

Well, I do want to explain something here today. Pentecost snuck up on me. I don't know why. It's on my calendars. But anyway, I have to plan for Australia and New Zealand and Europe and how to do some of these things because we have the Sabbath and then the Day of Pentecost following it. I don't know why but I thought I had one more week yet. But thankfully on driving up here I realized, whoa, wait a minute, I don't. So I have to shuffle everything all around.

So today we're going to begin a new series. I'll come back to the one on thankfulness later. This way on Pentecost those in Australia, New Zealand, and Europe can hear this particular sermon. I'll explain that to them by email, what we're doing and how we're doing it, but it always is a challenge when you have to juggle some of the sermons and so forth like this to make sure that everyone receives a proper message on a high day because it needs to be about that high day obviously.

So today we're going to begin a new series about the subject of Pentecost. It's amazing how that we just recently went through the series entitled *Passover to Pentecost* and here we are in that time period already.

It's been on my mind that we should go back and look more closely at the way in which God began to fulfill Pentecost and has been doing so throughout time. It's really quite incredible when you go back and start looking at the process, because there is a lot to the process that God has been using to fulfill it. We're getting close to a period of time now just in front of us where the major portion of that is going to be fulfilled and so we're going to go back now in time and work out way up through the process here and review some areas that we have reviewed not too long ago. But still, they need to be reviewed again because we're in that season. Actually some of it has been quite a while.

We're going to begin where we always need to begin and that's back in Leviticus 23. The title of this sermon series is *God Fulfilling Pentecost, Pt. 1*.

So as we did recently in that series of *Passover to Pentecost*, again, we're going to take a look at this and pick it up because we did go through and talk about Unleavened Bread, the wave sheaf, and so forth, because they're tied together. They're tied together by a special count. That's awesome in itself that God gave a count whereby He desired in every way that the wave sheaf be tied into (which is during the days of Unleavened Bread), be tied into Pentecost. It's an awesome process. It's an awesome plan that God has in how He continues to reveal things to us so that we can drink in more and become more excited about what He's been doing and why He's doing it in the way, the manner that He is. Any time He gives us a little bit more it's inspiring. It's encouraging. It's exciting. Reviewing these things, it's always exciting.

Leviticus 23:5—In the *fourteenth day of the first month at even*, and again, this is “between the two evenings.” We understand the two evenings when a day begins and day ends. It’s all it really means. I still marvel when we look at this, at the simplicity of what God has given to us and gave to us a few years back, that others think it has something to do—and it’s because of Judaism and because they’re so far away from understanding the things that were given to them so long ago anyway—but they talk about the time the sun begins to go down and then it finally gets really, really dark and it’s between whatever they count that first part of an evening to be. There’s been debate about that for a long time, even within the Church, as to what that is and yet it’s so simple. It’s just the beginning of a period of time, a day, and the end of a day. It’s everything to be fulfilled about Passover is between two evenings. That’s so obvious - “In the fourteenth day.” That’s all it’s saying here. It’s so simple, so clear.

In the *fourteenth day*, in that day, between those two evenings that make up that day, in essence, *is the Eternal’s Passover. And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the Feast of Unleavened Bread unto the Eternal. Seven days you must eat unleavened bread. In the first day you shall have a holy convocation: you shall do no servile* — regular or normal work that you do through the week. That’s all it’s talking about there as we understand. *...you shall do no servile work during it. But you shall offer an offering made by fire unto the Eternal seven days.* Just repeating this, and we just went through this recently, but I think of that, God using the example of fire, trial and testing, and the things that fire represents and understanding that during the seven days of Unleavened Bread that teaches us about becoming unleavened, about coming out of sin.

So there are those things that we learn from that and understand that the entire period of time, from the time that God calls us and we’re baptized and begin a process of coming out of sin to the time our life ends or we’re changed - and during that entire period of time we’re striving to come out of sin. Awesome, what it teaches!

But you shall offer an offering made by fire unto the Eternal seven days. In other words, it’s the full time period. It’s a complete picture, in other words. **In the seventh day is a holy convocation**, and again, **you shall do no servile work during it.**

Now, **verse 9**, it goes on, **And the Eternal spoke unto Moses, saying, Speak to the children of Israel and say to them, When you have come into the land which I give to you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then you shall bring a sheaf of the first.** It’s talking about a sheaf of the first fruit; in other words, a sheaf of the harvest when it first begins in the spring time there, and they went through a process of just cutting a small bundle and taking it to the priests. Again here, incredible meaning in all this and this was something that God said, “This is something you’re to do when you come into the land.” Well, that wasn’t going to be for forty years more beyond this, in essence, or close to it when some of these things were being given. But again, He’s telling them, He’s giving them His way of life, and they’re going to be in the wilderness for forty years so it’s something they can’t observe and do because they were eating manna that whole time. They

had no harvest. The only time they could have a harvest was when God brought them up to the area of going into the promised land. So He's telling them, "When you come into that land that I give to you, then this is what you're to do. Year by year by year you're to take a sheaf of the first fruits," and He gives a very specific timing of when this is to be done, "and you're to wave this sheaf of your crop before the Eternal to be accepted for you," as it says here.

So it says, **And he shall wave the sheaf (verse 11) before the Eternal to be accepted for you. On the day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it.** So it's that Sabbath during the Days of Unleavened Bread, whenever that is, but it has to be in the Days of Unleavened Bread or it has no meaning. I marvel that people have been scattered, they argue over these things. They debate these things. You think, "Why? It's so clear!" It has no meaning outside this period of time. It only has meaning in the context of this period of time. Candidly, when they came into the promised land, that's another story. We may come to that, we may do that as we go through this particular series, may address some of that, but that's an awesome thing too because God reveals some things during that period about this very thing that I just mentioned, about the timing when they came into the promised land because it's only by that account can you know how to count. Awesome! So He gave them very specific instruction of when this was to start. "When you come into the promised land this is when it's going to begin." That in itself was going to reveal more that God would give to His people, to His Church.

So it's to be accepted for you. **On the day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it.**

Verse 12—And you shall offer that day when you wave the sheaf a male lamb without blemish of the first year for a burnt offering unto the Eternal. So again here, all these things that God gave to have representation. Again, this is about Jesus Christ, "without blemish." So again, it's talking about this wave sheaf, which we understand to be about Jesus Christ fulfilling it, but also that lamb then that was offered up was a reminder of this. It was a lamb without blemish. Jesus Christ, when he offered himself and then came to the point in time where he himself was offered up before God as our wave sheaf, was without blemish, without sin. Awesome, all these things that have such incredible meaning.

I look forward to the time that God begins to reveal more to us about all the things in Leviticus and all the tabernacle itself and the offerings, because every single thing that's there has incredible meaning on a higher plane, on a spiritual plane as far as God's Kingdom and as far as God's family and the things He's constructing. There are still things that we don't understand, still things because God hasn't revealed them yet.

Verse 14—And you shall eat neither bread, nor parched corn, nor green ears, until the selfsame day that you have brought an offering unto your God. So they could begin the harvest well in advance, but there was a specific time that they were to wave the sheaf and they weren't to begin partaking of that harvest, eating of that harvest (which becomes important later on when you read about it, when they come into the promised land), until this was done. Then they could begin to eat of it. Before that they weren't supposed to.

It says, **This shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.**

And you shall count unto you from the day after the Sabbath, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering. So, it's so clear! I still marvel that we were confused before. But you know, speaking of the Church back in Worldwide, God let us believe, let the Church believe for several decades that Pentecost was on a Monday, and understanding this transition and this time period here, well, we didn't. We could all prove (we thought) why it was a Monday, why it had to end on a Monday, because we didn't grasp some simplicity of what was being said here.

Yet this teaches us a lot as well. You can't understand diddly and have it by absolute knowing in your mind unless God gives it to you and when it's His time to give it to you. That's the only way you can have the truth, be in the truth. God has to give it.

So it says here, this counting, **seven Sabbaths shall be complete.** So if you start on a Sunday and begin a counting seven days you come up to a Sabbath day every time. You go through seven Sabbaths and then it says, **even unto the day after the seventh Sabbath you shall number fifty days.** So that brings us to the fiftieth day each Pentecost from the time that the wave sheaf was offered up. ...and you shall offer a new meat offering unto the Eternal.

Then it goes on to say: **And you shall bring out of your habitations two wave loaves of two tenth deals: they shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven.** Beautiful! It's about those that God begins to call and work with. We understand over a period of 6,000 years, the first fruits, those who make up the first fruits among mankind in that 6,000 years, and they're baked with leaven. It's baked with leaven because they have sin. Leavening is a matter of sin and they have sin in their lives. The only way we can conquer and overcome and come through all that is by God's great mercy, by patience, by grace, by the blessing of being able to be forgiven of our sins through Jesus Christ. Otherwise, we have no hope; we'd have no hope at all because we have sin day by day by day because we're so selfish as human beings: wrong thinking, wrong actions sometimes, wrong speech. There's a continual refining no matter how long we're in God's Church to see those things that are in us.

So it says, **they shall be baked with leaven; they are the first fruits unto the Eternal.** So the beginning of a harvest, the beginning of those who would come into God's family, and God uses harvests to teach that. Just like the great fall harvest and those things that are going to happen that's pictured in the Feast of Tabernacles and the Last Great Day, all beautiful about God's plan and what He's doing with mankind.

Verse 20—And the priest shall wave them with the bread of the first fruits for a wave offering before the Eternal, with the two lambs. And they shall be holy to the Eternal for the priests. It's a beautiful thing here, realizing that there is a process through time here, that there are two wave loaves. Over time God began to reveal that to us as well and began to show us that there are two periods of time that are involved here. There is the period from the time of Adam and Eve being placed on this earth until Jesus Christ came, and before Christ came there were those

who lived by faith, as it talks about in Hebrews, and yet they looked for the promises that God gave through time about one who would come in time - candidly, a Messiah, the Christ.

And though they didn't understand fully those things that would happen and how they were going to be saved, how they could have a relationship with God and why they looked for a city whose builder and maker was God and how they would accomplish all that, they repented of their sins; God brought them to those things to understand, to repent of sin. He opened their minds and gave them certain understanding of His ways and His laws, especially, of how to live life, because, candidly, everything comes down to that. It's about how we live life toward others, toward God, and toward our fellow man.

That's the most important thing because it teaches us about relationships. That's what God's concerned with in His family. It's about relationships. All the other knowledge that comes through time, things that Jesus Christ came and taught later on, they didn't have. They didn't have all the understanding of the things that Christ gave on a spiritual plane. They didn't know those things and they weren't judged by those things either. They were judged by how they lived their life toward God and how they lived their life toward one another. Beautiful! But they were one of the loaves. They picture one of the loaves. Then the other loaf was from the time of Christ on and the things that were given and the Church. It's awesome, the things that God gives.

And you shall proclaim (verse 21) on the selfsame day, *that* it may be a holy convocation unto you: and you shall do no customary work *therein*: *it shall be a statute forever in all your dwellings throughout your generations.* So again, that brings us to Pentecost, from the wave sheaf up to Pentecost. Jesus Christ being the first of all the firstfruits, but then the larger harvest from among mankind, not the Son of God. He is unique. God's plan, everything was based upon him. He is the foundation of it all. He was the beginning of it all.

Then it begins, after God's creation of mankind, of those that God would begin to save, begin to work with, begin to mold and fashion to be a part of His government. Over 6,000 years—Awesome!—God building a temple, constructing a temple for that length of time, and that being the meaning then of Pentecost and those things that are to come.

Again here, the title of this series, *Fulfilling Pentecost*, has a lot of meaning to it because God's been working for a very long time to fulfill it. He started that well before Leviticus 23 here when He gave this understanding about a time that you're to keep, about that which you're to count fifty and a particular period of time you're to observe year by year. So God began keeping it a lot sooner than that. He's been doing this work for 6,000 years and yet revealing more and fulfilling more at certain segments along the way. Awesome!

Let's turn over to Hebrews 11, because one of the first things God did when He began to fulfill Pentecost - because it's about fulfilling Pentecost and what God's been doing—was shortly after the refashioning of this earth, remolding of this earth, and making it possible for life to exist on it once again and then creating life upon it and mankind.

So in Hebrews 11:1 it talks about this matter of faith and how people have lived through time. It's a matter of believing God. God gives us the ability to believe. First of all He has to begin drawing us and calling us. It doesn't matter who it was through time, God had to give them those things in the mind to see and understand about Him to the degree they would be judged by it, whatever that knowledge and understanding was. Without God doing that they couldn't see it.

Now, they didn't know they were being worked with on a spiritual plane. Abraham didn't know. Noah didn't understand those things on a spiritual plane. They weren't being taught about those things like we have been in the Church since Pentecost 31 A.D. and God pouring out His spirit upon mankind. But God poured out His spirit on individuals He chose to work with because it's the only way they could see and understand Him to give them a hope, that they had a vision of a Great God indeed, that they looked to a city, it says, that which God was going to create, that which God said He would build, that which God said He would give, that which God said about a Messiah, all those things that God gave at different times. They believed those things, and because of that they lived a certain way toward God in a relationship toward God. They were in awe of God. They looked forward to those things happening. They saw the ugliness of mankind on the earth, they truly did, and they wanted something different just like we do in the Church. They were no different in that regard; they had a desire for God. Only God can give you that opportunity, that ability to choose that.

So God worked with individuals along the way over 4,000 years. It's so incredible to understand that process. He then began to work with an organized group after that, after Pentecost 31 A.D., the Church. Two different loaves, two different ways of working with mankind, and yet with the same promises and the same hope and the same desires and being saved in the same way. Their sins were given in something that Christ was going to do later on, that he would fulfill later on. They didn't understand all that, but God received them accordingly because of what He knew His Son would do and how His Son would live.

God knew His Son from the beginning of time before anything was ever created. He knew what He would be like. He knew what he would do because he was of Him, of His mind and of His being, though separate and of his own and his own personality and all those things that were molded and fashioned within him, unlike human beings. We're created just totally selfish, not as the sons of God because there can't be but one to fulfill what needed to be fulfilled, that would be unique through time like him.

And let's just say that more will be given in understanding of that later on because we can't yet. Okay? There is a lot more and God will give it in His time soon to understand that process and why mankind was different and had to be worked with in a different fashion for Elohim, for the purpose of Elohim. It's so that there will be great variety in His Family. That's what it's about, choices that lead us to His family that are unique and different, and different ways to be molded and fashioned within His temple. Awesome, what God is building, what God is constructing.

So it says, **Hebrews 11:1—Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.** So there is a lot we don't see and we have hope. We have that which we believe. Just like after death we know. It gives us a comfort though it's hard to be separated from someone we know that we're close to, but we understand the process.

We've been learning in recent years that that process needs to go on through the Millennium. It isn't just something that people could all of a sudden come to a certain point and be changed, as we'd hoped, some had hoped not knowing God's purpose and God's plan. No, it's good to have the experience of death. It's good the way God created mankind, to be temporary and to have to wait until able to receive certain things from Him. The only ones unique in that, in one respect, are those who happen to live at the end of 6,000 years. Everyone else has to wait until the end of a thousand years to see those whom they have loved through time. Awesome! And those during the Millennium, it's going to be spiritually healthy for them to understand those things as well, to understand they're going to live and die and have a hope at the end of a thousand years.

They'll be a lot stronger in that hope and belief than ever before because they're going to see the evidence of what God's done in 144,000, because they're going to be walking the earth! They're going to be able to see them, experience them, to understand this is what awaits us. That's why it gets, in one respect, easier and easier as time goes along and Satan is not around. It does get easier.

So they have the opportunity of learning from the hideousness of 6,000 years of human history, of what mankind has been like. They still have to fight their own nature. They still have to do those things and fight against sin, fight against selfishness, because that's the way they are. That's the way we are. Incredible, God's plan, what God is doing, how He's molding Elohim through time and how so many more then can be saved through time in the manner that God's doing it, through the Millennium and through the Great White Throne. There is no better way. It is the best way because it's of the Great God whose mind is so far beyond us we can't even begin to comprehend His greatness. We can't get a little drop of that because we're so human, so temporary, so physical in thinking even with God's spirit dwelling in our minds.

So it goes back to faith. It goes back to what we choose. Faith is a matter of belief and living by it. God gives us the ability to believe whatever it is (different people through time), about Him, about what He promises. Then the faith is living by that, choosing, making a choice to live by that and desiring those things that He says are there, or the ability to see it and to choose it and then to live by it is faith.

So it's the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. None of them have received what they looked for, not a one of them. **For by it the elders obtained a good report,** those in times past, those that go from the beginning of time.

Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God... Mankind can't believe that. They don't have that kind of faith. It's just a little bit too tough to think, well,

if God did all that where did He come from? And the mind can't comprehend. The mind can't comprehend that God sustains the universe, that God created it and sustains it. I can't comprehend that and neither can you. You can't come close to comprehending that. No one can.

"Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God." God gives us the ability to believe what He said. We believe it. I believe it. It's clear! How do we believe it so clearly? Because He gives us that ability and then we live accordingly, we make choices as time goes along. We become stronger and stronger in what we believe and see. We begin to see more and more the stupidity of man's intellect, of man's reasoning, because he'd like to reason God out of the picture. It's easier to somehow deal with. It's easier to believe in something stupid like evolution and not understand that God created everything that's there. God created all the potential that's in the things that take place on this earth, whatever it is.

Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made with things which do appear. We can't comprehend it because at one time there was nothing physical; there was no universe. The angelic realm, the angels lived in an angelic realm, a spirit realm. This didn't exist, this universe, and then God brought it into being. Awesome! He began to bring it into being.

Now, **verse 4—By faith Abel—Abel!—offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain.** Here's where it all began, the first. Not the first of the firstfruits, but the first among mankind to be worked with, to be molded and fashioned of the first fruits. He's the first one. **By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain,** because he believed God. God gave him the ability to see and understand certain things about the purpose of it, about a relationship with God, and Cain didn't grasp it. Cain didn't see it. Cain wasn't being worked with. Cain hadn't been called by God to be worked with. He was just allowed to go on his very own carnal physical way.

...whereby he obtained witness that he was righteous. Awesome! The very first one who obtained this, who received this of mankind, God says he was righteous. He attributed his faith, because that's what God does. It's not because we are righteous, because we're not, but if we believe God and we live by that faith, we are able to live by that because of God and because of God's spirit (though he didn't understand those things about God's spirit), but that's what he experienced and that's what he lived and he lived by that. God attributed that to him for righteousness. That's what He does. We're not righteous, but we repent of sin, we continue to repent of sin, and because we believe God and we strive to live by a certain way of life, we want a certain way of life, we've chosen a certain way of life and we want to continue to walk in it and continue to follow God, He blesses us and He attributes that to us for righteousness. Awesome!

Because there is no other way we could be saved because we're not righteous. We're selfish by nature and we have to repent constantly of sin in our lives. No matter how refined it becomes or we become we still find selfishness in the mind. "Lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride..." a lot of pride, just everything just floods out of human beings because of a selfish spirit.

It's prideful, it just is. Now, we see varying degrees in the world. We see a lot of pride in the world and we can grasp a lot of that, but sometimes amongst ourselves, or even in ourselves, perhaps it becomes a little harder to see at times, and that's where we have to ask God to reveal things to us even on a refined way.

God testifying of His gifts. He was witness; God Himself was witness of His gifts. Who else was going to witness of those things and speak of those things and have those things recorded through time? God had to do it. ...and by it he being dead yet speaks (or as it is as well, is yet spoken of). So God has it recorded so we can talk about it, so we can think about what He did and that it began with him, the beginning of the fulfillment of Pentecost. God had a plan to call 144,000 over 6,000 years and he is the first one, the first one to be worked with.

To me that is awesome and to understand what God said about him. Here is where God began to fulfill, to begin to build upon the matter of the firstfruits that would be in His Kingdom. It's beautiful. So again, he's the first among mankind to begin that process of those that God would choose to be a part of His government when Jesus Christ, the first of the firstfruits, would come to this earth with them.

Let's turn over to **Luke 11:42**. Jesus Christ speaking here and said, **Woe unto you, Pharisees! For you tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God.** Now, they were very meticulous, because the Jewish people have tended to be that way anyway, more, exacting in things that they did. Matter of fact, in time they went beyond being exact to being exact and safe.

It's like when you're in Jerusalem and the siren goes off an hour before sundown because they're not just going to be exact, they're going to be a little more righteous about it because we're not going to get caught by that and we're going to start observing the Sabbath a little early. It's going off a little later as well when the Sabbath is over, an hour later because you want to feel good about this. You want to feel righteous about what you're doing.

You'll begin the Days of Unleavened Bread about three days earlier because you're going to get rid of all your leaven and you're going to read all kinds of things into what could be leaven. You're going to have leaven soda pop. They've declared certain pop to be leaven. You can't have certain kinds of pop. So they have it labeled. They have it all down to a very fine art. It's not the Days of Unleavened Pop. It's not the Days of Unleavened Soda. It's not the Days of Unleavened Beer. But that's how far they go. You can't have those things because it has yeast in it. It's not the Days of Unleavened Dog Food.

We've been through those kinds of things because when you don't know you have to go through a process of maturing and when you're a babe and young and just learning it takes time. So we've gone through a long period of time to learn many things and God refining those things into us helping us to become more mature.

So in time we have had to come to learn that, well, you know, if you're using baking soda for brushing your teeth and that's all it's being used for you don't have to throw it away because it's your toothpaste; you're not using it for cooking.

So people get, "Oh, I can't do that! I've got to..." You're not disobeying God. And not only that, you don't have to go through and clean out every drawer in your dresser. You don't have to take a vacuum and you don't have to move it out and clean because you might have been eating a hamburger or something and dust blow through the air and you have some leaven back there. That comes from the mindset of Judaism, this feeling good about yourself.

God just says throw out the leaven that you use, throw out the yeast that you use, throw out those things that have to do with baking of bread or making anything that's a breaded product. Get rid of them. That's all you're supposed to do. We're not to start to feel good and make it a religion in itself to somehow feel better because we take it farther. Yet there is that proclivity in human beings to do that kind of thing. God's helping us to be far more mature as His people. He just wants us to do it a certain way, the way He said to do it. Get rid of your bread. Have no breaded products. The dog can have its dog food. It's fine. Now, if you're eating it too, get rid of it. That's a different story.

So we learn from things like this. It's whatever you consume in your body. Get rid of it during that period of time, that seven days. So we grow; we learn.

Christ was telling them this is what you do. You're very meticulous. You count little pieces here and you're so righteous. Basically, that's what he's telling, "You're so righteous about what you're doing. You're so meticulous. It's just so exact." You don't have to be exact. You can round up. You can round off, whatever it might be. It's not a matter of feeling better about it or thinking that God just wants us to be so exacting about everything.

So he's saying, indeed here, "This is the way you are, but it's not good." They got the picture. They understood he was talking about them and not putting them in a good light.

So he says you do this of all your herbs even; you're very meticulous about it. He said, **these ought you to have done**; it's the right thing to do. You're supposed to tithe—duh—but you left the others undone. What? Judgment, the judgment of God, how to judge things in a right way. How to make right choices and decisions, to judge things because it's about God and the mind of God, and the love of God, and according to God's law and so we should strive to do and make judgments according to not the way we feel about it or think is right but what God says is right. And love, the love of God. This should be what is in our being and in our mind and our desire of how we live toward God and how we live toward one another. This is what is so important.

Basically he's letting them know you're not doing that. Judgment and love are not a part of what you're doing. You're just pretty righteous because of what you do.

Woe unto you, Pharisees, for you love the uppermost seats in the synagogues and greetings in the markets. Oh, to be seen by others, to be recognized by others. Now, we've had this in God's Church. We've had these kinds of things in God's Church because it's a part of human nature. Sometimes even about where people sit, that somehow it's a better place. My experience has always been in God's Church that wherever the ministry sits that's where people want to be, whether it be the front row, the middle, or the back. Why? My wife and I, we do certain things in a certain way. I communicate with her. I want to know where she is. And I could tell you, I could probably give you a sermon over that one, but I won't. But sometimes then that becomes the important place. Or the cookie thing we had, that becomes important. Who is going to bring the cookies? It's about being seen, being recognized, being in charge, having the authority, whatever it might be, being looked up to.

So the Pharisees had this. They loved to be recognized. They loved the uppermost seats in the synagogue, the chief seats, the best seats, whatever gets into the mind. Now, who decides what are the best seats? Even in the church that's changed from time to time. There used to be a time when Mr. Armstrong would say, "And where are the ministers?" He's looking down here where they normally would be in the auditorium. "Where are they?" Finally someone toward the back holds up their hand. He's there and the rest aren't there because they didn't come to listen to God's apostle, because the teachers the instructors there, the evangelists, they weren't there to hear Mr. Armstrong, God's apostle, because they were already filled with, you know, "rich and increased with goods."

Laodicea had already set in within the whole administration of Ambassador College back then when he was speaking. Incredible! It blows the mind to think things like that happened. At one time they would have been there, see? It was a place of honor, of recognition. Sad. It lost that and people in the Church lost that as well.

Anyway, this is just a common thing of human beings, to be recognized by others, to be seen as righteous because you're better than others, or whatever it might be. I could give a whole sermon on that because I've seen that raunchiness come into existence within the Church as well, attitudes of feeling that some are better than others.

People who were of Ambassador College began to be told by some at college that they were better than others back in their church areas and they would go back with that attitude. There were certain things they could and could not do because certain ones in college began to teach them this, certain ones whose minds began to be twisted and distorted and they began to be a tool of another being to cause division and hurt and suffering within God's Church. Human nature succumbs to those things and gives into those things oftentimes.

So, anyway, I'm going to keep going because I don't want to get off and give a whole sermon on that. But again, we need to see ourselves in the light of what God says about how we live toward one another and how we think about one another. We're not better. No one is better than anyone else. The Pharisees weren't better than anyone else, but they wanted everyone else to believe

that they were, that somehow they're special and need to be looked upon as being special and important. That's why they were like this then, they just wanted more and more and more—more authority and more power—because they used it on the people in a wrong way, and they themselves wouldn't live by the very things that they expected others to live by. Incredible! That's what Christ says.

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are as graves which do not appear... Interesting what he said here, "You're like graves in which..." in other words, the stones are gone, the mound is not there, the grass has grown over, and so people walk along and there are graves, there are bones down there buried down there. Like in some old cemeteries and stuff you don't know necessarily because there's no marker there anymore and you can be walking over people who died a hundred, two hundred years ago. You don't know. Not that it matters, but he's just using this example here that this is what you're like. He said, **You are like graves which do not appear and the men who walk over them are not aware of them.** Basically here showing something in themselves. You're not even aware of yourself. You're not aware. You don't have any idea, in essence. They didn't grasp that.

Then answered one of the lawyers, and said to him, Master, by saying this you are reproaching us also. Whew, well, starting to get the picture a little bit. That's right. That's what this was about. If you live like that you're not living God's way. You're not living love. You're not living right judgment. So if it applies? You know, if the shoe fits, wear it, have ownership of what you're doing that's wrong before God and then repent. They didn't get it.

And he said, Woe unto you also, you lawyers, for you lay upon men burdens that are grievous to be borne, and you yourselves do not touch the burdens with one of your fingers. Woe unto you! For you build the sepulchres of the prophets, and your fathers killed them. Hypocrites!

"Here you're building up the sepulchres of the very ones that your father's killed and you are no different. You hypocrites!" They're getting ready to kill him. They wanted to kill him. And that's what he's leading up to. That's a part of the story flow here as time goes on. They were the very ones who were going to want his death, who desired his death, who wanted to put him to death. And he's showing them that you're doing the same old things that your fathers did, and yet you build up the sepulchres out here as though these were great men. But you killed them! Your fathers killed them! And you're going to kill them, too. You're going to kill.... Anyway, incredible who they were going to kill.

And so he's just telling them what they're like. People don't like that. Human beings as a whole don't like that. Unless God's spirit's working in us to help us to see. I need to see myself. I need to see my selfishness. I need to see the difference here about God's way and have a desire as time goes along when we mature that I don't want this anymore. I want what He says we can have. I want to have that mind that is pure and clean and living God's way all the time without lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life that we all have. And so you grow in that and you become stronger and stronger in that. What a beautiful thing that God offers us.

Verse 48—You truly bear witness that you allow for the deeds of your fathers: for they indeed killed them, and you build their sepulchres. In other words he's telling them, "But you won't do what they've said. You won't live by what they said but somehow you build these up and keep them up and it's like they were great men. But you're the same ones. You're the same nature. It's your fathers who put them there."

By reason of this the wisdom of God also says, I will send them prophets and apostles, and some of them they shall slay and persecute: that's the way it is. It's just the way it's always been. ... **that the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation.** So from the very beginning, from the foundations, from the very beginning of time this is the way it's been. The first one who came along that began to live by God's way of life and began to speak about God's way of life was Abel. And from that time on it hasn't changed.

From the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple: verily I say unto you, It shall be required of this generation. So, incredible here, this story and what's being said. And there are other places it's quoted here as well about this. I believe there's a quote in Matthew about Zacharias, up to the blood of Zacharias. Now, whether he was the last of these individuals, the prophets, the whatever with whom God worked, he's showing here the loaf from the time of Abel to Zacharias. And whether it was the Zacharias that we know of? The Jews say it's not because of certain things about the temple and so forth. But again, there are certain things that Jesus Christ says here that would lead to believe that indeed it was the Zacharias.

And so a period of time with which God worked with mankind and leading up to the time finally that at least those who were killed, there might have been others through whom God worked that weren't killed. We just don't know. But he's using an example here of something of those who were killed, from Abel to Zacharias, before he came along, before Christ came. Before he would be put to death these were put to death. And so this is the way it's been all along, you've been putting them to death.

Let's turn over now to Exodus 19. To me that's a beautiful picture to think about what God said, about what Jesus Christ has said and to think about one of the loaves being a period of time and another loaf being another period of time. And yet God's fulfilling Pentecost in it all and bringing it all together, that in time all of it, all of those 144,000 with whom God has worked, from the beginning from Abel to whoever is the last to be worked with in the 6,000 years to be a part of the 144,000 God's been fulfilling Pentecost. He's been working to fulfill that count. It's a beautiful thing.

And now, here in **Exodus 19**, let's back up here. You know, God began fulfilling Pentecost, again, beginning with Abel and fulfilled the wave loaf, one of the wave loaves anyway up to that period of time of Zacharias. And from the time of Abel to the time of Jesus Christ, if you will, candidly, God's been doing this, and doing it since as well with the other loaf; two periods of time.

And this is what came next. Notice: **verse 1—In the third month, when the children of Israel had gone forth out of the land of Egypt, the same day they came *into* the wilderness of Sinai.** Now, we're coming up to Pentecost. This is when God gave the commandments - again, fulfilling another portion having to do with Pentecost. Because a part of the story of Pentecost is that God gives His law to mankind, a way of life to live. And that's a part of the process and yet later on He gives something more to show that you have to have His holy spirit to live this way. So these things were done on Pentecost, a part of God fulfilling Pentecost and how He's worked with mankind from the beginning.

And says, **For they were departed from Rephidim, and had come *to* the desert of Sinai.** And so it's not like Sinai today where people say, "There's where Moses was." It's not a part of Egypt. It was in Midea. That's what they came to. That's where Moses had been when he herded sheep. It's where Moses was when he saw a bush burning. He was in the Land of Midea, and the Midian's. And, so, anyway, he's just going back, God's taking him back to the same region and to this mount, and candidly, Mount Sinai. And so they'd gone through all this area, had journeyed down here, and it's saying here now this is in the third month. We know what happens in the first month on the fourteenth day. They put the blood on the doorposts. And the fifteenth day at night, when the fifteenth day had begun they began their journey. And finally they were at this point. This is what it's talking about, it's bringing us down to this point in time. It's when Pentecost arrives.

...and had pitched in the wilderness; and there Israel camped before the mount. And Moses went up unto God, and the Eternal called unto him out of the mountain, saying, Thus shall you say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel; You have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and *how* I carried you on eagles' wings... I love that. God uses this expression here talking about protection, talking about Him delivering someone directly. It's used in Revelation, in essence, about deliverance that God gives His people and deliverance He gave over a specific period of time even.

You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and *how* I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you unto Myself. Beautiful. He says, "I brought you to Myself." "I brought you out of Egypt, out of bondage, and now I've brought you to Myself to be worked with as a nation, as a people."

Now, therefore, if you will obey My voice indeed, that big "if." Candidly, we learn that they weren't able to because they didn't have the holy spirit. God gave them the law on Pentecost but they were lacking. They had to have something else. **If you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a treasured possession unto Me above all people: for all the earth is Mine:** "I brought you out. I brought you to Myself, and if you will do these things and obey My voice you will be a special treasure above all the earth, for it's all Mine." In other words, "I can give it to you."

... and you shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation. That's what refers to later on and Peter talks about this. Because, you see, God knew it wasn't going to be for them. God

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knew that they didn't have the ability to obey Him. God wasn't calling them into a spiritual relationship as a part, to be a part, or to become a part of 144,000. They were called for a different purpose as a physical people, as a physical nation to teach some great lessons. And the great lesson, as a whole, is that with God's favor and God's blessings and God's help even as a physical people, if you don't have a calling from God on a spiritual plane, if you don't have His holy spirit you can't live it. You will continue to rebel. You will continue to want your own way. You will continue to turn away from your God on a physical plane.

So you can be given incredible knowledge, you can see a sea part, you can see Egyptians, an entire army destroyed right in front of you and bodies washed up on the shore. You can witness all these things. You can witness incredible things take place and still do your own thing, and still turn against the Great God because you just can't live this way of life without help. The ability to believe and see about a relationship with the Great God, God has to give that to a person. He has to communicate that to the mind. And He wasn't communicating that to them.

"But if you will obey..." And so what do people think? What have the Jews thought ever since that time? "Oh, we can do it. We can keep the Sabbath. We keep the Sabbath." And they have done the best of the Israelites of keeping the seventh day because of the type of people they are. They have done a good job of that in reality, of keeping something that all the rest of the Israelites disregarded totally. The rest totally went their own way!

Look at us here in this country, what took place. Look at what Ephraim and Manasseh have done. Incredible! But the Jews kept the Sabbath and have been hated for it. And primarily they because talk about having a special relationship with God. And they continued on for a long time after the rest of the tribes were taken captive. They have a longer history and take a wrong kind of pride in that as well.

So, You shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation if, if, if; if you obey My voice and keep My covenant. He's about to give them on the day of Pentecost, the law, and they can't do it. They can't keep His covenant. God knew full well they couldn't keep it. They weren't called as a nation for that purpose. They were called to teach something else.

Just like the one my wife and I talk about quite often - there are some Israelites we'd like to get in a line and have a stern talking to one day. "You caused a lot of problems when you said, 'Give us a king to reign over us.'" That's what they wanted and Israel has suffered ever since. "They'll take your children and they'll take them off to war. They'll die. You'll be taxed to death." All the things that are going to happen, they're going to take place.

It's not like God's way. It's not God's process. It's not how God works with mankind under His government and His system.

Verse 7—And Moses went and called for the elders of the people, and placed before their faces all these words which the Eternal commanded him. And all the people answered

together, and said, **All that the Eternal has spoken we will do.** “We will do it! Yes, He brought us through the Red Sea. Now we’re here at this mountain and God’s telling us various things that are going to take place and we’re going to do it.”

And Moses returned the words of the people unto the Eternal. God knew. He knew they weren’t going to do it. Take Moses away for a few days, few weeks, so much so that they’re going to build their own god. They’re going to melt down gold and create their own god and make it like something they were familiar with in Egypt, an animal, a bull, calf, whatever, but a bull calf, whatever, and this is their god who brought them out of Egypt. Where is Moses? He’s probably dead up there. We need god... so we need something we can see. Didn’t take them very long. Right away God’s showing they can’t do it. They can’t live by His way of life.

Verse 9—And the Eternal said unto Moses, Now I will come to you in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with you, and believe you forever. In other words, God says they’re going to hear Me speak to you, Moses, and believe forever. You’re the one that’s been chosen. Though you have done all these things in Egypt and brought them to this point in time this is going to cement it home, in essence, bring it on home.

And Moses told the words of the people unto the Eternal. And the Eternal said to Moses, Go unto the people, and sanctify them today... Now, it’s interesting here, the timing. He says, “Go and sanctify them today. In other words, let them to know they’re to be set apart for a special purpose here. That’s what it is. God’s setting them apart for His purpose. And so they’re being set apart here, **and tomorrow, and let them wash their clothes...** So go and tell them they’re being set apart. Tomorrow they’re to wash their clothes, they’re to clean up, and they’re to get ready to come before God.

Candidly, this was the preparation of the Sabbath and they didn’t even know about the Sabbath yet. That’s what this was. Okay? That’s what this was. It was a preparation day, though they didn’t understand that yet. They didn’t have this system yet fully to understand what God was going to give them as far as the commandments were here in full reality. They had begun a process but they didn’t really grasp why, that what God had said and so forth, that He was going to give them on this particular day here even more so driving it home as part of the 10 Commandments. Now, they’d started a process to understand part of it but they still didn’t get it.

But this is what God’s letting them know, that this is something you’re to do on a particular day - wash your clothes, **and be ready upon the third day**, not when you wash your clothes, but the next day, which would be one day for that, preparation day, second day for the Sabbath, the third day is the period of time that God was going to speak to them, speaking of the first day of the week, Pentecost. ...**and be ready upon the third day.**

So when the third day is here you need to be ready, but its tomorrow you need to be preparing, the first day here. Tomorrow you need to be preparing and washing your clothes so that you can come before Me on the third. Why? Well, because there’s an order here of things. There’s a

weekly Sabbath and then there is, which is, again, grasp to understand what they were doing and so forth that began to happen later came along as far as how God worked with them. But anyway, **for the third day the Eternal will come down in the sight of the people upon Sinai.** So, again, the first day of the week on Pentecost.

Verse 16—And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightning's, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people who were in the camp trembled. And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God; and they stood at the lowest part of the mount. And Mount Sinai was altogether covered with smoke, because the Eternal descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly. Scared the tar out of them! We can't even begin to imagine what that would be like, to see something like that when you've never experienced it. Even if you knew about certain things about God. But they didn't know and so God brought them here and this mountain, and then all of a sudden it just looks like smoke coming off of it going up into the atmosphere kind of like a volcano, you know, smoke that just kept going up and then the thing is shaking.

And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long and became louder and louder Moses spoke and God answered him by a voice. So, Moses here before the people and before the elders of the people, because not all could hear and see everything but all was passed along as to what took place later on. But those who could see witnessed this. And here Moses is crying out and God answers him. Powerful!

And the Eternal came down upon Mount Sinai, on the top of the mount: and the Eternal called Moses to the top of the mount; and Moses went up.

[Exodus 20:1]—And God spoke all these words, saying, I *am* the Eternal your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. (We're jumping down to Exodus 20:1 now.) But this is what God began to give to them, began to say and began to speak.

I *am* the Eternal your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

So, what an awesome thing here, God fulfilling Pentecost through time revealing things about from the time of Abel all the way up to Zacharias. Then we come to a point in time when God brings them out and begins... Because before this there was no knowledge of a Pentecost. There was no knowledge among the Israelites or Abraham or others about Pentecost and God's purpose and God's plan for these things that were to take place. And here God begins to record all these things, begins to give some understanding of various things to them about how they were to live as a people.

And so He went on to say... Now, there are things that God gave to them to live by, and this is what we're talking about here, about a relationship with God, how to have a relationship with God, things about a seventh day and so forth that they were given knowledge of.

I am the Eternal your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall have no other gods before Me. And yet that was the custom of the world at that time. It was a custom of Egypt, different ones, just like god families. And you look at different ones through some of the things of history and there are different beliefs among various peoples of various nations through time, and oftentimes it's about different families and their fighting and their problems because they tried to... They gave them qualities of human beings and how human beings were and how they acted and what they did and how they dealt with human beings, how they dealt with mankind - their gods. And it's a lot of crazy things through time.

And so He goes on to tell them "You shall have no other god's before Me." He's your God. There is one Family.

Anyway, going on, the second one here: **You shall not make unto yourself any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down yourself to them, nor serve them: for I the Eternal your God am a zealous God, or jealous God even.** Because we think of jealousy in a certain way. God's is not as mankind's is. When we talk about jealousy among human beings we think in a certain frame of mind and yet God is using a term here that's a little difficult to translate because of how we think as human beings, and so we equate that to God. No, everything belongs to God and His desire is to have the best for human beings. And once He begins to work with you, and He brought them to the mount, "I brought you to Myself," and God desired for them to begin living a different way of life, He desired that they live a way of life where He could bless them as a people. And when they did and when they responded He did bless them.

You can read about that over and over again throughout scriptures, of times when they did serve Him and worship Him in a decent way (not perfect by any measure) God blessed them and gave them great favor, gave them great favor in wars and so forth, gave them great favor in wealth. Think of David and Solomon and the different things that have taken place through time, different ones that came after that with whom God worked and gave great favor to.

And so His desire for them is to bless them as He desires people to make choices and choose Him, but the reality of the history of Israel was very few ever chose Him, especially in Israel, because of what they did when they broke off from Judah. And they never came back into a relationship with God.

So "you shall not bow yourself down to them nor serve them." So here they hear this and what happens very shortly after this? They try to make a god out of gold, and an animal. Insanity!

...visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of those who hate Me, and showing mercy unto thousands of those who love Me. So you love God's way of life, you desire God's way of life, God will show incredible

mercy and give incredible help and favor. Even on the physical plane. Because those as time went along, most of that happened on a physical plane. And yet there were those that God did work with to mold and fashion for another purpose, to be a part of the loaf, the first one, part of the first fruits.

...and showing mercy unto the thousands of those who love Me and keep My commandments.

And so speaking of things that would happen in the future through time, of exactly how God was going to work with mankind - thousands and thousands and thousands who have been a part of the Church since it started in 31 A.D. that God has shown incredible mercy to, great favor to, molded and fashioned them, given them understanding, giving them the ability to live these things, His commandments.

Verse 7, the third one here: You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain; for the Eternal will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain. So here we're going through commandments that God says, in essence, "This is how to have a right relationship with Me. This is how to love Me. This is what, if you desire to have a right relationship with Me, this is how you live, this is how you think toward Me." People rarely did.

I think of today and how people talk. I've noticed a change here in the last year on TV alone. I have never seen so much cursing and taking God's name in vain as I do now. It's incredible! People, it's just the way people talk. And now it's in programs every night on TV. Incredible, how people are. Now, that's a physical thing of taking God's name in vain and cursing and so forth. And that's where we begin when we come into God's Church; we begin to see those things, that we're not to be like that. We begin to make changes immediately never to do those things again toward God, toward Jesus Christ, toward anything that's holy that uses those names and so forth.

And yet in time we learn something else, that there is a spiritual aspect of this that God wants us to learn as time goes along, that we in God's Church, we carry, we bear His name; the Church of God, the called out ones of God, those with whom God is working. And to take that and take it in vain is so incredibly sick!

Now, the Israelites did things on a physical level on a physical plane and that's the only way they could see these commandments that were given. We learn as time goes along there is the spiritual aspect of these commandments and how we think and how we live toward God. And there is in this one as well. This is so important, that we grasp and comprehend. If we take lightly the sacrifice of Christ, if we fail to repent, if we fail to fight to change, to conquer and overcome certain things in our life, if we begin to accept certain sin in life what a hideous thing. And yet the human mind can do that.

I've known of hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of people in God's Church who have taken God's name in vain. They took on the name of being a part of the Church of God, and in time for various selfish reasons, because of pride, because of lust, lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes,

wanted something different, didn't want to continue in this way, didn't want to continue to hold on to those things that God gave to them that were true and right and began to think differently.

I think of what Mr. Armstrong went through during the period of Philadelphia and ministers - because it generally started with them, when there would be a larger group leave, a church or several churches go out of the Church together. Some holding fast, very few as a whole, but most could be affected very powerfully by someone having an influence over a congregation or congregations over a period of time, and a little poison here and a little poison there, something negative toward the Church, something negative toward Mr. Armstrong, something negative toward some doctrine, and began to twist things in doctrine or teaching just a little bit, and in time those who continued to hear it...

You see, that's exactly what Satan did. That is exactly what Lucifer did - a little bit through time, a little bit of twisting, a little bit of distorting, and in time others began to think his way and began to think, "Yeah, God's unfair." And others in the Church at different times beginning to think, "Yeah, Mr. Armstrong's getting old. He doesn't see everything as clearly. And there are certain things we're beginning to see..." Because why? Because a minister begins to teach something different and it seems to be right and so they latch on to it. Incredible, what can happen, because it's happened again and again and again and again, doctrines that have been twisted and distorted that people begin to listen to.

Think of what Dr. Hoeh did for years and years and years at Ambassador College about a 14/15th Passover. He taught it. He taught it in his classes year after year after year, unwittingly so of people who listen not grasping exactly what he was saying. And in time a lot of those individuals began to think along those lines, in those terms, and they became ministers and they didn't hold fast to what Mr. Armstrong had written about Passover when he specifically had in bold in that section of the booklet he had **14th or 15th**, stated something like that in bold like sometimes takes place before you start reading. And it was about the question 14th or 15th, and he quoted three basic scriptures making it very clear, no, there is no 15th in this, it's all about the 14th and these scriptures prove it.

And yet others began to create doubt about scriptures that sometimes I've told to this Church and sometimes I did, I did even this year in the spring, that some of those things we take for granted because we've heard them taught, preached in the right way. But if you had someone over a little period of time begin to teach you just a little bit and put some doubts about various scriptures or begin to quote things and you begin to believe certain scriptures, that that's what it says, it isn't too hard to take you off course, to take you off track. That's what ministers have done through time. That's why we came to an apostasy and came to have the problems that we did, because people began to decide for themselves something different than what Mr. Armstrong, God's apostle, had given to them, because they forgot where they learned it.

They forgot how God's spirit worked with them, how they began to learn the truth. And that never stops. It doesn't stop now. There is a certain way people hear the truth. And how many

have you known who were right here in this area, or those of you in Cincinnati, or wherever you are today and you're listening, how many more were in your area even of recent time and began to believe other doctrines, began to believe other things. Incredible! Began to believe other ways that God was working with them.

Mean all those truths about the temple and the stones being shaken, being spewed out of God's mouth, now you don't believe that? Or do you still believe that and kind of picking and choosing the ones you want to hold on to? Some going back to the very organizations they came out of. Blow my mind! Going back to people who teach 14th/15th Passover. How can you do that when you've had it engrained, drilled into your mind? Passover, Unleavened Bread, to Passover and Unleavened Bread year by year by year in some of the strongest ways God has given yet and to go off on that tangent? Just shows what you can do when you begin to take God's name in vain and you begin to drift away just a little bit from what God has given and you begin to think a little bit differently and you begin to criticize and you begin to find fault.

It happens. It's been happening every year. It's happening again this year. And it will happen all the way up. I am not going to be surprised if it happens all the way to the very coming of Jesus Christ because of what we're like as human beings. Sad.

And so, again here, we learn the spiritual aspect of this, that we carry God's name. We are the Church of God. And others in community or family learn that; we bear God's name and we have, in that respect, we carry even more of that because we're a remnant of God's Church. And that bothers people even more who were a part, who have drifted away or have fallen asleep and whatever has taken place through time and gone off on different tangents. And we stand out that much more, we truly do, but we bear God's name and we bear the truth of God and we're to stand firm in those things and to be seen for being God's people. And if we're not, and if we shy away from it or we're embarrassed of it, or whatever we might be, then we begin to bear God's name in vain. Sad. Sad that that could still be going on.

Anyway, 10 Commandments, a way to live life, basic law about how to have a right relationship with God.

I think about the one about not stealing from God, and yet we still have had people stealing from God. One finally admitting it here just, what, a week ago? And they're listening today. And you just don't get by with it that easily. And just because you haven't heard from me doesn't mean something's not coming, because it is, and you'll not be coming to Pentecost with God's people. Because there are some things that are so severe. To lie to God's ministry. To lie to God's servants. To lie to several of God's servants. To not give what you know you're supposed to give to God. To not give to God what you promised that you would start doing at the Feast of Tabernacles is sick. It's sad. And you can repent but it's not without suffering and it's not without correction. And we just don't get by with lying to God like that in life. And how anyone could think that blows my mind. To have God's spirit?

And so we have to continue to cry out to God for His holy spirit so that we can hold fast to these things we're going through right now that He gave on the day of Pentecost so long ago to Moses and to the Israelites. "This is how you love Me. This is how you have a relationship with Me. Do these things and you'll be a special people to Me above all people on the earth. You will be as priests to Me. You will be a holy nation to Me." They weren't! They weren't! Individuals at times were and were a part of that, but that which has been a holy nation to God and those who are as priests to God, in essence, on a spiritual plane, are those who are becoming a part of the 144,000. It's a matter of a fulfillment in time. It's a matter of a calling and a matter of God bringing those into His family. And that's where He places them in His government to teach about His way of life and to govern His way of life for the next 1,100 years. Awesome! Absolutely, incredibly awesome that we can see those things and understand those things, that we know those things. Because it's God's spirit that gives that knowing.

And so God says here is how you do it if you will listen, if you will live by that. And He told them and they couldn't do it. We can. We've been given the begetting of God's spirit. He gives us the ability to have a special relationship, a special fellowship with Him. And not only that, but if we live by these things, if we obey God's way of life and live by His truth that He gives to us then we're able to have a fellowship with His family, with one another. We are God's family and we are blessed to have a special relationship with one another because we live by a certain way of life. And if we choose not to live by this way of life we begin to cut ourselves off from that relationship.

Now, that happens earlier because there are things that happen in the mind that cause some different kinds of problems on a spiritual plane to where it isn't fulfilling and meaningful like it could be. Sometimes people think they have certain things that they don't really have because they know certain people. But in time we just hurt ourselves, we rob ourselves of the joy and the fullness of life of obedience. Because it's by obedience and living this way that our lives are enriched, that we have a fulfillment in our being of God's way. It's an awesome reward, if you will. Just in living God's way of life there's a richness and fullness that you can't experience any other way.

And so how you feel toward God, how you think toward God, the current series we're interrupting right now about thankfulness, gratitude toward God, the way the mind thinks toward God, it has everything to do with this. And the more this mind is in us, the more this unity is in us of being of this kind of mind, of a desire to please God, of a desire to honor God, of a desire to worship God and to be thankful and to see and pray to God to help us to see everything that He pours out upon us and to treasure it.

You know, when it talks about a pearl of great price, it isn't just a nice little platitude. It isn't just a nice little parable, you know, hidden treasure, the pearl of great price. It is! And we should feel that in ourselves. To be real and to have a real relationship with God means that we treasure His words, we treasure His way of life, and we treasure what He's blessed us to see. Especially

Doesn't take long to make that separation, "Not one of us. He's too good for that," or whatever it might be, ever how some people think. Some look at it in a good way. Some people, most people look at it in a bad way. "You're just better than us, aren't you?" No, it's just the way we live. It's because it's right.

I'm so sick of this world, so sick of the way society is! It just ought to sicken you to the core of your being. It's like what Lot did, he vexed his righteous soul day by day by the things he saw because people are hurting themselves. And yet this is the law that God gave on Pentecost to show mankind how you can live life more richly, more fully, and it has everything to do with how we think about God. This is where it starts.

He didn't start with the other commandments first. He didn't start with "You should not covet," blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, whatever. He started with what's important, "I am the Eternal your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt," who brought us out of spiritual Egypt, who began to lead us out of sin, out of that quagmire, the way the world is, who use foul language all the time - which I did, ignorantly so, stupidly so. Grew up every other word curse words. It's just the way the mind was. That's the way society was, in my society anyway. Lived ever how I wanted to live. And He called me out of that, thank God, or I'd be going the way of some others right now and some others that I love with... and see the choices they're making at a time when they should be enjoying life at the fullest and just going off nuts, crazy in life. And I'd be going the same way, probably, except by the grace of God.

What about you? Do you really see what you would be if it weren't for God and God's mercy and God's love, God's patience? How thankful are we? Don't mean to keep getting back into that other sermon, but this is where it's at, the 10 Commandments. It's how we think toward God. And we carry the name of God; don't want to take God's name in vain.

"I am the Eternal your God who has brought you out of Egypt," out of sin, bringing us out, freeing us from it through our Passover. How often do we think about that? To be blessed to be forgiven of sin for what we are and then hating it and going forward with confidence that you're able to be forgiven of your sin and continue to have a relationship with God and love God all the more for it, to grow in your love toward God? Because that's what happens if we live right, your life becomes richer, stronger.

"Out of the house of bondage." This world is captive to these things. People are captive to how they're living and it's just getting worse and worse. People are captive to hatreds and jealousies out there.

In politics, look at the frenzy that's going on on all sides. It's just getting worse and worse and worse. We're at a point of if something didn't happen we would destroy ourselves from within. We're really getting bad fast. It's scary. I don't know if you're scared by it but it's scary what's taking place. Type of civil unrest, a type of unrest that hasn't existed for many decades - and maybe back to the civil war. That's how bad it's getting. You think people can't all of a sudden

turn ugly and things turn really nasty even from within? They have the potential of doing so, they truly do. Hatreds can be so deep. Hatred. Bitterness. Anger.

Verse 7—You shall not take the name of the Eternal your God in vain; for the Eternal will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain. We take lightly the name of the Church of God, God's life in us, not living how we should? God doesn't take that lightly. If you rob from Him how bad is that? How bad is that?

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Not going off and doing our own thing. You want to have a right relationship with God you treat that day in your mind, in your spirit totally different from every other day in every way. How you think and what you do, everything that you do you want to strive to have it more in unity and oneness with God, focused and in fellowship. Where you have opportunity, to desire that. How much do you desire that? How much do you want it?

I remember a time (I've mentioned it before), it's just the way that it was back then when people would write in and think that they would have to go to Pasadena to get baptized. They didn't know there were churches all over the U.S.. You couldn't go to a phone book. You couldn't go and find it in the Yellow Pages or wherever. You couldn't find it in the newspaper like a lot of other churches were. People tried. They'd go look at a Church of God and go there and find out, oh, this is not the right one. Course they weren't, Churches of God weren't there on Saturday, but some did look into some of those with those names and found out when they were and when they did meet.

Anyway, what an incredible thing when you found out, man, it's only 185 miles away. That's awesome! I can go up there, drive up there, get baptized by a minister that's close. See, that's a lot different than over a thousand miles away. It was exciting! And how many people that I'm talking to today went through those kinds of experiences, to find out who cares - back then you didn't have the interstates like we have and to the degree we have today back then. That's how old I am. Anyway, I'm sorry.

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shall you labour, and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Eternal your God: in it you shall not do any work, you, nor your son, nor your daughter... In other words, that routine, normal work that you do throughout the week, whatever it might be that you have around the house, whether it's cleaning of the house or the doing of the laundry or different routine things you get into let alone your own job, whatever it is that you do. Unless you're me - this is when you do most of your work, then, you know, God, that's different, that's of God, for God, serving God. And so there are things that people have done.

I think of times when we used to have halls. What were some of those? What is that? American Legion, especially, some of those types. You'd go in there and some of them stunk so bad, you know what, of beer, because boy, they like to drink there. And I remember some halls where you go in there and people have to go in there and mop the floors. Different ones in the Church would

have to go in there and mop the floors to get some of that stench so we could have a decent enough atmosphere in which to have chairs set up then, and they would work hard to get the chairs out. Different purpose. Fine. That's a different... That's not your normal routine work that you do during the week for yourself and your family in your home. There are some people who in time have had some difficulty separating those things.

And so God tells us how to do it, how we're to sanctify it and set it apart in our mind and in our being.

Honour your father and mother: that your days may be long upon the land which the Eternal your God gives to you. And that can be a tough one sometimes for some in God's Church, of things they have to address and how they have to address it. Because the greatest way you can honor them is by what you live in God's Church, that you continue to fight for God's way of life, that you become a part of the God family. Indeed, what an awesome thing, that you can use the positive things that have been molded and fashioned or taught to you, that you can respond to those things and with what God has given to you to live better, to live far better than what you would otherwise if God hadn't called you into His Church. And so we strive to live what is right and strive to do these things to the best of our ability where we can.

The reason I mention some of that is because sometimes we have all kinds of situations that we're called out of and different kinds of things depending on things that have happened in people's past or their life or things that other family just doesn't see and could never see and never comprehend and never grasp. But what you're to do is to respond the best you can with what you've been given. And sometimes that may mean, candidly, never having a physical relationship in sense of conversation or relationship with a parent. Sometimes it comes to that degree. And you're still honoring them because of what you're living.

Because there are some things you can't do, you can't live, you can't involve yourself with and have the kind of relationship with God that requires something unique because you hold in esteem that the highest.

You shall not kill. More about murder, because the Israelites were involved in a lot of killing and God gave them responsibility to do so when it came from Him.

You shall not commit adultery. Country and western music. Country and western life. You know, it's supposed to be the Bible belt. Have incredible divorce rates because they have incredible cheating that goes on - and they meet in church! Do you believe that one? Anyway, what a sick world, that which supposes itself to be religious, more religious than those northerners. And so if you're down in the south and you tend to have more of the Bible belt type of thing and more where the country music is and the way they live their lives is very much one of adultery. I mean, it just happens. It just is. And a lot of the music kind of tends itself that way and talks about those things. Sick, sick world we live in.

How much hurt and how much pain and suffering is caused in this world because of sex, because people don't work to control, don't seek help from God to live and think what is right, to cry out to God to live right. Because you see the mind works in a specific way that's normal and natural, and God says to use it in a right way, see? And that takes help from God, especially in this sick world we live in.

Verse 15—You shall not steal. Not to steal at all, period, exclamation mark, in life, to take from others that which does not belong to us. That includes all kinds of things. If it means that you receive help or money or something and you don't do your part to take care of that, whatever it might be. It's like student loans today. People go out and get student loans and they have no intentions of paying them back because that's the way the government is worked with by a lot of people. And you think, that's stealing. That's not right. And on and on it goes in society and how people think what's owed to them, "This is owed to me." Sick world we live in.

Where was it, New Jersey has passed a law now where those who are illegal in this country have the opportunity of a college education and they're not going to be charged things like out of state, any kind of out of state fees, but out of state students come into there they have to pay enormous rates? And the ones who are legal who have grown up there all their life and their parents have paid taxes all those years they have to pay a lot. You think everything is upside down. And why are they doing this? It generally comes back to votes. It comes back to a crooked and perverse society. Sick, sick world.

You shall not steal. And the one at the top of the list should be you should not steal from God. To do that? I'm sorry, that blows my mind how that can even be done on a physical plane let alone a spiritual one if we're supposed to have God's spirit dwelling within us. You want to talk about a quick way of cutting yourself off from the flow of God's spirit, the first time you do it is the time you were cut off from the flow of God's spirit, and you're on your own until that's been deeply repented of. And that means changing then and making certain that we're doing what we're supposed to be doing.

You know, I've sometimes been dumbfounded in God's Church, because I've known this for years. I've seen it in people's lives years and years and years and years, all the way up to the present, of people having struggles with jobs and employment and wondering why, and yet they don't tithe like they should. They might tithe 5% or 2% or 6% but not what God say's and definitely not saving a 2nd tithe like they should faithfully. And so wondering "Why am I having such struggles and such hardships?" And I think, "Duh, duh, duh," all capital letters, "DUH!" Because how can God intervene to help you and bless you in your life in your struggles if you're not doing some of the most basic and simple of things? That one is hard for me to grasp.

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour. And this has to do with how we speak about one another and how we say things to others about others. That's why gossip, that's why discussing certain things, and so forth, we should not do in the sense of tearing people down or in the sense of finding fault with individuals and especially that which is false and distorted. We may

think and perceive that we understand something and we very well don't have the entirety of a story. Even within the ministry, you know, that's difficult to understand or to come to understanding of various things and kinds of questions sometimes that have to be asked. And frankly, there are just times you have to rely on God to lead and guide and direct and bring things out in the open. And sometimes within the ministry then we are put in a position of discussing various things that are difficult, that we have to do as a part of a function, as a part of a job. But as a whole it's to know how to help someone, how to best work with them and so forth. And so it should always be in that context even there. But otherwise, as a whole within the Body, there are just things we shouldn't do, to tear someone down or to put someone in a negative light. Because that is bearing false witness if we grasp it

It doesn't just have to be false to fit in this category of what it's talking about in the sense of a lie being told about someone else. Because everything we talk about we know it's the truth. Oh yeah? Hmm. Do you have the mind of God? Do you know the mind? Do you know the heart of other people?

Verse 17, the tenth one: You shall not covet your neighbour's house. You shall not covet your neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbour's. Has a lot to do with the series we're going through right now about thankfulness and gratitude and being at peace with those things that we have in life that God has blessed us to experience. And regardless of what state we're in, in this country especially, we're exceedingly blessed. We are so blessed compared to other countries and nations around the world just because of what God has given us as a people. We really are. Awesome!

Verse 18—And all the people saw the thundering, and the lightning, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw it, they removed themselves and stood farther away. And they said unto Moses, You speak with us, and we will hear. Bull! Says later on that it wasn't a matter of this happening but it what was told to them that was the issue. Yes, it was scary. Yes, they were fearful. But they had no more... It's easier to tell a man, "Oh, we'll listen to what you say, but..." And they didn't listen to either one. "And we will hear." It had to do with the commandments. It was too much. It was too much, what was being told to them. That's what's shown. ...**but do not let God speak with us, unless we die.** So they were fearful to have such a God, because they wanted to do what they wanted to do and they didn't want to have something like that that had such power. "We really don't want God." That's kind of what it came down to.

Verse 20—And Moses said to the people; Do not fear, for God has come to prove you so that His fear may be before your faces, so that you do not sin. To live a way of life. If you live by those commandments, to prove them, to live it. God already knew what they were going to do, but sadly they didn't make the right choices, as a whole. From time to time some did, but not as a whole.

With that we'll conclude with that today and have *Part 2* next week.