luther is the one who began using the printing press in a very powerful way, as well as a lot of these others, that by this time it had grown to greater use, there were far more printing presses throughout Europe and some began to use this in a push in what they were doing. And so Martin Luther is the one who published, as we talked about... I'll get to that in a moment here but I want to back up a little bit. He was one who actually printed a Bible into the German language instead of Latin. So he was one of the first who began to do something totally different - no longer in Latin but now in a different language, in this case into German.

And then the Wycliffe Bible that... we talked a moment ago about Wycliffe who was back in the 1300's, he translated but they didn't mass produce it yet, it was just done by hand. He translated it into English, but now printing presses started printing it into English in the early 1500's. And so the printing press began to do something as far as the public was concerned out there, of people who were able to read in their own language and study in their own language things in the Bible that they had never known before except for what someone would give to them from a pulpit, and very rarely was that out of the Bible. So this was an incredible revolution that began to take place as far as the power of the printing press, technology and what was being thrust forward.

And to be candid with you, Satan used this one powerfully so to attack God's Church. That's what Sardis is all about. It's the primary tool he used to attack God's Church, because after the 1260 years God removed a special protection and blessing He was giving to the Church to feed it, and now it was able to begin to stand more in a different way on its own but through the ability to have tools necessary to continue to move forward...but that began to be a crux and a problem as well through time, just as what happened in Philadelphia and on into Laodicea - similar sort of patterns that followed, human nature being what it is. Great lessons that the Church has had to learn through time.

And so again here, Wycliffe Bible was printed, other Bibles began to spread in different languages and this was not taken well by the Catholic church.

In 1517, again, we talked about this, Martin Luther posted 'The 95 Thesis' on the castle door and then during that same period of time a fellow by the name of Huldrych Zwingli (Ulrich Zwingli) led the reformation in Switzerland, in the Zurich area, so much so that what was called the five states of Switzerland went to war against him and others in that area of the Zurich area. They went and had a war and this Zwingli was killed at that time. This was in the early 1500's and he died there in that war in 1531.

Then 1530, a year before, there was Jean Calvin (John Calvin) who broke away from the Catholic church in France. So again, France, Switzerland, the region of Czechoslovakia now, the region of the Czech Republic I guess it is now, but Bohemia and Moravia, and then Germany because of what Martin Luther

was doing. There were things going on in The Netherlands as well, and then of course England. A tremendous power was beginning to be influenced and beginning to take place here in the early 1500's.

So now we come to King Henry VIII (...and I won't sing it even though the tune comes to mind). Incredible history of what took place. So going back here now, Henry VIII with all of his wives and the problems created by this with the Catholic church helped to give the protestant movement in England a stronger foothold. The first break with Rome came when Pope Clement VII refused over a period of years to annul Henry's marriage to Catherine of Aragon. I'm only going to mention three wives in this story... But this is important because there are children from this that come up later on in the story here as far as rulership in England, and you can see why some of the sentiment was carried through, because of what Henry VIII had done with the different wives here.

But here is an example here with Catherine of Aragon, he wanted to have an annulment in order to be able to marry again. That was his objective. Henry first asked for an annulment in 1527...so this is after Martin Luther did what he did but before what some of these others did as far as John Calvin and Zwingli and some of the others.

So he first sought an annulment in 1527 and after various failed initiatives he stepped up the pressure on Rome in the summer of 1529 by compiling a manuscript from ancient sources arguing that in law spiritual supremacy rested with the monarch and also against the legality of the papal authority. So, in other words, he was trying to give legal claim to, right, to the fact that the power of the church rested with the monarchy and not with the pope in this respect. They did what they could do to twist and distort.

In 1531, just a few years later Henry again challenged the pope when he demanded £100,000 (I don't know what that was equivalent to, but that was a lot back then), from the clergy, which was the Catholic church clergy, in exchange for a royal pardon for what he called their illegal jurisdiction. He also demanded that the clergy should recognize him as their sole protector and supreme head. Quite a step!

So the Church of England recognized Henry VIII as the Supreme Head of the Church of England in February of 1531. So again, a beginning here of some of the things that began to move and make a change in England.

A year later, in May 1532, the Church of England agreed to surrender its legislative independence and canon law to the authority of the monarch. And then another year later, in 1533, the Statute in Restraint of Appeals was passed which removed the right of the English clergy and laity to appeal to Rome on matters of matrimony, tithes, and oblations. Strike them where it hurts! So in other words, they couldn't appeal to Rome anymore. He was trying to break the tie of the Catholic church over England totally. It also gave authority over such matters to the Archbishops of Canterbury and York.

So this is what finally allowed Thomas Cranmer, the new Archbishop of Canterbury to issue Henry's annulment. And this becomes important a little bit later on, this Cranmer, because of what happens to him, but he was the Archbishop of Canterbury and he issued the annulment with Catherine of Aragon that Henry couldn't get with the pope. So now he has it from the Archbishop of Canterbury because the laws have passed and he is the head at this point. Henry married Anne Boleyn and then Pope Clement VII excommunicated Henry VIII in 1533 after this had happened. Surprise, surprise!

1534, another year later, there was the Act of Submission of the Clergy which removed the right of *all* appeals to Rome, effectively ending the popes influence. And then the First Act of Supremacy - this is another Act, an Act that was passed by parliament and by the king - confirmed Henry by statute as the Supreme Head of the Church of England in 1536, but due to clergy objections the contentious term 'Supreme Head' for the monarch later became Supreme Governor of the Church of England, which is the title held by the reigning monarch to this present time. Amazing!

So since that period of time... there was an interruption on this so it didn't really... history doesn't have that fully right there in the one I quoted here, but they had that title there, Supreme, as the reigning monarch, to the present when they held that title. I'll come back to that in a moment.

Then we jump ahead to 1547 when Henry VIII died and he was succeeded by his 9 year old son Edward VI, whose mother was Jane Seymour. So here is the third one. So here he is 9 years old, he reigned for only six years and he died at the age of 15 in 1553, and rather than passing along the rule to either of his sisters, Mary or Elizabeth, the succession went to a cousin by the name of Lady Jane Grey. So, some of these names you remember hearing in history or history books or seeing in movies or whatever, but her reign only lasted for 9 days and there is a lot of behind the scenes politicking and things with the church going on at this particular time.

Her reign lasted for 9 days, and Lady Jane Grey was imprisoned and then later executed for high treason. What they did back then, they eliminated objections or potential political powers. That's been the history. That's what happened in Rome, that's what's happened through time, it's in the Bible, some of the betrayals of things that have gone on and families being wiped out and families wiping their own families out at times. Incredible history of crazy things that have gone on.

Then Mary I was brought along after that. Mary I was then made Queen in July of 1553 and remained queen for only five years. She was the daughter of Henry VIII and Catherine of Aragon. She was the daughter from Catherine of Aragon that he tried to get annulment from. So think about the children and their feelings then in some of these things because that's what happens in history here, why they reacted and did some of the things they did; because Mary is Catherine of Aragon's daughter. Mary was, without too much guessing here, a Roman Catholic and she immediately re-established unity with Rome, she restored the Roman Catholic Bishops in England, and she set out to put down and destroy Protestantism and return England to Roman Catholicism.

During her five year reign she had over 280 religious dissenters burned at the stake in what's called the Marian Persecutions. That's why she has the name 'Bloody Mary'. That's where it came from. Executions for heresy by Mary I's government began in 1555 - the most famous of which was the burning in Oxford of three leading church figures. Then in the following year, in March of 1556, this Thomas Cranmer, who was given the role of Archbishop, he was the one who gave the annulment to Henry VIII, and you can understand Mary's feelings, some of her feelings and why she followed up on this one. He was killed, burned at the stake for heresy.

Some of these things were taking place, in the sense of history and what the Church of England felt, it felt that because of what she did, the martyrdom of these different individuals and so forth, only added to the so called 'moral authority' of the English protestant church. Anyway, Mary died in 1558 and Elizabeth I came to power.

She is the daughter of Anne Boleyn, the one that King Henry VIII wanted to marry after the annulment of Catherine of Aragon. She reigned for 45 years in England, and again, from the outset Queen Elizabeth had a great battle on her hands as she was not going to submit to the Catholic church's rule or influence over England, yet she worked to bring about a system similar to the Catholic church - because the Church of England isn't a lot different from the Catholic church in the way it's organized and the structure and some of the things they've done - but still she worked to bring about a system very similar to that of the Catholic church in the form of the Church of England while at the same time standing firm against Puritanism. Puritanism at that time was looked upon as being an extreme and a problem to the Church of England, but the Catholic church was a greater threat and so most of what was done was against both groups but primarily against the Catholic church.

So she had, especially at the beginning here, an awkward time of trying to keep peace and so forth in the groups but that changed because of what the Catholic church continued to do toward her and her resolve against it became far greater through this period of time.

So by the time we jump forward here just a little while - it didn't take very long here, actually, in the beginning they were already having threats of foreign invasion and treason and so forth because of the Catholic church. But in what was called the Elizabethan Religious Settlement was Elizabeth I response to the religious divisions created by Henry VIII and of course Edward VI and Mary I. This response, described at the revolution of 1559 was set out in a second Act of Supremacy that had been passed earlier through Henry VIII, but it re-established the Church of England's independence from Rome with parliament conferring on Elizabeth the title of Supreme Governor of the Church of England, and from then it's set that way through time.

About ten years later, 1569 (we're jumping a little bit ahead here then...) the story that follows really becomes entangled here and perhaps the best overview would be one of the threat of assassination attempts against Queen Elizabeth because they grew in tremendous power from the Catholic church, from Jesuits, and so forth, as well as invasion from France, from Spain, threats of invasion that they were continually worried about, concerned about. This persisted because of what the Catholic church was doing through the other countries at this time.

In 1569 pope Pius V directly supported rebels in England in an effort to depose Elizabeth. In 1570 he excommunicated her and labelled her as a heretic, and once he did that they were also encouraging assassination. So... a lot of love there through history, isn't there? ...and how people dealt with each other. You think, this is absolutely incredible, some of the things that some of the popes did and some of these countries did - absolutely incredible to think that they called themselves religious.

Then jumping ahead, by August of 1572 fears of assassination and invasion from France grew after what was called the St. Bartholomew's Day massacre where French protestants were massacred. I think there were over a thousand, or whatever, that were murdered by French Catholics in Paris. And this was witnessed by Sr. Walter Raleigh and several others; they came back to England and this concern then of invasion became even greater and concerns about Elizabeth being assassinated.

A decade later, 1581 so we're just jumping ahead through time here - but you can see a trend of things that were taking place because of what the Catholic church was doing, what these countries were doing, a desire to depose her, a desire to overthrow her, but she was becoming stronger through all this and had a greater resolve to fight back.

So, in 1581, a decade later, things began to move more rapidly as many historical events began to emerge and truly thrust England into becoming the British Empire. The separation between England and the Catholic church grew much stronger and by March of 1581 parliament passed strict regulation against Catholics, carrying heavy fines for hearing mass and it became high treason to convert to Catholicism. So, by 1581 they weren't messing around much anymore, it became pretty strong, the movement in England. It was in this year that a Catholic Jesuit priest, Edmond Campion, was executed for treason. He was hung, drawn, and quartered for raising sedition in England. The campaign against Catholic missionary clergy lasted for another decade after this. So from that period of time 1581 to 1591 it continued on.

Interesting here what happened later on in history, Campion was beatified by pope Leo XIII in 1886, not 1586. So it's showing how the Catholic church looked upon things that happened in England at that particular time and by this time here Campion, because of what happened to him, beatified by pope Leo XIII, and in 1970 he was canonized by pope Paul VI as one of the forty martyrs of England and Wales. Interesting the history sometimes of some of these things that have taken place.

History records that Queen Elizabeth was not exaggerating when she sent a message to the French Ambassador in 1583 stating that, "There are more than 200 men of all ages, who at the instigation of Jesuits, conspire to kill me." And they were. The most well known assassination attempt was in 1583. A lot of things happened in that period of time, 1583. It was called the Throgmorton Plot, that was an attempt to assassinate Queen Elizabeth and replace her with the catholic Queen Mary of Scots. Not the Queen Mary who was 'bloody Mary', who died earlier, this was another Mary. Queen Mary of Scots - Throgmorton was involved in numerous plots to kill the Queen, however, on this final occasion Queen Elizabeth's secret service uncovered the plot which also involved the Spanish Ambassador at that time. After the arrest it was also discovered that Henry, the Duke of Guise and France was monetarily supporting Throgmorton. So these countries were behind some of these things, this push to get rid of her, to kill her, and this Duke of Guise was raising up some of the things that were taking place in France to kill protestants and replace... some of the things that were taking place there in religion as well at that time.

But again, after this happened, this Duke of Guise of France was monetarily supporting Throgmorton and he was also planning an invasion of England from the Spanish Netherlands. So this came out in what took place. Throgmorton was executed and the Spanish Ambassador of course thrown out of England.

Through this same period of time there was much happening concerning the expanding influence - I know I'm going through a lot of history but just an overview of some of this to see what was taking place in the world at that time is, to me, awesome, to think all of it coincided, all of it converged, if you will, (maybe a better word - converged), into this period of time and what came out and all these things that built up to this moment in time.

Through this period of time there was much happening concerning the expanding influence of England into many other parts of the world, if you will, which were the beginning stages of thrusting England into a world Empire, the British Empire. The only one who really stood in her way was Spain, because they were going through some of the same things. And so for history, or for prophecy to come about in the way that God was going to mold and fashion it, something would have to happen to Spain and something would have to happen in England, and it did.

In the early 1520's the first circumnavigation of the world was accomplished by a Portuguese sailor, Ferdinand Magellan. Some of you have Magellan GPS devices. ☺ That's where the name comes from. This was at the behest of the Spanish crown - so this was for Spain. He led the first expedition to circumnavigate the world. Then between (much later here now) 1577 and 1580, Sir Francis Drake was a Vice-Admiral to England; he circumnavigated the world a second time and as he was prone to do already he raided Spanish ports and ships in the process. There wasn't a lot of love there. Basically the king wanted Queen Elizabeth to give everything back that he'd taken but for whatever reason she relinquished. He had the support of the queen obviously. So even in this time period here it's amazing some of the places that Spain had already gone into in Central America and part of the Americas there, all the way around the other side; Peru and some of the regions in through there. That's where Sir Francis Drake went and there are even accounts where he raided, went into taking ships, attacking ports and stuff where the Spaniards had already even landed in Peru and some other areas of the world by this time, even on the other side in the regions of the Pacific.

He circumvented the world here and in 1579 he claimed 'New Albion' for England, and this might have had a bigger impact on history but some have believed that New Albion was the area of New York, and it wasn't. The majority of historians now fully understand by where he traveled and by what was taking place it was actually parts of Northern California that he claimed for England. But because of certain things that happened, records that were lost and so forth, the claims couldn't be attested to in the same way as what happened later on here in history. But you think of one side to the other, of what took place from 1581, 1580 all the way to 1583, it's really quite amazing - God opening up the door for fulfillment of prophecy for the end-time, for Ephraim and Manasseh. Because that's what it's about, it's about Joseph and what God was going to accomplish in them over a period of 430 years. Awesome! Not necessarily to the day, but 430 years, and in time we may find out it was to the day as far as God's concerned. Anyway, we'll come back to that a little bit later.

Then there was a fellow by the name of Sir Humphrey Gilbert, who was the half brother of Sir Walter Raleigh that everyone knows a little bit better, a pioneer of English colonization in North America. He is especially noted for the period in 1583 when he set sail in June (he died in that year too), for the area of Newfoundland, and he had letters of Patten from England, and in a formal ceremony took possession of the region of Newfoundland including lands 200 leagues to the north and to the south - and he did that for England in August of 1583. And that's why he's pretty much wiped out in history, because he died then. Some of the problems they had with shipping at that time was pretty dangerous, some of the things that took place. Even Sir Walter Raleigh was supposed to have been with him on this particular trip but because of what happened to some of their ships they couldn't make it - but he made it through, Sir Humphrey Gilbert, and claimed these in 1583.

And then backing up a year was another notable event that worked to sway many into looking into America to colonize and seek even greater freedoms of religion. Because that was the movement for a long period of time, of those coming to the Americas, it happened to be people who were seeking religious freedoms from the Catholic church and from the Church of England, both. There were some trying to escape throughout Europe, and if you see some of the migrations of people they came from all those areas, including areas of Bohemia, and Moravia, and Germany, and The Netherlands, and England, and France. There are different ones from different areas, but mostly in the northern regions all the way as far as the Czech Republic, and the migrations that began to take place after this period of time.

There was an important event in 1582 that history records as being powerfully influential as far as the attitudes of people in looking to the Americas. It was a book written by Richard Hakluyt entitled, 'Divers
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Voyagers Touching the Discovery of America'. This stirred up an excitement and a zeal of people to look beyond Europe and away from the tyranny, if you will, of governments and to look to a new part of the world to begin religious freedoms, and so much had to do with the history of how this nation came about, candidly.

The latter part of 1583, again, Sir Humphrey Gilbert died and his half-brother Sir Walter Raleigh continued on with his quest of colonizing the America's, and then less than a year later, in March 1584, Queen Elizabeth granted Raleigh a charter for colonization of Virginia. Again, the blessings of Joseph for the end-time had taken root and had become fulfilled by God in 1583. That's when it all began; that's when they were thrust forward...again, to fulfill some promises that we're going to look at later here in the sermon concerning the 430 years, of a time when God gave specific promises to Abraham and what happened later on. It's an incredible story, it truly is, when you put it all together!

I know that some of this history is a little boring to some but - it can be - but again, just an overview of it to realize what took place and what God's been doing through time. I marvel at what God has done with the Church, but we should also marvel at what God's done in the world to bring about events that He has prophesied that are so powerful and have ... and doing it down in a minute way, if you will, as far as timing is concerned. God's in control, God has... He's the one that has all power. It's something we should truly be in awe of.

So again, there is much more to the influence and changes being made in the world during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I's forty-five year reign over England.

Changes in the Roman Empire were being made by Constantine up to the year 323 AD when he became sole ruler of the Empire and declared it Christian. And then the course of the Church of Rome's influence over Europe and battle against God's Church that began for the next 1260 years. In like manner, what happened then with the fall of the Catholic church's power and influence that dominated for 1260 years, began to come to an end through England and through what God was doing with Ephraim, or Joseph at that particular time, candidly.

So both of these events, the rise of Constantine and that of Elizabeth were both followed two years by a decisive, if you will, hallmark that set their course for the changes that were going to take place through time. Just like with Constantine, two years later the Council of Nicaea and the boost that gave to the Catholic church in going forward. For Queen Elizabeth I it was the beginning of the war with Spain in 1585, but a war that was (amazing if you go back here) never formally declared a war! The war was punctuated by widely separated battles and began when England's military expedition in 1585 to The Netherlands began against Spain. And then in 1587 Sir Francis Drake destroyed the Spanish fleet in Cadiz, Spain...not all the fleet, but the fleet that was there in Cadiz which made up a huge part of the Spanish fleet at that time. I got a charge out of this one here, that particular battle was known in England as 'the singeing of the beard of the King of Spain'.

Then in the following year came one of the most well known changes that thrust England into the role, if you will, of a world power. That was in 1588 and the defeat of the Spanish Armada. There were a lot of things that happened that are noted in history where mistakes were made, there were goofy things that took place - I'm not going to go into - there was the matter of the North Sea and some of the Sea and some of the things that happened because of weather that destroyed much of the fleet... because it was a powerful fleet, so much so that King Philip II of Spain considered it invincible. They sent 150 ships and 30,000 men to invade England, and the two primary reasons that King Philip II did this was to, as it was

stated here in history, was as a matter to end the competition for trade and expansion, because England was out there and Spain was out there in different parts of the world, especially in the Americas. And the second reason was to bring England under Catholic rule again. And so the back was broken at that time, if you will, of the efforts of the Catholic church and any country again to come against England to do such a thing.

Wanted to mention some things here concerning the reign of Queen Elizabeth I. I'm repeating some of these, I know, but I want to drive this point home. What we have covered through all this concerning the rise of a world power in England through the reign of Queen Elizabeth I is threefold; first, the 1260 years of protection given to God's Church was necessary from 323 to 1583 when the power to persecute God's Church changed in Europe, primarily in England because of England's influence and power, but it was happening all across Europe at that time and it had to do as well with people beginning to look forward then and the ability to expand into other parts of the world for so-called religious freedom. But that's when it took root, if you will, and became fairly firmly set as a course and for a time.

In the year 1583 was the year also, in the very midst of the period that God was beginning to establish England as a power, as an Empire, and again, in order for the fulfillment of physical promises of prosperity that would be given to Israel for the end-time... primarily those to be fulfilled in Joseph. It was for all that was to take place in others as well, from France all the way up to The Netherlands and so forth but it was primarily because of the two things that were to take place through Joseph - the rise of a great power and a commonwealth of nations, and then the greatest nation the world would ever know before Jesus Christ would intervene.

And then third, and though we don't have the specific portion of history in God's true Church as far as the history is concerned, we will find in time that something of major significance happened to the Church of God on Pentecost of 1583 - you can take it to the bank.

Let's turn over now to Exodus 12 because the story here, to me, is awesome, about this 430 years. I marvel because I think about how that God has led us to... If you look at the sermons and what we have gone through - when God has shown us the various things that are a 'type' of something that's happened physically - even the different stories that we've read about in recent time, but especially the journeying of the children of Israel, and then God bringing us up to this point in time and not even knowing where we were going, not even knowing we were going into this. And then all of a sudden God opens another door to help us to learn a little bit more about what He's been doing that still has to do with a 'type' of something that's important here, that God gave us in Exodus 12. So, let's read it again, just as we began this series.

Exodus 12:40 - Now the 'sojourning', now, this is a word that has to do with 'habitations' that you read about in Leviticus 23, at different times in Leviticus 23, and it comes from a word as well for 'dwellings'. It's also translated as 'dwellings' there in Leviticus 23, which is about the Holy Days. So you read it many times there about the 'habitations' or the 'dwellings' and even the one example the word comes from the one that's used concerning the Feast of Booths, when it talks about it there and talks about that they're to have a booth and so forth and to be reminded of the children of Israel who dwelt in - and it's the same word here, the root word for what's being used here.

It talks about the **sojourning/dwelling of/habitation of the children of Israel who dwelt in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years**. Now, there are some good lessons here again. Sometimes it's easy to read something into scriptures and this is a good example of it; if you don't know the rest of the story, if

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we don't know all that's connected with it it's easy to read something in here that is not being said - especially sometimes because things are translated awkwardly oftentimes, because the translators didn't know what was being said either and sometimes they gave a translation of certain words that really didn't... and then the putting in comma's that don't really go where they should because they weren't being used anyway. That's more of an English thing - at least for us.

Now, the sojourning of the children of Israel, so it's talking about their habitations, it's talking about their living and what they've gone through through time and it just makes a statement here when you come on the scene, **who dwelt in Egypt**, and that's where you see them at this point in time when you come into the story. But it doesn't say here that they were in Egypt for 430 years. That's reading into the scriptures if you do that. So again, it's very awkward, and if you don't know the rest of the story it's easy to read that into the story and thinking that, well, the children of Israel were in Egypt for 430 years. No, they weren't. They were there for 215 years, exactly half of that. Exactly half! That's how long they were in Egypt - very well a matter of genealogies and times and so forth that are given in the Bible. Very easy to follow through... well, not that easy, but you can get help out there and you can find it.

And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the selfsame day it came to pass...so here it's giving an account of something that happened to an exact day 430 years from a moment in time that's important to God and important to us when God gives us the rest of the story and helps us to understand what He did, showing the power He has to bring things about in such a timely fashion - in exactly the way He chooses to do it. He records it, He does it, He brings it to pass. And there is a 'type' of this then...that's why what happened in 1583 over that period of time all the way to Christ's return becomes so important, because it's a continuation of something being accomplished here on a spiritual plane... and a physical plane too.

Let's go ahead here; let's turn over to Galatians where Paul talks about this period of time. I'm just going to summarize this in an overview because there are people who get really into this, you can go way too far in some of these things where it starts talking about 400 years and so forth, and it's easily to be understood but if you want to talk about things that are hard to understand sometimes as far as following it in a sermon, that would be it. That's why I'm just hitting the overview of some of this and giving the crux of it.

Galatians 3:16 - Now to Abraham; it's important to notice exactly what's being said, just state it from the very beginning here so we don't have to go back and forth too much. It's stating here very clearly where this begins. **Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made.** So here is something that begins with Abraham. **He did not say, And to seeds, as of many; but as of One, And to your seed, which is Christ. And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ**, in other words about Christ; that's what it's about, **...that was confirmed before about Christ**, and then it goes on... and it would be better understood in English, **and then the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after**, so it's talking here about something that was confirmed about the seed, if you will, **and then the law, which was four hundred and thirty years later**; we know when that was, Mount Sinai, the giving of the law. It says, **cannot disannul**, in other words, **it cannot set aside that it should make the promise of no effect.** And so there are certain things that God gives as a matter of promise, not a matter of law, not a matter of how well people keep the law. It's a matter of something that God is going to do, period, in His timing.

Verse 18 - For if the inheritance; in other words, **were of the law, it would no more be of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise.** And so again here, it makes it very clear here something that

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happened 430 years before. Now this... I'm just going to say it here on this part here: there is a specific time of 430 years that God said happened on the day, on the 15th of Nissan when they began to come out of Egypt. He said, '**to the day**'. Here, it doesn't specifically say, 'to the day' but it says 430 years later. It's still 430 years, but if you don't get down to the nitty gritty of the months or the days involved it's still a period of 430 years, because by the time they came to Mount Sinai, was not too much longer obviously from the time - just as we count Pentecost - when the law was given. So it's still 430 years later, but it may have been to the day as well in something else that we're going to look at a little bit later here. Likely was but God will show that in His time more so.

So anyway here, the point being is that it's talking about two separate times here. Exodus 12 is talking about something that happened exactly to the day, 430 years later, when they came out of Egypt, when He brought them out of Egypt on the Night to Be Much Observed, the 15th of Nissan, the beginning of that day after sundown on Passover they began to come out of Egypt. Here Paul speaks of something that happened 430 years later when the law was given, but he's making a comparison here now between a similar period of time, if you will, of promises that were given to Abraham, because that's where it starts, that's what it's about.

He said, '**Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made**'. So it's about promises given to Abraham and something that would happen 430 years later - perhaps a few weeks later then in that but he didn't zero in on that because of how you count Pentecost. But the important point being it brings you to the law, and he's making a point here about the promise and the law and showing here, as he said here, **For if the inheritance were of the law, which it's not, it would be no more a promise: But God gave it to Abraham by promise**, by something He was just going to do in His time.

So, again here, let's go back here and notice some things about Abraham and when God began to promise things to him. Let's go back here to Genesis 12, to the very first; because Galatians makes it very clear that it's talking about Abraham and it's talking about the promises that were given and that's what the 430 year count is about. It's not about how long they were in Egypt, it's about what started with Abraham and promises that were given to Abraham. So let's just start looking at some of these.

Genesis 12:1 - Now the Eternal said unto Abram, Get out of your country, and from your kindred, and from your father's house, unto a land that I will show you: And I will make of you a great nation - Now, from the very beginning... you know, He hadn't taken Isaac up to a point where God says, "Now I know you." But God brought him to the point where He told Abraham, "Now I know you." But God intended from the very beginning He was going to do this with Abraham, with Abram, if you will. When God chooses to do something He's going to do it. When He picks individuals in life to do what they're going to do, they're going to do it, to fulfill things in His plan. That's why we never had an apostasy until God *allowed* it to happen; but before that He was not going to allow anyone that He brought in to be an apostle, through time, to have anything like that happen to them. He molded and fashioned them to prevent anything like that from happening.

So we, that's why when we come into God's Church we should have.... you know, we don't see that, we learn it through time, but great boldness and confidence if God has called you to something He has purposed to fulfill it, and if we yield to that process He will do it. And in some cases He is going to do it, period. He will mold and fashion you because He knows how. He knows how - in the womb if need be, in the mind through experiences you're going to have in your life. If God has a plan - which He does - He molds and fashions certain things in individuals lives because He's building something. That's what's an awesome thing to understand.

You look at the universe and you see the things of Hubble and we *marvel* at the distance and time and things that they're seeing out there, 13½ billion light years away, and you think, "It took that long, by the time you see it, for that light to travel from that point there, looking at now." 13.5 billion years ago! We can't comprehend things like that and the vastness of everything that's out there!

But what God is doing in human beings is *far more awesome* because when God commands things to come into being He designs them, He plans them, and He brings them into being - solar systems, galaxies, they're there, He creates them, nothing resists Him. And that's why it's such a marvel with human beings, to understand He's molding and fashioning in us - that's why it's referred to and that's why I love the example throughout the New Testament over and over again, especially Paul speaks of this *new creation*, because of what God's creating in us. It takes time! It takes time to mold and fashion us to become a part of Elohim. God didn't just command us to be a certain way at a certain time because He couldn't, it doesn't work that way! It's something of the mind through free choice, and that's what's such a marvel about what God is doing in us.

And so again here, God chose Abraham. If anything over the past few years, we've learned more and more, when God... just like... you know, I think of the examples when we sat around in one of the Ambassador College classes my first year of college in Bricketwood and I remember one time - because it kind of blew my mind - how some were talking about Adam and Eve, and all of a sudden when Adam sinned it was like God hit His forehead and said, "*What* am I going to *do now*?" Like this was a puzzle! Like this was shocking to God! And you think, "No! God knew exactly what they were going to do! It was not a shock! It was not a surprise! It was a part of a plan!" And yet sometimes we just...it's hard for us to grasp and comprehend things about God.

And so when He called Moses and he was put out there in a little reed type thing, whatever it was made/constructed of and thrown in amongst the reeds there along the Nile and it was.... and who found him? Oh, this just happened by chance?! No! Not a bit of it did, by chance! It was all by design! God inspired his sister, Miriam, to do *exactly* what she did! Awesome! When God has a plan to work something out He's going to do it. For Moses to have been in Egypt for 40 years was *exactly* according to God's plan! For him to be gone for 40 years was *exactly* according to God's plan! For him to come back and do what he did was *exactly* why he was put in the basket in the first place! ...because God had a plan to take the children of Israel out of Egypt 430 years after the promises were given to Abraham! Exactly to the day! Awesome! Awesome-awesome-awesome when you understand the power of God to do the things that He does!

And that which was physical is still something that's being done now at the end as it was in the beginning here, because God still has a plan to take Israel out of Egypt and He's going to do it 430 years later! That's why it comes out as it does. Coincidence? No. Crazy!

So again here, He says to go and **...I will make you a great nation...** God had a plan! God had it planned *so far back*, that there would come a time after so many generations after Noah, after a flood, of something He was going to do to the earth, of something that was going to happen later on with an individual many generations later that He would raise up - and for this purpose. Because the Christ, the seed that had to come, that was going to be a blessing to *all* nations....started with Abram. Awesome!

And so here is where He starts telling Abram what He's going to do; **...and I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing:** Incredible!

Verse 3 - And I will bless them who bless you, and curse them who curse you: and in you... in you shall all the families of the earth be blessed. So, in him, through time, there would come a seed - which was about Christ - and because of what would happen in Christ all the nations would be blessed from Abraham/through Abraham, promises given to Abraham because of the Seed and because everyone is going to be blessed - even going all the way back to Adam and Eve. So, even through time! And that's what it's about; that's what God is telling him.

So Abraham departed, he just obeyed God. He departed **as the Eternal had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him:** See, God worked with Abram. He molded and fashioned him, He gave him experiences. There are things that he went through that brought him to this point in time that God knew where he would be at a specific moment in time, his thinking and so forth, because He was molding and fashioning him and his response and his thinking. **...and Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed out of Haran. And Abram took Sarai [saw-rah-ee] his wife,** which was changed later [the name], **and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth into the land of Canaan...**

Verse 7 - And the Eternal appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto your seed will I give this land: and there he built an altar unto the Eternal, who appeared unto him. So as you go farther into Genesis more and more God continues to add more; it's progressive revelation. God was doing this with Abram a little bit more as time went along, more and more of the story, more and more of what He was going to do, but it started here in Genesis 12 where He told of him He was going to make a great nation, and now speaks about this Seed.

Verse 8 - And he removed from there unto a mountain on the east of Bethel and pitched his tent, having Bethel on the west and Ai on the east: and there he built an altar unto the Eternal, and called upon the name of the Eternal. It's interesting here when you see where they actually left from. There is an area just above Syria today into Turkey and that's where they were in the region of Ur, I guess you'd call it, it's referred to here. But anyway, it's in that particular area up there and they came down...it's been in the news a lot here recently, Aleppo, Syria. They actually came right down through there on their way down through here. So it actually mentions some of that, where they traveled, and they traveled from farther up, just barely into Turkey, all the way down through that area into the area of the areas of Israel today and farther south as we'll see here in a moment here.

So it says, **Abram journeyed, going on still toward the south...** so he was moving from the north, way up there, going through Israel, the land of Israel today, all the way moving south toward Egypt...but didn't go that far until something happened.

Notice this...**Verse 10 - And there was a famine in the land:** you think, two times something happened that forced them to go into Egypt; it was this time and another time when that's how Israel ended up in Egypt, because of famine in the land and the whole family came down then and had to go down to Egypt for help. And that's what happened here, that's why Abram went down there in the very beginning.

So it says, **And there was a famine in the land and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there; for the famine was grievous in the land.**

Genesis 13:1 - And Abram went up into Egypt, he, and his wife, and all that he had, and Lot went with him into the South, in other words, going toward Egypt... **And Abram was very rich in cattle, and in silver, and in gold. And he went in his journey from the South even to Bethel unto the place where his**
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tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Ai [Haai]; Unto the place of the altar, which he had made there at the first: and there Abram called on the name of the Eternal. So again here, there is a period of time here if you read the rest of the story of what happened there, of how he told this fib – a lie - and how that Pharaoh finally asked him to leave Egypt because of the deceit of trying...he was trying in his own cunning way to protect Sarah but it turned out it was just a lie, and then God appeared to the Pharaoh in a dream - I think it was a dream - or a vision (I think it was a dream), and it shook him up and he told Abram to leave.

I believe that was in those verses there... then it says...

Verse 14 - And the Eternal said unto Abram, after that Lot had separated from him, so we go through the entire story here; they've gone out, we go through the story here now of where there is so much there that they make this division then and Lot is told that he can choose out whatever area he wants and then Abraham chooses what he is going to do...and that's a part of the story here in chapter 13.

So it goes through a lot in this period of time here talking about some of these things. So He says, **Now, lift up your eyes and look from the place where you are northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward:** so there was an intent here in time where God was going to separate Lot and the families who would descend from him from Abraham and what was to be a part of his lineage and what was to happen to them.

Verse 15 - For all the land which you see, I will give it to you and to your seed forever. And so the reality is here... Let's notice verse 16 too where it says this....

Verse 16 - And I will make your seed as the dust of the earth: so again here, it's going to be those who come from Abraham, but it's not just about Israel and it's not just about Abraham. It is, indeed, about still the Seed and about Christ and what God is going to do through Him, because of what's going to take place in time here through the Millennium and through the Great White Throne for all mankind. It doesn't matter who people came from, in that respect, it doesn't matter the time period, because this goes all the way back to Adam and Eve, and this is what God is going to accomplish in time, speaking of that which would come from 'your Seed', because it's about Christ, it's about the Church, it's about what God is doing with Elohim that is far greater than just a physical family lineage coming from Abraham.

And I will make your seed as the dust of the earth; and so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, he shall also your seed be to be numbered.

If you look at some of the story here there are other periods of time where other promises are made about the seed and so forth, but the reason I went on into Genesis 13 here is because...and it may have started here in Genesis 12 where God first gave him the promise of becoming a great nation. So at some point, it was on the 15th of Nissan, after Passover, at some point in time here God is referring back to in Exodus 12, 430 years before, when He began with Abraham to give him promises. And so again, most likely this particular story here, one of these two stories, at least we'll know in time, it either started here in Genesis 12 - some try to say it started later on in Genesis but some of those things don't fit. So it either started here - right away in Genesis 12 or it started immediately after they came out of Egypt and some of the periods of time there that are reflected there. So, whatever it was, because there's some 'types' sometimes that are important to God, but the main point being here as we've gone through is to understand the timing of some of these events and how they took place. To me, exciting, because it's about promises given to Abraham and if you follow through on the promises there are those

that God gave that were to be fulfilled at the end-time concerning something that had to happen during a period of time with Great Britain and with the United States and how God was going to, candidly, even work from there to do what He was going to do with the Church concerning Sardis and concerning Philadelphia and concerning Laodicea here to the very end.

So again, 430 years is important to God and it should be important to us to understand the awesomeness of how God designs things and does things, and to understand that these still have to do with promises given to Abraham, because that's what it's all tied into and something that God is fulfilling and accomplishing. And indeed He is, because the Seed is about Christ.

And so there are 'types' here. There are 'types' that happen physically when God brought the children of Israel out of Egypt, and there is a 'type' of something that's happening spiritually and physically at the same time where it leads up to the Seed and His power that's going to be given...and something that happened literally 430 years later to bring it all about.

I want to mention too, that because of what happened in England and what happened with... it's not to make it sound like that was 'a good thing' in the sense of Protestantism, because it *wasn't*. It just ended a process whereby the Catholic church itself had the sway and the power that it did and it opened up a door for God's Church to do other things into the end-time without that power being over them through government and so forth, and it gave greater freedom, in that respect, to God's Church, of something that was to be accomplished later on in time. But because of what happened with the Church of England and Puritanism and all the other things - those aren't good things, they're still bad things - and Satan, as I mentioned earlier, used those things; he used the fact of the printing press, he used the fact of technology and some of those things, to confound later on, God's Church, because that's when God's Church was almost destroyed - was through Sardis.

And that was the fruit of what happened through the migrations of people's to this country and what happened with *knowledge* that was being thrown out there. Because you know what human nature is? In time, because of all the knowledge that was out there, God's Church began to lose the truths - because the normal thing of the human mind is when you have something you've never had before, like Philadelphia, all the truth that was given in Philadelphia, it became something that the Church couldn't handle in time, it went to the head in the sense of raising up with importance, rich and increased with goods - because that's what it talks about in Laodicea and why God had to spew the Church out of His mouth.

A similar sort of thing happened during the period of Sardis because with all that was being printed out there by all the different churches, this new found freedom in the world to be away from the Catholic church, in all the things that came on the scene there are so many religions that have come about, especially through the 1800's. But that took a tremendous toll on God's true Church because people had access to read things they had never had before and it planted thoughts. And the thing with human nature is it can begin to think it's discovered things, it's learned things when they aren't of God. That's why God told them, "Remember where you have learned it..." He told Sardis that and He told it to other times as well. But, "Remember from where you have learned..." Let's read that, because it's important to understand how people are called. It's a tendency of human nature sometimes to where the human mind can begin to be filled with itself so much so that it begins to think *it* understands something better than what God has given to it in the way that God feeds us.

And that's why we've gone through some of the sermons we have during the Feast this year, and yet it happened right after the Feast in visiting with one individual and talking to them and they felt that they understood certain things and could judge certain things and discern certain things that they really didn't have the ability to do.

And so it says here in Sardis, be watchful, that pops up over and over again, this matter of being alert - just like we're talking about, because of being in the 'night', this 'Night To Be Much Observed', it's the same type of expression, to be alert spiritually: **Revelation 3:2 - Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found your works perfect before God. Remember therefore how you have received and heard, and hold fast**, that's something we're never to lose in God's Church. When we're brought into God's Church, when God brings us along, when He gives us truth, He tells us, He warns us, in essence, over and over again in many different ways, but specifically here to Sardis He said, 'Remember how you learned it...' ...how you came into the Church. If you do that you don't take things to yourself and begin to think that you have things that you understand that are different.

Protestantism began to carry a toll on God's Church. That's why by the time Mr. Armstrong came long, the trinity was there. There were things that were there that shouldn't have been there. They had truth about the name of the Church, by the time he came on the scene, the Sabbath, and Tithing. That was it! Things of Protestantism had already been creeping into some of the groups that were out there. Some had resisted some of those things but some of it still crept in and began to diminish God's Church, and various things of Protestantism did begin to creep in. That's why there was only very little left by the time that Mr. Armstrong came along and God raised him up to do what he did.

Let's conclude today in 1 Thessalonians where we started out; going full circle here because we went through some of the first few verses of 1 Thessalonians and today it's important to now end in the finishing verses here of 1 Thessalonians - again, to understand... I marvel at the power of God to bring things about exactly the way He says and the timing He says and then the admonitions that were given in the beginning of this series and the admonitions that God gives us here beginning in verse 11, continuing on from where we left off the last time.

1 Thessalonians 1:11 - Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also you do. So again, Paul talking to the Thessalonians here, that he knows that they're doing this and to continue doing it, **to comfort yourselves together**, care and concern for one another in the Body, a desire to edify, to help each other, not to hurt each other. It's the exact opposite of doing anything that would hurt, that would cause harm, that would lead anyone away from the truth that God has given to them.

Verse 12 - And we beseech you, brethren, to know them who labor among you, and who are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. Which I know you do. **And be at peace among yourselves.** So again, within the Church, that we be at peace among ourselves. And I think of the things we've focused on in leading up to the Feast and through the Feast, and God bringing us to this point in time of maturity within the Church that He's done. It's not what we've done, it's what God has done. It's just a matter of our yielding ourselves to the process. Because even by going through some of this sermon here I marvel, because I believe we see some of the daylight approaching; just a little glimmer in the distance.

There is something that begins to change in an early morning, those first rays - you don't see the sun yet, it's not daytime yet, but just a little twinge of something in the east, a little bit of light, and that's where we are. We're getting toward the end of this and that's exciting!

Verse 14 - Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them who are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, we focused on this in the last many weeks. These are things we've talked about. These are things we've been addressing in God's Church. Again, a desire to be at one, a desire to be unified, a desire to be a strong Body, a desire to help those who want to be helped, and to encourage those who want to be helped, but not to pamper those who don't...because that's wrong too. There is a fine balance in there in God's Church, of how we deal with one another and a desire to care for and love each other.

...comfort the feeble-minded, sometimes people go through various things in life, they have battles at various times in life - who isn't? Who hasn't had battles in life? ...especially when you're first called! Because of your past, because of things you have to fight against - if you're called out of the world - because your whole life is going to be one of fighting against how you've been molded and fashioned into who you are at that point in time. And the reality is, I love the example Mr. Armstrong used to give about how it's going to take three and four generations to get rid of the bad habits, candidly, that are passed along from family to family to family! Because so many of our battles have to do with where we are in time and what we have learned and what we've overcome and then candidly there are things passed along in families. That's just the way it is! It takes a long time to get rid of things in this world and the way of this world and hopefully and prayerfully each generation yields itself more and more to God, which every family should desire, that each generation become better. That's what people should desire for their children, that they do better than what they did! And God's going to give that to the world in a short time here, thankfully!

But for the Church as well here in what we go through it says here, **Now, we exhort you brethren, warn them who are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak,** at a time when someone has stumbled, weak, given into something they shouldn't have done, then the support should be there. But sometimes too there are penalties in life, in things we do. We have to understand that there are things that happen in life sometimes we're to be sobered by. But still to give the support and the help and to be there for people *if people want help!* You've got to *want* help if you want to conquer and overcome. You've got to *desire* help. You've got to *fight* for this way of life!

...support the weak, be patient toward all. And that's the way we should obviously be toward each other - be patient toward each other. And again, I marvel here thinking we're almost to the end of this and this is where we are in large part, this is what God has brought us to, and He's primed us and readied us for the 'daylight', for what we're getting ready to go through. That's amazing! That's clear as clear can be - that's where we are! I hope you take encouragement from that!

See that none render evil for evil unto any man; no matter who it is. We don't live that way. No matter...especially not in God's Church...but not even in the world! That we don't render evil for evil. That just because someone treats us a certain way doesn't mean we strike back and treat them in like, in like manner; **but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all.** To everyone! **Rejoice evermore;** I think of what we heard during the Feast; and what do you rejoice in? What is it you have in life to rejoice in? God. The Truth. Where we are. Where He's taking us. Our whole life, this is it; it's about God and being able to rejoice in it. If we don't rejoice in the things we hear and the sermons we hear, in the fellowship we have and everything that God has given us and brought us to this point in time, something is wrong... and in the growth, and be able to look back and see, yes, there is

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fruit, this is what the fruit is, this is what God has blessed me in in being able to reap, like we talked about during the Feast.

Verse 17 - Pray without ceasing. *Pray without ceasing!* Again, we're still in the 'night', and even as you go through the 'daylight' portion it just means you never quit. It doesn't mean it's 24/7 you're praying, it just means you're praying daily as God says we should; we look to Him daily. And what does a large part of prayer consist of? Repentance!

I was thinking about this when I was reading some of this here this morning and 'pray without ceasing' and I think of times past when I've visited with people and counseled with people about trials and talked to them about praying and it's come out in the conversations that they haven't prayed for maybe weeks or months or longer. And I think, "Then you haven't been repenting. Well, no wonder you are where you are; no wonder you're fighting what you are, because so much of prayer is about repenting." It's going before God and asking for forgiveness of sin, and if you're not doing that you're not changing.

So again here, a matter of praying without ceasing meaning you fight, you keep at it, you never give up, you stay constantly always being reminded of where your help comes from, where your strength comes from.

In everything give thanks: in everything! Whatever you're going through in life, to look for the things to be thankful in, not for the things of 'woe is me' and 'let me get out my little, tiny violin here and play a few chords and hope that others listen to me play my few chords'. You know, life isn't to be like that - something is madly wrong with us when we come to that point in life. We need to fight against such attitudes; instead, to give thanks, to look for the things... to understand we have a lot to be thankful for from beginning to end in life, and if we don't see that then we don't have a right relationship with God and we need to repent of it and have a right relationship by giving thanks for everything that God's given us, giving to us to mold and fashion us...the good with the bad, because they all are a part of the process.

...for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. Quench not the spirit. That's why you're to pray without ceasing, to recognize where your strength comes from, to not sin in any fashion or form and when you do to repent quickly because you don't want to strangle or restrict the flow of God's spirit in your life. Don't quench God's spirit! Don't make the job harder! God wants to do a work in us and we want to yield ourselves fully to that, but that means a strong flow of God's spirit in our life too and we don't want to quench the spirit, we want to do the things we're supposed to be doing.

Despise not prophesying. That can have to do with relationship with people and how we speak about various things and talk about various things, inspired speaking, but literally even in prophesying. People have gotten upset with how God leads, with how God can bring us to another 'day', or to a 'day', a 'prophetic day', and it's like that's not fair! What isn't fair? You're going to stand up to the Great God of the universe and tell Him, "That's not fair for You to work with me that way! That's not fair for You to work with mankind that way! That's not fair!" Blows my mind sometimes how the human mind can think.

Prove all things; and when it says that I think of something I said earlier, 'to prove all things'. Verses like this have been abused and misused by people in God's Church, because it's like you're to prove... You know what the word 'prove' has to do with primarily? It's like trying oxen - it's like getting a brand new tractor, if you're on a farm, or some kind of huge implement that helps you to do a greater job, some

kind of grape picker in the vineyard, and you have this great machine and you can't wait... and if you've lived on a farm and you've gotten something new like that, you can't wait to get out there to prove it, to see how good it really does, what kind of a job it does. And that's what God says about His way of life. So whatever we're taught, whatever we're given, God says prove it! That means to live it, go out and do it and then to **hold fast to that which is good** because what comes from God is good!

Some have taken this to mean that we're to 'prove' everything that God gives to us, which we are to prove to ourselves God's truth and God's way of life, but that doesn't mean that gives license to go through what God inspires and gives to us to decide for ourselves what we think is right and wrong. There is a difference there and we have to learn that.

So, **prove all things**, that God shows us how to prove, how to put it into practice, how to learn, how to, indeed, study, indeed how to learn, indeed how to receive what He gives for us, gives to us and so forth.

A great admonition here in **verse 22 - Abstain from all appearance of evil**. So these are just the finishing touches of a way of life that we are to be, that we become more of in the Church, especially since Pentecost, and God has refined this even more so in us and this is what it's about and what we continue to go forward in. We want to do this, especially when things begin to change here in the near future, and to make sure and strive to live right before others even more so, understanding the importance of that when they know who you are.

Verse 23 - And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; it's God who does it, it's God who molds and fashions us. We have to yield ourselves to the process. He's the one, as it goes on to say, **and I pray that your whole spirit**, is what it is here, **and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ**. And I think of where we are and how much more that should mean to us now. We don't have far to go! Keep fighting!

Faithful is He who calls you, and who will do it. Again here, to me, an inspiring series in that respect, to see what God has done, because just as it says here in this verse, 'Faithful is He who calls you' ...when God has a purpose in calling you He will do it.

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