

This is *Part 2* of the new series *It is God Who Redeems Us*.

We ended *Part 1* as we were part way through a Psalm of David that focuses a great deal upon the subject and process of redemption. I'm excited by this process here, of some of what we're talking about, because we're in that season of the year to begin zeroing in on Passover. Where we're headed here it's going to be a little earlier this year than normal.

While I'm on the subject here, just so everyone hears this around the world (since it's on the system here), I'd made comment about gathering together for Passover, that this year is going to be a little bit like last, obviously, because we're not going to have everyone come together as we might in some areas, and not even in Cincinnati here.

So, even though we come together on the Sabbath we're not going to come together anywhere on a large scale in any fashion or form on Passover. It's something that people are going to be doing in their homes. Some have asked questions about, is it okay to have certain ones come in and be with them or whatever. Again, if it's just, you know, on a really close proximity where you live and you are normally together on the Sabbath it's fine if you do the Passover together. But keep it small numbers, a handful, one handful...and if you get part of another hand in that wouldn't be so bad, I guess.

But as a whole, here, keep the numbers small. That's the idea of all this because there's a different environment when you're taking Passover. Again, if you're together normally on a Sabbath, then obviously it's very fine on a Passover. But we want to keep it small, keep it close wherever people are located and not get anything large at all.

Having said that, we're going on with this about redemption because it is a subject that fits in incredibly well with this season of the year. Now that everyone has had a week to digest what we covered last week in that particular Psalm, going to begin again there by backing up to verse 1 in Psalm 103. So, if you want to go back to that.

It is a Psalm of David. Again, to get some of this back in context of what we were covering, it says, **Psalm 103:1—Bless the Eternal, O my soul.** Again, it's saying, "With all my life." That's what it's talking about when it says "soul."

People in the world in Christianity, traditional Christianity have different ideas about what a soul is and there's something inside of you. You think, no, it's a word that's used just about your life, your living being.

So again here, it's saying here **Bless the Eternal with all my life.** It's your conviction. That's what David was praying about. ...and **all that is within me.** That's kind of some of the type of thing we've been going through in recent time here, that just like David, a man after God's

own heart. But it's something you have to do with all of your heart, with all of your being, to throw yourself into this way of life, into having a relationship, a right relationship with God, seeking to put God first in everything. That's the focus here.

Bless His holy name. Bless the Eternal with all my life, and do not forget all of His benefits.

We've gone back through from time to time, and are doing so on this particular series, going back in history, our history, whether it be in the Church, or going back in history in time of how God has worked to bring about a process of redemption for everyone. A lot of that has to do with remember how God has worked with us, remember how God has worked with His people.

Today we're going to go through some things going all the way back to, at least mentioning about Abraham, and then on, Isaac and Jacob in particular. That's a part of our history, remembering the benefits that God has given His people at different times. And without Him having that plan and purpose for them we wouldn't be here because there's a progression of revelation that God has given through time and has taught all along the way in that progression.

...who forgives all your iniquities. Again, redemption. That's what it's about, forgiving us of our sins, and the process of redemption.

...who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from destruction, who crowns you with loving kindness and tender mercies. I'd mentioned in that particular sermon that it's good just to sit down or kneel or whatever you do in your prayer wherever you are at times when you pray and go through something like this. Do it from time to time, different Psalms. There are so many things that can enhance your prayer life. These are awesome tools. Especially at this time of year something like this is an incredible thing to go through, to think about, to meditate upon.

The more you see God's plan, what God is doing, that He's stressing to us the importance of this process of redemption, candidly, what comes from that is a greater thankfulness, a gratitude toward God. In your prayers you can have that relationship, those feelings, that thinking toward God in a very deep and appreciative way, and it helps enhance that. God will even stir that up more through the power of His spirit. He'll give you that even more so.

...who redeems your life from destruction. Everything in this world, without God it's being destroyed. Everything comes to a point in time, if you will, that it's gone. It does, even life, it dies out, it's destroyed. And without God there wouldn't be any more. Thank God He has a plan the last hundred years. And then, of course, for those who have been in the Church through time and some toward the end here that have an opportunity to be in a first resurrection.

"Who redeems your life from destruction." Because without forgiveness, without a relationship with God, we would have no hope.

"Who crowns you with loving kindness and tender mercies." Just that alone, to think upon those things, to pray about those things, to remember the loving kindness that God has shown

you throughout your life, the tender mercies that God has shown. Especially when we realize what we are like and grasp and comprehend how ugly sin is and how we have not always, obviously, we don't always put God first.

...who satisfies your mouth with good, so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's. The Eternal executes righteousness and judgment for all who are oppressed. He teaches us these things. He teaches us how to judge righteous judgment. He teaches us to judge from a perspective that comes from Him, from His word, from His law.

He made known His ways to Moses, His acts to the children of Israel. It's going back and looking at time remembering the things that have happened in times past, that if those things hadn't happened, the progression of events that took place, the things that were taught at that time that we can grow in and grasp and comprehend, there's a lot of sacrifice that's gone on over 6,000 years that has to do with the subject of redemption. Everyone who has been a part of that process through the 6,000 years, with whom God has worked, is a part of this process as well, and all needed to bring us to where we are now.

The Eternal is merciful and gracious, slow... Again, not "anger." Not like human thinking of anger, what anger is. It's about a wrath in the sense of correction. It's about that which can end in death as well. The things that God does when He judges have to do with righteous judgment.

Candidly, sometimes there comes a point, just like the flood, it was better to destroy all of mankind at that point, except one family, in order to continue on, to show how evil mankind is, how evil human nature is and how evil it can become after living such a long period of time. Righteous judgment. It came time where it was more merciful to execute that.

...and abounding in mercy. He will not always strive (contend) with us, nor will He keep or reserve wrath forever. In other words, there always comes a time when judgment must be executed. Judgment that's executed in a great way when people have lived by God's way of life and judgment He's going to pass in the sense of what He's going to give as far as what people have done to have a relationship with Him, what they have sacrificed, what they have gone through, how they've been molded and fashioned, and God resurrecting them and giving them eternal life.

Then the execution of judgment as well. That other kind of execution is not in the sense of what we think of execution but it's exercising judgment, and that's what this is about. For those who choose a different way, that has to be addressed as well, even in the angelic realm.

...nor will He keep (reserve) this, in essence, this wrath forever, this execution of judgment. He has not dealt with us according to our sins; nor punished us according to our iniquities. So again, this is something we learn through a relationship with God. We come to understand what we have done. We can look at our lives ever how long we've been in God's Church and we

grasp God is incredibly merciful and patient and very kind to us in every way. We come to understand His love for us as we continue on in this process.

Verse 11 now, continuing on from where we left off. **For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward those who fear Him.** So again, this matter of fear is not a matter of being afraid of God, it's a matter of fearing to go a different way, to do something different, to dishonor God, to dishonor God's name, to bring shame to God's Church, to God's name, and on it goes.

Because it's a matter of how we live so we should be fearful of letting down. We should be fearful of becoming lethargic and lukewarm. We should be fearful of sinning. We should be fearful of continuing in sin, and if we are then we'll fight against it, we'll seek to conquer and overcome whatever it is that's wrong because we have that fear in our minds because we want, we desire what God has to offer us.

...and as far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us. That's upon genuine repentance, obviously, and a relationship with God, if we've been given that. That's why every once in a while, I mention that once you've repented of sin genuinely before God, it's gone. It's not like we do as human beings where we remember what people have done and weigh that against them when we consider.

Now, there's a matter of remembering certain things so that if something does happen again that you're able to deal with that as you have responsibility and so forth. But as a matter of holding it against someone, you learn you can't do that; it's not our prerogative to hold things against people. That's between an individual and God. We have to be very careful in this area of judgment ourselves. We learn that process then. We learn so much about God in that process.

...as a father has compassion on His children... That doesn't even come close! So, when and if a father has compassion on his children, because we experience all kinds of things in human life. But when those things are done well and we can think about something like that, when perhaps you've been shown a compassion in your life or you've shown your children compassion because you understand certain things they go through, mercy that you show them at different times. It's making a comparison there. But God is so far above that. That's why some of these kinds of examples like this I hesitate a little bit and think, hopefully, we can see well beyond that.

The Eternal has compassion on those who fear Him, who fear going against Him, who fear living a different way of life because we know what it will bring if we don't repent.

For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust. Sometimes people have used this as an excuse for sin in God's Church. Wrong to do. "Oh, He knows what I am, knows I have this weakness." So, we use excuses why we can't overcome certain things or we can't fight. You can overcome and fight everything in human life. With God's help, with God's spirit, you can

conquer, overcome. That's what overcoming is about. It's about this mind being changed and being in unity and harmony with God's word.

As for man, His days are like grass—and the older you get the more you know that—as a flower in the field, so he flourishes. So, we see this. For the wind passes over it, and it is gone; and its place remembers it no more. It's there, you see it, a week later you drive by and you see, maybe, a field.

I think of bluebonnets down in Texas. An incredible sight if you've ever seen stuff like this, or been in an area where there are certain kinds of flowers. There's another one called "Indian Blanket" that's down there, and some of these places, just beautiful when you see them.

I remember when we were down south of Los Angeles, toward Temecula area on down toward San Diego, away from the freeway down there. There's an area down there that if you hit it just right at a certain time of year with rain, and we happened to be driving through there that one year a few years back, and the hillsides out there were just orange in different places because of all the flowers, the wildflowers that grew there. I think it's a type of poppy or something like that.

But anyway, all over the sides of hills and just absolutely beautiful with the green and the orange. But a little bit later you go by? Gone. Sometimes for years. It's there; it's gone. You can't remember. You can't keep it in your mind fully what it was like. You just remember it was beautiful. But in time it's gone in your thinking. You don't think upon that anymore. Only while it's there.

And so it is with mankind. We're here for a time and we're gone. You can go past in any area, if you visit a cemetery, if you go by and see a cemetery, for whatever reason you're there, and tombstones that are there and nobody keeping care of it, nobody remembering who was there. The memory fades away in time and people don't even know who's there anymore, the lineage, the whatever it might be as far as family lines are concerned.

He remembers that we are dust. But for man, his days are like the grass, for the wind passes over, as it says, it's gone... and places remembered no more. But the mercy of the Eternal is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear Him, and His righteousness to children's children. God doesn't forget. God knows whoever it is through time.

That's why I marvel at 6,000 years. God has the history. He's observed it. He's watched it. He's been with different ones through time, knows everything about everyone that's ever existed. All that people have had, that spirit essence that's in them, is with Him. We can't comprehend that, but it's with Him and He can resurrect at any time and give that individual back with the same mind that they had when they died. It's the same spirit essence.

To comprehend those things? We don't understand it. But God has that power, that kind of power. And so, it's making this contrast here that God remembers, and God knows, and though people are forgotten. The only reason we know certain ones here is because they're written

about and we can read a little bit about them. But to know all their life and things that happen? We don't. We just have some of the highlights.

...to such as keep His covenant. So, this is what the key is, this is what's so important, "to those who keep that covenant," that covenant relationship. For us, it's keeping what we promised God at baptism. It's being faithful to that, that God is first in our life, that we belong to God.

...to such as keep His covenant, and to those who remember His commandments, to do them. The Eternal has established His throne in Heaven and His kingdom rules over all. God is all mighty, all powerful, has control of everything. Doesn't strive to control everything but has the ability to control anything and everything at all times. He allows mankind to do various things, to go his own way and so forth, the uniqueness of all that. But eventually, again, judgment.

So, in this current latter period between the end of Laodicea and the beginning of God's Kingdom reigning on earth, God has blessed us to learn and then grow in deeper understanding of the significance of how He has progressively revealed truth. This is an awesome thing, whether it be matters of history and time the truth that God has revealed through all this.

We're going to go through a portion today, and I don't know how far we're going to get, but just to understand, as an example, where Jacob was, or Isaac was at any moment at time as far as what knowledge they had. They didn't have a lot. They just didn't have a lot. God worked with them; He had a relationship with them that was unique by what He did give to them and they were judged according to what they had.

Again, to understand all that is difficult for us as human beings, even in God's Church, obviously, with all that we do have. But again, looking at their lives and realizing Moses doesn't come along until much later up the road even. All that God gave through Moses and all that's written in whether you look at the book of Exodus, Leviticus, Deuteronomy, and so forth, Numbers, and all the history of what took place during that forty years in the wilderness. Incredible.

Yet these people before this period of time, for hundreds and hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of years didn't have that. They didn't have that. They had very little in comparison. God had a plan of progressively revealing things through time. That is something we should be in awe of, especially when we realize what we have now.

So again, we've been blessed to grow in those things over time, especially here at this end-time. And in this like manner that God began to work with Israel on a very physical plane in order to lead them into a begotten family, His begotten family, to have a greater means of seeing and understand His plan and purpose on a spiritual plane that we can learn from. God has given us these things so we can look at them and learn spiritual lessons.

Just like we went through this example of David and some of the history of him and what it was like for him and saw what was after him. Again, so much of what they saw was on a physical plane. We've been blessed to grasp the spiritual purpose of why those things are written.

Today we're going to go through some things having to do with the life of Jacob. Again, our focus and things that God had to say about that period of time, we understand on a spiritual plane. But it was spoken to them on a very physical one. Awesome, to be able to be so blessed to have that.

Let's turn over to Isaiah 43. Although we're not going to spend a lot of time going through the scriptures that have to do with what we're now going to address and what's going to be mentioned, there is much that God gave to Israel when they were in the wilderness that had to do with the subject of redemption. There really is. That's why we're going back here and starting with some of the things mentioned in Exodus and even going back a little farther because it's something that God began to reveal more and more through time and build upon.

To understand that process, to me, is an awesome thing. Because even in that there is so much to learn and build upon that He's given spiritually for us to grasp and comprehend.

Now, the things we're not going to look at is things written in scripture here about how God revealed to the Israelites that they could redeem, as an example, close relatives from being indentured servants because of things that they owed, because of borrowing and so forth, and having to pay back, when this happened and they didn't have the ability to do that they became servants for a period of time, sometimes a long period of time depending on the situation.

But people or close relatives, kinsmen, could buy them back, pay that debt, plus, or whatever it might be. But they could pay that. That's the term that was used, this matter of redemption.

They learned this. God began to use this expression, as it were. On a physical plane there were things that they could redeem. They learned that they could redeem animals (to purchase), as an example. As an example, in giving a tenth, if they wanted a certain one, because as it passed under the rod, as an example, ten, and this is the animal they desired to have, they could redeem certain ones plus a percentage, sometimes another quarter, whatever it was, twenty-five percent of the whole above and beyond.

There were different times and different kinds of redemption. But they could pay extra in order to have something that they wanted to keep, as an example, for livestock, whatever it might be. They learned about these things. God taught them that there is a price to pay as a matter of redemption. There is a price to pay; there is sacrifice to pay. Anyone, a kinsman, a relative who would buy back, buy your debt so you could continue on, what an incredible thing to be given!

There was that appreciation, the learning of appreciation of what it meant to be redeemed, to have something like this, the fact that someone sacrificed so much in order to do this. So

again, God began using this term in a way and teaching them things so they could learn from this, so we could learn, and so that God's Church in time could learn as they studied things like this, or they were told things about redemption. They knew what this was about. They knew what was involved in it.

In other words, when God began to work with us, when God began to redeem us, He wanted us to be able to see how much sacrifice, what was being given on a far greater plane, if you will, than what they practice as far as a nation of people.

Again here, different examples. They had the ability to purchase certain possessions or redeem certain possessions as well that they could keep. Then God revealed those things that they couldn't redeem, in the sense of a price. There are some things dedicated to Him that you can't pay for; there is not a price. What...? How much...?

Again, different things to be learned here in all this as far as what it means to be redeemed. So, there is a great cost, there is great sacrifice involved, especially when you look at what it is that God is redeeming from death. What can you pay for that ransom? How much are you going to pay for that? Look at what God has given, sacrificed and given for us?

So again here, Isaiah 43. Let's begin there.

Isaiah 43:1—But now, thus says the Eternal who created you, O Jacob... Interesting here the order of things, what it's talking about. Again, addressing Jacob. This is for us. This is for anyone who reads such things. Isaiah, look at the period of time that this was written, long before.

"Thus says the Eternal who created you, O Jacob." In other words, letting us all know God is our creator. Always being reminded of that in different ways. Just the seven-day cycle, a reminder of what the seventh day is all about. God is our creator. That's how Genesis begins. God wants us to understand He is our creator. Over and over again here in different ways God reminds and wants us to think about those things.

O Jacob, the one who created you, and He who formed you. This word here, "formed," has to do with a potter, the work of a potter to fashion, to form, working with clay. That's how this word is used in scripture.

...and He who formed you, O Israel. We understand something about this that's incredible. God is molding and fashioning Israel. We understand it's not about a physical people, yet that's how God started. He started by showing a physical people. But we learn that there is something far more important that God is molding and fashioning that's to last forever. Israel was never intended, as a physical nation, to last forever.

It goes on to say, **and He who formed you, O Israel.** Again, this word about God strives or perseveres, the meaning of it, or, we'll look at the definition again a little bit later here, but it can be applied in a couple different ways here.

Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called (proclaimed) your name. Then, “You are Mine,” is not even in scripture there. Some of these translations are hideous. But again here, it’s just making the statement here, “I have called (proclaimed) your name.” God’s the one who gave it! Israel. He named him. He created and worked with mankind. He worked with Jacob and brought him to a point where He gave him a different name.

That’s what it’s talking about here. He’s talking about this process here of Israel and it’s going to start out physically but it’s going to become something far, far greater. The name itself has the meaning.

I think it’d be good here at this point here (I have it in my notes here) to go back to Genesis 25. We’ll come back here to Isaiah 43 but let’s go back and look at some of the story that led up to this process where God began. It’s a process of redemption. Again, on a very physical plane but things we’re to learn, appreciate, and grow in as far as what has gone into this entire process. The more we see of it, the more we grasp it, the more we understand it, the more thankful we can become and to grasp how blessed we truly are as God’s people for everything He’s given us.

We’re going to look more closely at this relationship that God developed with Jacob, one that actually began with Abraham and then Isaac.

Again, what an awesome thing here to think about the timing of some of this. I think it was ten generations after Noah. Noah lived 350 years after the flood. To think of all this period of time and all the generations from Noah on down and finally coming to Abraham. Then in his fifties, Noah died, and God began to work then, focus upon the things that had been given to Abraham that Abraham knew. We don’t know all that he knew but it jumps from the period, basically, of focussing on Noah to focusing on Abraham. An incredible thing to understand.

He was in that region, that’s how he grew up, knowing of his great, great, great, great, great, great, great, ever how many times there (there are ten) grandfather. Incredible! To think that long period of time so few people who have been worked with through time and all that period of time, one, and then finally, another one who had been prepared and God working with him and having an incredible plan. Because He raised him up, Abraham, prepared him. Awesome!

So, jumping in here to **Genesis 25:19**, going past the period of Abraham on to his son, Isaac. **Now, these came from Isaac, Abraham’s son. Abraham brought forth Isaac. Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah as his wife, the daughter of Bethuel, the Syrian of Padan Aram, the sister of Laban, the Syrian. Now, Isaac made supplication to the Eternal for his wife, because she was barren. The Eternal answered him and Rebekah his wife conceived.**

So again here, it doesn’t tell us a lot, but he had this relationship that he was already molding and fashioning with God. He looked to God for things in his life. Evident by what he was doing here. This didn’t just happen out of nowhere. It was a part of a process of how Abraham had been worked with for a period of time already before this ever took place. Then God began to

work with him more closely as time went along. Here at this point in time then he asked, in this case, concerning Rebekah.

You can go back and read before here about his life, some of the things that took place and see that relationship that God was developing starting with Abraham on down. Because Abraham was faithful in what he had to teach and he taught these things then to his son. Again, all seek to do that as a whole, but people have choices. But when God has a plan to do something, to call individuals... God does the calling.

That's why we went through a period of time (I think it was written from that wonderful camp over there), about this process here that people who grew up in the Church, they have to be called too. They have to go through this process, have this relationship with God, and people have choices to make along the way in that when that is given.

It goes on to say here, **verse 21—Now, Isaac made supplication with the Eternal for his wife, because she was barren; then the Eternal answered him, and Rebekah his wife conceived. Now, the children struggled together within her.** So, she went to God. She went to the Eternal to seek what was happening. That's what it's talking about here.

That's again, some poor translation here in how it's stated, but basically, this is what it's saying. So, because of this, because of what was happening inside of her, for whatever reason didn't feel good about what was taking place, but two children there and all that was taking place so she went to the Eternal to seek what was happening.

A parent, a mother, when something doesn't seem quite right becomes concerned. And generally, a lot of times, especially in this age (I'm sure human nature is very similar back then), we can tend to think the worst. Today we may have some kind of ailment come along and we can think some of the worst things could be happening. Sometimes in this old world, they are.

Verse 23—And the Eternal said to her... So, again, this relationship. Rebekah had this relationship, had grown in this relationship. Her husband had this relationship, and she has this relationship asking of the Almighty God what is happening here.

This is how He answered her. Now, how this was answered, we don't know. It doesn't say. It just said that this is the answer God gave to her and she knew it. So, whatever took place it doesn't say. **Two nations are in your womb. And two manner of people shall be separated from your belly.** Awesome! Two nations. To be told something like that? You wouldn't think that way, nations, great peoples or whatever, countries, whatever terminology was used she knew what this meant, what was being said. **One people shall be stronger than the other people, and the older shall serve the younger.**

So, when her days to be delivered were fulfilled, with twins in her womb, the first came out red all over and like a hairy garment. And they called his name Esau. Incredible difference in the two, just in their physical make up. **Then, after that, his brother came out,**

and his hand took hold of Esau's heel; his name was called Jacob. So again here, all coincidence?

It's amazing to read stories like this and think, hmmm, he just did that and so God used that. No, it happened for a purpose. God was involved. God was involved in both children, their development and so forth, in the womb. God had a great purpose in what was going to happen at this point in time in all human history, in that portion of human history up to that point in time.

So again here, **they called his name Jacob**. Now, there's not total agreement on where this comes from so in Hebrew here there is some different speculation, different ideas about what it means. But basically, some feel that it's a Hebrew word that comes from the one that means "heel," or "hind part." Or the meaning "to supplant; as in taking the place of." Grab a hold of the heel to supplant, to take the place. So, again, it has usage in Hebrew that has rather been lost and so they're trying to piece these things together and this is the best, in essence, that's here. May have both in their meaning.

It goes on to say, **Isaac was sixty years old when she**, speaking of Rebekah, **gave birth to them**. It's going through here and talking about some of this and God telling them where they should be and how they should deal with things in life as far as where they were.

Verse 27—So the boys grew. And Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field. So again here, we think of a field and we think of someone out there maybe tilling the ground, turning the ground, like a farmer. No, it's talking about, basically, a person who hunts. Where do you hunt? This was the kind of individual he was, in the woods or in a pasture or wherever it might be and the kind of hunting he did. That's the terminology being used here.

And Jacob, it says, **was a plain man**. Now, again, it's, to me, a stupid translation because it's not used that way at all. It's a Hebrew word meaning "complete," and often translated as "perfect" or "upright."

So again here, something different about him and his response to things around him in life and his pursuit. Esau was different, and his pursuits and what was important to him, whereas Jacob, in this respect, was following more after his father, if you will, though his father loved Esau more, which it brings out here.

So, difference in a relationship here, a unique kind of relationship here, but this is, basically, what it's talking about here. It was about how he chose to live life. He chose to live different than Esau and chose to live in an upright fashion. It doesn't say this about Esau.

So anyway, it says here, **Isaac loved Esau**, and it says here, **because he ate of the game** (the animals) **that Esau had hunted**. So, for whatever reason here, whatever all that means, he took a liking to him because he saw this individual, this person growing up, this individual taking charge in life and being strong and being a hunter. In that day and age a little different,

in that respect, so he had respect to that, and because of that he had a liking toward that particular son more than the other.

It talks about here that he was, again here, **upright individual, dwelling in tents. But Isaac loved Esau because he ate of his game** or partook of that. It was something he enjoyed a great deal. How do you explain that? Carried over into his feelings toward him. **But Rebekah loved Jacob.** So, the mother loved Jacob and father loved Esau.

Sometimes these things happen in families where individuals maybe take a liking to one more than the other. I think that's hideous, personally. I think of someone asking Herbert Armstrong one time, of the three campuses which one he liked the best. Because everyone who was in Pasadena would rather he like Pasadena the best. And everyone in Bricket Wood, would, "Oh, Bricket Wood. He's got to love it." Or Big Sandy, "It's going to be Big Sandy!"

His comment was they each mutually excel each other. Because he wasn't going to show a favoritism. He loved them all. He loved all three and they had different meaning to him. And not the same, but what an awesome thing, they mutually excel each other in different things and so forth, and everyone judged according, or those things judged according to what was there. Not making a comparison and then even broadcasting it.

Certainly, something a parent shouldn't do. Anyway, I've known of families and stuff, that things like this have happened that screw up people's minds and screw up their lives when things like that happen. It really does. Shame on the parents, and something they should repent of because they're wrong. I hope you understand that.

So again here, says here, goes on to say, **And Rebekah loved Jacob.**

Then **verse 29** it says, **And when Jacob was cooking a stew...** So again here, it jumps in the story. I mean, you're talking about just jumping through time sometimes. The things we're given as you go through stories like this, especially in Genesis, everything from Genesis up to this point here you cover so much that happened over such a long period of time you don't have much information.

When Jacob was cooking a stew (it jumps ahead in the story), **Esau came in from the field, weary** (exhausted, famished). Now, he had to be pretty bad because of what happens here. I guess it wasn't good in hunting because he came back and his expression is he's close to dying. Now, I don't understand all that but that's basically the state he felt in, and evidently looked like he was in. He had no energy, no strength. Again, to understand some of this, it's difficult.

So, Esau asked Jacob, Feed me from that red stew. So, there were lentils there that had a red color to it and that's basically why it's saying this, **...for I am weary** (exhausted, famished). **Therefore, his name was called Edom.** So again, having to do with the red stew, because it's the name he was given because of some of that, called because of some of that.

Again, short story and we don't understand it. We don't know the whole thing, what took place. But God shows us what's important in what was given.

So, Jacob answered, Sell me this day your birthright. Bargaining. "It's my stew." You'd think, over stew? Over a big pot here, ever how big it was, I don't know. But anyway, enough in there and he wanted it and it was his and not sure why a brother like that didn't just come and take it, because Esau could have.

He said, **Sell me this day, your birthright.** And Esau said, **Behold, I am about to die.** That's his response. **I'm about to die, so what profit does this birthright do for me?** "If I die, what good is a birthright?" So, in his mind he had to be close to that or feeling that to make a comment like this.

And Jacob responded, Swear to me this day. And he swore to him, and he sold his birthright to Jacob. Then Jacob gave Esau bread and stew of lentils, and he ate and drank, and rose up and went his way. Thus, Esau despised his birthright.

So again here, he didn't value, perhaps didn't even believe in God. Don't know. Jacob, that's why that word "upright" not "plain." Upright has to do with, in how it's used in scripture, basically, had to do with his character, if you will. That was marked as far as Jacob was concerned. Esau, his character is revealed in this, that he didn't value what God had promised to Abraham and Isaac, that they had been told. And so, it didn't mean that much to him. Probably didn't believe it.

So again here, that thinking toward God was different than Jacob's was. It says because of that, it was evident, that Esau despised, looked down upon, did not value his birthright.

Genesis 26:1—There was a famine in the land, besides the first famine that was in the days of Abraham. So, Isaac went in to Abimelech, king of the Philistines, unto Gerar. There the Eternal appeared unto him and said, Do not go down into Egypt, but dwell in the land that I tell you. It's a matter then of listening to God, his attitude toward Him, and so forth. Isaac was pliable, workable. He was able to be molded and fashioned by God. It becomes very evident here by this there was a relationship there.

Stay (dwell) in this land... But he had a relationship with God, it's evident, again, by these things that are continuing to be said. **Stay (dwell) in this land as a visitor and I will be with you and will bless you; for unto you and your seed...** You're to stay here. You're a visitor, in essence, not of this land, but you're to stay here and in time then **I will give unto you, to your seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I promised unto Abraham your father.**

This is about something very physical and he's telling Isaac here in this case, this is all going to be to you and your seed. **I will make your seed to multiply as the stars of heaven; and will give unto your seed all these countries; in all your seed shall the nations of the earth be blessed.**

It would be hard to grasp something like that at this time, obviously, to see the world as it was at that time and God saying something like this to you, that of your seed you're going to become large, you're going to become as the stars of heaven in multiplying on the face of the earth. All nations are going to be blessed because of your seed.

Now, we know what that means. God had a plan in beginning to work with Abraham, a family that was unique, and it started not long after the flood. Incredible. Ten generations from Noah, almost 350 years then after the flood and God began to work with Abraham in a very powerful way, and then Isaac, to bring about what was going to take place in time. Again, a little bit at a time, progressive through time.

So, he says, again here "...and in your seed, shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." So, it wasn't a matter of physical people.

I remember, I came into the Church in '69 and the period of time into the '70's, and there was so much that was seen on a physical plane, especially when it had to do with Israel, being an Israelite, where did you come from, Judah, whatever. It's like, that's not what's important. It's not a matter of your lineage physically, that one is better than another, one tribe is better than another, that one group of people on earth, one nationality is better. That's not what it's about, especially in God's Church and especially when you understand what these things are being spoken of, and especially when you understand the name of Israel is not about a physical people.

But in the beginning because of a Church that was coming out of the Sardis era, a Church that God was giving truth to in a very powerful way, so much was seen only physically. It took a lot of time to begin to help the Church to mature, like a child, growing and growing and more being able to be given as time went along.

We have gone through a great deal of time for those who have experienced some of those kinds of things in those periods of time and realizing those things were very wrong for people to have done, making comparisons and feeling more important because, "I'm of Judah. That's even better yet. I'm Jewish! Woo-hoo!" No, it's not better than another. That's not what it's about. That's not God's plan. That's not God's purpose that some physical group of people is better than another people. That's not what God is all about. That's not what God is doing.

Now, those are important in the context of how God worked with them and what is to be learned from them and the truth that was given to them and so forth. Those are the things that are important.

God makes that very clear throughout the New Testament, about Jew and gentile. Both are to be one. But again, had to grow to be able to come to see some of those things. Had to grow through time.

That's a horrible thing. To me, that's one of the most hideous things, when people look down upon each other and people are raised up with pride when they think they're better, that somehow, they're better than someone else.

There's a lot of that in this country right now, there really is. It's sick out there and it's getting sicker. It's just happening throughout the world. That's how nations are treating each other and that's human nature. That's just the way it is. Eventually, it leads to wars and people conquering each other.

...make your seed to multiply as the stars of heaven. Again, hard to comprehend that if you were listening to that, because you couldn't foresee the world and what it was going to become like in time. We're able to look back and grasp these things a whole lot easier, obviously.

...and will give your seed all these countries; and in your seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed. It's about Joshua. That's what it's about. "Your seed." Because what was going to come out of that lineage was indeed going to come through part of the family as far as Israel and then the different tribes and Judah and Christ being promised to be a part of that, David and the things we read about David, and so forth, and this rulership, a king and the importance then of that taking place. All of this through time God just revealing more and more as time went along. Incredible!

Then to think of what all these people went through to be a part of. A lot of sacrifice. That's why I mention that example of the pioneers. The pioneers and covered wagons, there's a lot of suffering that people went through. And today, we don't think about any of that kind of thing.

But you think about one time in a great resurrection and some of the things that people have gone through in time, and things we just take for granted today not thinking of history and how some of our own relatives, different people who have suffered through time.

This, far more meaningful, obviously, the kind of suffering that people have gone through. Because everyone has suffered. Everyone has had to sacrifice who's been worked with by God, truly.

It goes on to say then here why God is doing this, a part of why God is doing this. But God chose Abraham. He molded Abraham and prepared him for all of this in order to accomplish this very thing, to grow bigger and bigger, progressive, bigger and bigger, more to be revealed through this process.

...because that Abraham obeyed My voice. We go back to the basics. You want a relationship with God, it's about obeying Him, His word, what He says, how He says to do it. We learn that we are wrong, and God is always right! We need correction! God is always true. Self has to change; this mind has to change. We come to understand those things.

...because that Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws. As time went along this was broadened more and more in the sense of understanding. Think of the Church, and then things that happened within the Church and realizing this is all a part of this. This comes from God. The Church is God's. The order that God has established and all those things that go with government, to understand the importance of what's being said here - order, unity, oneness with God Almighty because the truth comes from God.

Genesis 28:1. As time passed, Isaac grew older and God began to work more with Jacob. So, Abraham, Isaac, and now Jacob. We're going to spend a little more time with Jacob here because it's about a process of redemption. It's about a process of being redeemed and what God has to say about these things.

Genesis 28:1—Then Isaac called Jacob and blessed him, and charged him, saying to him, You shall not take a wife from the daughters of Canaan. Arise, go to Padan Aram, to the house of Bethuel your mother's father, and take yourself a wife from there of the daughters of Laban, your mother's brother. So again here, this desire then as time went along and the relationship between Isaac and Jacob began to change. Because it did. There was that which God saw and understood, or that Isaac understood, how God was working with his own son, Jacob, in a way that Esau wasn't being worked with.

A distinction began to be made. Again, a matter of a distinction, a difference, and Isaac saw those things and became aware of it. Now Isaac is telling his son to do something to obey him, to continue in a relationship here with God.

He's saying here in **verse 3—May God Almighty bless you and make you fruitful and multiply you so that you may be a multitude of people.** So, he's talking to him about what he had been told and passing long this same information to his son. He wasn't passing this along to Esau because, again here, something was being established and God making it clear this is how He's working. He had worked with Jacob to mold and fashion him, an upright man. That's what it was talking about. Someone who had the same desire. Because you have to reciprocate.

Esau, God didn't have the same plan for Esau. It just wasn't there. God didn't have the same plan for others who descended from the families of the ark, from Noah, from that period of time in that 350 years plus that we come on down here then by the time we get to Isaac. Again here, it's because of God's calling. When God has a purpose in working with different ones He's going to accomplish it. Because something is being done that is a matter of that which is progressive, that's going to continue through time, but it's going to be molded and fashioned and done the way God is doing it.

People can't do it on their own. You can't go out and do these things by yourself. If it's of God, it's of God and God's going to make it very clear this is of Him.

He's passing along to Jacob here, **May God Almighty bless you and make you fruitful and multiply so that you may be a multitude of people.** In other words, a great congregation of people.

So again, the same thing is being said to him. So, he heard these things, and it has to be on the mind, this is the relationship with God and what God has planned for you. **...in giving to you the blessing of Abraham, to you and your descendants with you, so that you may inherit the land in which you are a stranger, which God gave to Abraham.**

So again, it's always going back to God over and over again. God gave this to Abraham. God gave this to our forefather. On it goes as it's passed down, as you'll see as we go along here.

So, Isaac sent Jacob away, and he went to Padan Aram, to Laban, the son of Bethuel the Syrian, the brother of Rebekah, the mother of Jacob and Esau.

Jumping on down in verse 10—**Now, Jacob went out from Beersheba and went toward Haran. So, he came to a certain place and stayed there all night because the sun had set.**

Now, again here, jumping from one story to another but it's about this progression and about things that God has recorded for us, that God made sure was recorded here as He worked with a people and as He worked with individuals, and to see the uniqueness of how God worked with them differently. Why? Because He was working individually with people. He wasn't working with a body of people like us as a Church. Totally different.

A lot had to take place to get us to this point in time, to the point in time of Christ 4,000 years after the beginning, in order to continue on. Took a long time to get there. It was by God's design, and sometimes we don't think about these things, of all the generations of people, all that God has done to redeem mankind, worked with people, patience with people, different ones He's molded and fashioned that are going to be a part of the 144,000, things that are hard for us to comprehend. But He wants us to appreciate them, to value them, and not to be like Esau, but to believe God.

So, Jacob went out from Beersheba... Honoring his father, doing what his father said. ...and went to Haran. So, he came to a certain place and stayed there all night because the sun had set. And he took one of the stones of that place and put it at his head so he could lie down in that place to sleep. Awesome, the history connected with this now.

Then he dreamed, and a ladder stood up on the earth and its top reached to heaven; there the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. He didn't have a Bible. He didn't have a book. He didn't have what we have. These things, they weren't written for him to have. Things were passed down. Things were written as time went along, written and placed in there as far as history and some things that were recorded.

But at this point in time, it wasn't like what we have so God worked with him very uniquely so to teach and mold and fashion him, to place things in his mind in this relationship that He had

with him and to build upon that. God chose to give this at this time. We know meaning that's contained in it, but he didn't fully grasp these things. But what it did for him, powerful!

So, it says here, **and the top of it reached to heaven; there the angels were ascending and descending on it.** So, he was given something to see that, very physical in his thinking in his mind, but this is what he saw, angels going up and down this ladder. Now, we know that they don't go up and down a ladder. But again here, this is what he saw.

He didn't have any experiences yet as far as a relationship with God. You think of Moses and the bush. That's how his, basically, started out, you know, and being spoken to. Because they didn't have the things we have. God worked with everyone uniquely so after His choosing. And so, in this case, a unique situation as far as Jacob is concerned, and again here, a work that God is doing and showing that there's an angelic realm and the things that they do.

And the Eternal stood above and said, I am the Eternal God of Abraham, your father, and the God of Isaac. Now, he already had a beginning of a relationship with God. There were things he already believed, obviously, and his father had told him about these promises that were given to his father, Abraham, and that which was going to be passed along to him now. He asked Esau for the birthright, so there are things that he believed. He believed God! Esau didn't. That's the problem. He didn't have respect to that and had to do with belief.

I am the Eternal God of Abraham, your father, and the God of Isaac. Now, we also know that this isn't the word that was used, "Yahweh." Because God didn't reveal that until Exodus, I believe, Chapter 6 or I think it's right in there where He's talking to Moses about some of these things and lets him know that "to them I was never known by this name." But now, He's going to reveal this to Israel, to him and to all of Israel, "I am Yahweh."

These things recorded later on. It's about God and it's about the fact that God is talking to him, **I am the Eternal God of Abraham.** So again, what was stated here was about God, **El Shaddai of Abraham your father, and the God of Isaac. The land on which you lie I will give to you and your descendants.**

So again here, God making it directly to him now through what he saw, through this dream. Before this it was only his father telling him this. Now God is strengthening this relationship in a very unique way because He had to. He had to have some form of working with him directly, more directly, because that was His plan and purpose. It wasn't to work through anyone else but him. This is where He's going now. Things are going to be done through him and his family line.

Even your descendants shall be as the dust of the earth. So, now it's coming directly from God. He already believes in God, but now this is happening? Wow! You know, you just have to have things happen in your life that help you in your conviction. There are things that you have to happen that are personal to you.

I think of the things Mr. Armstrong used to talk about that were personal to him in his conviction, in his relationship with God, things that happened to him in life that were unique to him in that thinking toward God. And so, regardless of the time period of when it was or when it is, even for us, there are things that we have to have in our own mind and our own thinking that have to be unique to us.

What would it be like if we didn't have that with God? We have, each one of us, has a personal relationship with God.

I can go back to the day I was called, and it started there. Personal. I can't give that experience to anyone else. But it's personal and no one can take that away from me ever, ever, ever. It's personal. It's in here. I know what happened. I witnessed it. I experienced it. My mind was open; I saw things. I didn't have the ability to go in here and prove diddly squat, but the moment I heard it I knew it was true. No one can take that from you.

So, whatever thing you have that's personal to you, that you grow in in time, the things you experience in your life, in your prayer life, there are going to be things that you're going to go through that are unique to you, and they're personal. I could tell you some, but I'm not going to. They're personal. Things that I have prayed about through time that God has given answer to that could have happened no other way. And I know it.

And so, we all have these. Some we share, some we don't, because they are personal between us and God. Beautiful. Awesome. God blesses us above and beyond. So often I think of the scripture, it says, beyond what you can think or ask. Awesome!

Here it's happening to Jacob because God has a plan of working through him and strengthening that bond and strengthening that relationship so that he becomes stronger in his mind, in his relationship with God, so that he can pass these things along in his family. Then in that, God's going to work. Where and how? Don't know, but it's going to happen. And it did.

Even your descendants shall be as the dust of the earth. You shall spread abroad to the west and the east, to the north and the south. Going to become great! Incredible! Like the dust of the earth. There's a lot of dust. So, you think, how great is this going to be? You can't comprehend it.

In you and in your seed... See, over and over again, "in your seed," **all the families of the earth shall be blessed.** All families. All families. What's not being said here - through all time. Because it's going to start with Adam and Eve on, all families of the earth, the Great White Throne, all families are going to eventually be blessed because of this - if they choose when they're given that opportunity.

Verse 15—Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land. And I will not leave you until I have done what I have spoken to you. Awesome!

So again here, powerful things that God told him. It was said in his mind, it becomes very obvious as we go forward in the story here. Again, all a part of something unique when God chooses to call and work with individuals wherever that time period is and whenever that time period is. Here, unique to him, a process of redemption, a process of sacrifice, a process where he had to enter into the sacrifices as well as to what was taking place, to be redeemed.

Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, Surely the Eternal is in this place. “Surely God,” because he knew him as El Shaddai. **Surely the Eternal is in this place and I did not know it. Being fearful he said, This place is fearful!** It was so powerful in his thinking, in his mind, in what he saw it had an incredible impact on his life that would carry him the rest of the way. Truly.

This is none other than the house of God, or the place of God, and this is the gate of heaven, or “to heaven” if you will. So, because of what he saw, because of where it was, because it happened there, this had an incredible impact on him, so much so he took the stone. Incredible!

Then Jacob rose up early in the morning and took the stone that he had put at his head, and set it up as a pillar, and poured oil on it. Anointing it because he was so moved. It’s hard for us to grasp something - we read a story like this and it’s hard to grasp the impact. But God wanted it to have an impact upon him awesomely and powerfully so, and to realize there may just be a little more involved here than what we would normally see. Because God can put into the mind of individuals certain desires to do certain things because He has a purpose in it.

He was so moved by this he had a desire to use this stone, to have this stone, and it became important for the children of Israel. Just to go through a bunch of history (I think we all know it), it’s talking about that stone that’s in Scotland right now, that the Israelites carried this stone through time with them as they did carry various things with them that they treasured and the stories that went with it. Jacob’s pillar stone. The pillar that he established and poured oil upon. Incredible. That which kings and queens have been coronated upon. Very moving.

A purpose in this, in the seed, because it’s pointing to the seed, the King, the one who is anointed to be King of kings. Incredible. They had this affinity through time, almost gone to war. Well, I think they actually had some pretty good skirmishes between Scotland and England at different times and the feelings that have been deeply involved with that through time. Incredible!

...he rose up in the morning, took the stone that he had put at his head, set it up as a pillar, and poured oil on top of it. Then he called the name of the place Bethel, which means “house of God.” ...but the name of that city had been called Luz, in other words, to that point in time, that area, that place.

Then Jacob made a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and keep me in this way that I am going, and give me bread to eat and clothing wear... So, he’s talking about in this way,

basically, that his father had taught him, in the way that Abraham had given to Isaac and then Isaac had given to Jacob and Jacob was an upright individual, he had latched a hold of these things, had an affinity toward God, had a belief in certain things that were being given here, had a desire to have the birthright promise because he valued it where Esau didn't! He had a belief that was strong toward God. Awesome!

God was multiplying this in his being, if you will, and strengthening him in this relationship. He's telling God, **If You will continue to work with me in this manner, if You will be with me and keep me in this way that I have been going...** That's what he's saying here, to help me, to keep me. **...and give me bread to eat and clothing to wear so that I come back to my father's house in peace, then the Eternal shall be my God, indeed.** (I added the indeed.)

And this stone which I have set as a pillar shall be God's house, and of all that You give me I will surely give a tenth to You. So, making this very clear here, "I am obeying You and I'm following the way of Abraham, the way of Isaac, and continuing in this way in my relationship toward You," toward God.

Now, in the following chapters there is much more to the story about Jacob and his growing family, and then his return to the land of his father, Isaac, later here as they were about to arrive back to the land.

They have this period of time. Long story here of things that happened between Chapter 28 and 32 here. But again here, the story here of him arriving back in this land that his father had sent him and having had the dream and getting back and finding Laban and his family and Rachael and Leah and the things of how Laban had treated him, had lied to him, basically, stole from him I think he said ten different times there as the story goes, of things he'd been cheated on.

So, over time here the relationship that started out fairly well because there was this bond of this relationship because Rebekah, Isaac's wife, and Laban, same family. Because family was here there was this affinity. But then personalities enter in and things begin to happen, and jealousies. God was working with Jacob and blessing him even though he was being oppressed, basically, by his own father-in-law. Again, not a real close relationship.

This story, it goes through this story here of what took place and then how they finally left. And so, we're jumping into a part of it here where now they're heading back to the land where Isaac is and they're going back to where Esau is and going to meet Esau. He has this concern about meeting up with Esau because he's afraid that Esau isn't going to be kind toward him and may even want to do him great harm. There are these different feelings. He's not sure how he's going to be able to go back there, how he's going to be received, so he sends different ones out in front of him. This is where we're jumping into a story here.

He sends out part of his group ahead of him with different parts of flocks and herd and cattle and so forth to give to Esau as they come to him first. Because they know Esau is coming, the

word is out, and so he's sending these out ahead of him. And finally, he and the rest of the family then, are on their way. So, this is where we're jumping into the story.

He's returning just as God had talked to him about.

Genesis 32:24—Then Jacob was left, so in other words, he remained behind. The rest had been sent on ahead to meet at different intervals, to meet Esau along the way. So, his thinking was that each time he met some that his heart would change then toward (if it was bad), would change toward him, toward Jacob and his family that he was going to eventually come to.

It jumps into the story here. **Jacob remained behind** and then that night, when all this took place, **a Man wrestled with him until the break of day**. Doesn't go into much. Leaves a lot of things to your imagination. People run wild with it. But, basically here, you come to know who it was in the form of a man. There was that which Jacob came to believe and see as well.

But again here, he had to know of some of these stories, whether he grasped them all or not. But of the stories of how God worked with Abraham, Melchizedek and so forth, and the times that he thought that he was entertaining different ones and come to find out it's God but in the form of a man.

Again here, it's difficult. You go through this, but again, this relationship that God was developing him, a personal close relationship. Moses got a bush, he got a dream and a personal example here that he came to know that this was of God and that God had, basically, manifested himself in this way. Incredible! How much they knew, we don't know. But again, that's what took place.

So, he wrestled until the break of day. Now, when He saw that, in other words, when it became evident that **He did not prevail against him**, in other words, when God came to the point of realizing, or of not realizing but God knew all the while these things were to happen, were to take place. But again here, it was up to Jacob and how Jacob responded, and the mind, the character was unique. He believed God. He believed certain things and so this is why he did what he did. That's not fully in the story here but it becomes apparent.

It was evident, that's all it's saying here, it was evident Jacob is not going to give up, Jacob is not going to quit so God had to do something else. It says here, He didn't prevail. In other words, God had made himself of a man not to have advantage but to be able to be on an equal plane, as it were, man to man to wrestle.

What good would it be if you were able to go out there and pin him down right away? It wouldn't prove a thing. This is about Jacob and his relationship, his thinking toward God, his character.

He touched the socket of his hip; and the socket of Jacob's hip was out of joint, and He wrestled with him. Continued on! **And so, He said, Let Me go, for the day breaks. But he**

said, **I will not let You go unless You bless me!** Now, he's in pain. He's hurting. He's suffering. This is not a simple thing. This is not an easy thing. But it shows the tenacity, the attitude of mind, the perseverance that he had. That's what his character was molded into by God.

Again here, this is what he wanted. He wanted to be blessed then. He knew more, obviously. It's not in the story here but there was that in his mind that he knew. It comes out, as we go through this, kind of comically in a way.

I will not let You go until You bless me! So, He said to him, What is your name? or, "State your name." "Give me your name," whatever. Kind of like asking, what were you named or tell me your name. **He answered, Jacob.** Now, he knew what his name was. But again here, He wants him to say his name to Him.

Then He said, Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel. Now, God had a purpose in this. It was God's purpose all along to give Jacob that name. But He had to bring him to this point to fulfill this. He wrestled with him for a purpose, to bring this about. He knew the character, the mind, and the thinking. How far he would go, perhaps he left that... I don't know. We don't know. It doesn't say.

But to come to that point in time where He touched him and this story then is recorded, because Jacob tells the story and it's passed along. "He touched my thigh. This is what happened ... and asked for the blessing."

So again here, these things had to be told. These things were passed down. A personal close relationship with God was being developed.

He said, "Your name is Israel." Can we grasp, imagine how meaningful this is to God? Because this has everything to do with God's Family, Elohim. It's about God's entire purpose for mankind, to bring mankind to this point of being able to become a part of spiritual Israel, of being able to become a part of a spirit family, the God Family. Incredible! God is introducing this at this point in time, had prepared the family of Abraham for this point in time in this lineage, in Jacob, to bring him to here to give him this name.

It wasn't just happenstance thing. It's something that was planned long, long, long ago. God's plan for mankind for 7,100 years was planned before anything was ever created. For us to comprehend that? Then for God to do these things at different points in time? We've got to be able to strive to appreciate the importance this was to God—Truly!—to be at that point in time?

When you plan things and do something and you, I don't care what it is in life, whether it be something in construction or something else you're planning in life to do, and you get to that certain point, and certain things that are so fulfilling when you see it finally, this is what you've achieved and the meaning that's there.

Multiply that so many times over with what God is doing and creating and molding and fashioning over such a vast period of time. We can't grasp that. But the excitement of God Almighty has to be so great, truly does.

Here is an example then. Finally, He's able to give that name to the one He was creating. Because He was creating him, molding and fashioning him and his family and the seed that would come from him. Because it's about that seed and it's about what God is doing to redeem mankind.

A long history of work, a long history of sacrifice, incredible things that have been paid, if you will, in advance through time that sometimes we don't think about nor can we appreciate until we think about them and pray about them and ask God to help us in that.

Again here, that word, a compound word which means "El," God, and "to prevail; persevere; to strive" as God prevails, perseveres, because that's a part of this, or that "to prevail with God; persevere with God." So, all that meaning is involved in the word.

It's about God and what He has done. He has persevered, He has kept at what He is doing, and now that very name is being given to an individual that everyone who becomes a part of in the sense of being begotten and starting that process has to do that, has to persevere with God, has to make those choices to fight, to fight this.

That's a part of what it's talking about here in what we're reading, and to fight those things in the world. Because to hold on to God's way of life and what God is offering us, it is a fight. You have to wrestle spiritually with everything around you in life because this world doesn't receive what God has to offer. It resists and fights against it and our own nature does.

We learn so much through this process, about what it means to strive or prevail or persevere with God. Incredible!

So again here, as it goes on to say, **Your name will be called Israel.** "For as a prince" - not in scripture. Its not there. I get so irritated with some of the translations. The words aren't even in there about a prince.

It's just talking about Israel. **For you have,** as it talks about here, the word "struggle" or "power," it's something you have done. It's a Hebrew word that means you have exerted the power, you have persevered or prevailed through what you have done, your work involved in this in fighting.

...with God and with men. So, this is not easy. It's something you must do with God in the sense of if you want this way of life you have to fight for God. God says here it is, but you have to fight for it then and you have to make those choices. Sometimes that means in fighting against the ways of this world and people who fight and resist God's way of life, who come at you in different ways.

He had already experienced some of these things in the land where they had lived, in the land they'd gone back to. Laban, his own father-in-law and some of the things that took place there, yeah, you have to wrestle if you want to live God's way of life and be true to God. This is all a part of it.

Then Jacob asked, saying, Tell me Your name. Now, there is something in his mind, in his thinking here and yet he knows. That's the point of it all, in essence. **And so, He said, Why do you ask about My name?** So again, this conversation back and forth between Jacob and God. And unique, indeed, and basically, "Why do you need My name." In other words, "You already know who I am." He didn't have to tell him, didn't have to mention it there at all. To do what He did, to touch him, the hip went out, and for him to look to Him, "I want to be blessed!" Why would you ask such a thing? You know who He is. So, anyway, a part of human nature but a part of knowing and not knowing.

And so, we all go through things in life. It's a matter of what we've been told, and our response is a matter of faith, to what is a measure of what we believe and the depth of what we believe. It comes back to us then, "What do you believe? What do you live by? What are you going to do about it?" Incredible.

Verse 30—Then Jacob called the name of the place Peniel, which means "face or a vision of God." **For I have seen God face to face.** It wasn't. It wasn't God face to face. It was on a physical plane in the sense of He's manifested Himself as a man and He wrestled with him. But seeing it on a physical plane he realized He was of God.

But we're able to know and see things, what is spirit, things that are physical and things that are spirit. And taken, frankly, the Church a long time to come to grasp, for God to show us various things about that relationship with Abraham, about Melchizedek and so forth. In God's time He showed and helped us to grasp and understand something that people have struggled with at different times as far as even the Church is concerned.

You think about what we've been blessed to see and what God has given to us. It's so awesome, it truly is.

He says, **I have seen God face to face, and my life is delivered.** That's what the word means, "delivered," not "preserved." It's similar, but it's about being delivered. It's about deliverance. It's about redemption. It truly is.

Then, as he crossed over Penuel, the sun rose on him, and he limped on his hip. Therefore, to this day the children of Israel do not eat the tendon of the thigh, because He touched the socket of Jacobs hip, the tendon, the muscle area, that area that attaches.

What an incredible story. It just sends chills up and down your spine. To think that here is something that was so moving to Jacob, the story is passed along, and it has great meaning then to the family and what they pass along.

This brings us back to Isaiah 43. We'll just read this verse again and then come back to it. This is a good place to come back to at the beginning of *Part 3*.

Isaiah 43:1. Has a great deal of meaning to it. **But now, thus says the Eternal, who created you, O Jacob, and He who formed, like the potter, to fashion, to form you, O Israel.** An ongoing process.

We've read about the story how God prepared through Abraham, Isaac, and then now Jacob to finally after all that time to give that name. Which was not about just a physical people. But that's how God worked to teach, to mold and fashion various events and so forth through time to bring us up to where certain physical things had to be accomplished and fulfilled on earth, where some of the greatest blessings on earth were going to be given to mankind and how mankind would take that.

Hence, today, this nation, other nations as far as a family reflective of the reality of a relationship that doesn't exist with God, God taking away His blessings. Because He gave us what we had and made us who we are, gave us the wealth, the strategic places of the world, as Ephraim was given, and on it goes then through Manasseh.

Those things as a part of an entire story through time, that mankind cannot govern himself, even when God has given the greatest of blessings of physical wealth and power the earth has ever known. Awesome!

But again, all those examples that without God Israel was an example through that through time, that unless God calls you, unless God gives you of His spirit with His laws, with His ways, you can't live it, you can't do it. You won't. You'll fight against it. You'll resist it. You'll do all kinds of things. But you cannot obey God.

God has to redeem us, all mankind, and begin to work with us, to call us, to have a relationship.

And so, we're reading about, we've read about these relationships that had such incredible meaning to where finally God was able to give a name after so many hundreds of years of having created Adam and Eve, to bring mankind to this point, to say, "Your name..." Can you imagine Him saying it and what it meant to Him? "Your name is no longer Jacob."