

We are now entering the Passover season of the year. It's incredible to think that we are only three weeks away from Passover, and by the time everyone in Australia, obviously, hears this, which is next Sabbath, and also in New Zealand, Europe, and any other scattered areas, when they hear this particular sermon it's only going to be two weeks away.

I'm excited that we have a sermon series I'm going to begin today that's going to carry us all the way through the Feast so that anyone can listen to it at any time and have the kind of food that is needed for the Days of Unleavened Bread period.

Last Sabbath ended the series entitled, *It Is God Who Redeems Us*. Again, the order of sermons as we've been coming up to this point, to me are inspiring and exciting because you see God's hand at work. God reveals much through that process of what He gives to us from point to point, from time to time and He continues to build. It's a wise observation that we make on our part to look at those things as well in our lives, to realize it is God who leads and guides and directs His Church.

Of course, Christ is the one who does that because God has given all things to him, but to understand that God's desire is to lead and guide and direct us and feed us, and He does that by Sabbath to Sabbath in a very powerful and a mighty way, candidly, as far as how we're building.

So again, we finished that particular series, *It is God Who Redeems Us*. In that series we covered the incredible story of how God gave a new name to Jacob. It's a powerful story and there is so much more there. But what we receive from that is going to vary as far as the Church is concerned on a spiritual plane. Because it's jam packed, it truly is.

Then the story that moved forward concerning how God has persevered and sacrificed through time to redeem us is so deeply meaningful, instructive, and revealing. We recognize that sacrifice that goes all the way back to the time that He began creation and what He had planned and so forth. Then when it actually happened as far as mankind being put on this earth and then persevering with mankind and pushing forward and working...working! A work ethic that's so powerful that we all need to learn from that, that we need to learn about God in a very powerful way.

He tells us we have six days to get things accomplished but the seventh is His, and we're to set that aside for rest and relaxation, and obviously, to be fed mightily, spiritually by Him. But there is that which the Church needs to hear as well, the importance, because there is much learned through that process of productivity and hard work and effort. There is that which is learned spiritually from that as well.

So, anyway, story moved forward in that process, how God has persevered and sacrificed to redeem us. And yet my concern throughout the series has been one of whether or not or to what degree each of us received or has been receiving the richness of what God is sharing with us.

We should be deeply moved by everything God gives to us. We should never get to a point where we become lax and complacent and ever tired of hearing. Because God Almighty is the one who feeds us! And our prayers in preparation for the Sabbath will reveal much about how we think and where we are and whether we truly hunger and want what God has given to us or whether we get to a point and go through various things in life, routines, and we get caught in the mud of the routines and get in a quagmire, as it were, and begin to slow down and begin to become a little lazy, as it were, on a spiritual plane. We can't afford to do that.

I was thinking this morning about how that I understand and I know and I've been watching closely world events, and so forth, knowing that things can begin at any moment in time, but I still feel because of the process that God has given us and revealed various things, how methodical God is and the meaning that has to be contained in various things, that we're still going to see things work out in a timely fashion, in an orderly way as far as things that are prophetic. So, there are certain years that pop out more than others, but still on the way there are things that we have to watch and be careful of and be on guard all the time.

So, we live in incredible times. But it's so important as to what we hear, what we receive from God, to what degree we're receiving what He has for us. Because there has been much sacrifice go into that to give to us what we have.

I think of people who have gone before, all the sacrifice, all the work that people have done through time, that have been molded and fashioned, called, the 144,000. I think of the first 4,000 years and people went through a lot, they truly did, so that we can have more now and it concerns God's plan and those things that are in the future.

Anyway, God has persevered through time with those whom He's called. Over nearly 2,000 years now Christ has persevered with all who have been called. So again, incredible to understand those things, to be moved by those things, to understand them, to be thankful to God for those things.

God and Christ have persevered with us and for us, and we are to likewise enter into persevering for God's way of life. God does it. We're to do it. We are to understand what He does, why He does it, and we are to let that or desire that to become very much a part of our life then, this matter of what it means to persevere.

Before continuing on I thought it'd be good just to go through some of the definition and think about our spiritual lives then and that work and the effort we put into it. Because you have to work for this. It isn't just given. It doesn't just happen. And yet sometimes if we're not careful we can live, people live, many people have lived just going from one point to another and kind

of floating through it all and not doing much, and after a time become so weak, and after a time God judging there is nothing in you, you don't desire this, you don't want this, you're not willing to sacrifice and fight for it. He's not going to just give it. It doesn't work that way.

So many have gone by the wayside through time. Incredible! God's allowed an entire Church to fall asleep when it led up to the Apostasy. We're to learn from that, never again. Never again.

So, some definitions here: "To persist in a state, an enterprise, or undertaking in spite of counterinfluences, opposition, or discouragement."

Now, do we have any of those things at any time? Yes, we do! If we're honest with ourselves we go through those things because we're carnal, physical human beings. You can't help it. So, there are times you go through some of these things. Obviously, when it comes through influences from the outside and being bombarded. We live in an age right now where there are beings that are so stirred up, so unhappy, so riled up, and they're gaining greater power and that affects many of us in many ways.

We're bombarded with things around us and if we're not careful we get caught in some of those traps! Like conspiracy theory crap! I so hate that kind of stuff! When we allow ourselves to get pulled into something and think someone is an authority on a matter and that what they say is true, it just boggles my mind sometimes. And yet I hear from church areas, and different areas, and around the world about some of these kinds of things taking place. It just riles me up inside thinking why do we take sides? Why do we pick and choose, and all the garbage that's out there, what pile of garbage we want to pull into our lives and choose to believe?!

We're to reject the things that are in this world and the garbage that's in this world. People think they have such great wisdom in this world and great understanding in this world. No, they don't! They're blind! They're in Egypt! They're in bondage! We're not supposed to be. We're coming out of it.

That's why I talked about during the times of politics and the political fighting back and forth and all the garbage that was going out here and some in God's Church began to take sides in different things and think that certain ones were important.

I think of one who calls himself a prophet in a scattered group who made a comment about a president. Had to be in office, had to be reelected, was going to be there because he fulfills some - I can't remember the details, his name... Anyway, doesn't matter. For whatever reason it escapes me. Pretty sure it starts with a "Z." But anyway, because he said that, I knew, yep, not going to happen. Just because he said it, if nothing else, because God works in that way so often to teach us, to lead and guide and direct us.

Another definition: "To persist in anything undertaken." We have undertaken a way of life. We were baptized under water and put to death. We were! And to come up out of the water in newness of life, to be a new creation, to have a new life begin in us. That's why immediately after that we have hands laid upon us by God's ministry and we receive then God's spirit,

because that's the order that God has given us of a way we're to look and focus in our lives to God. It isn't just a personal relationship between us and God, so God has an order of things. He's given us that for a purpose and we learn through that.

I still think of those who never ask for the ministry, never look to the ministry, don't think about those kinds of things, especially when it comes to sickness. Blows my mind how those things can happen. Because that's a command; it's not just a suggestion.

Yes, and I'm stirred up because I am excited about this way of life, because I love this way of life. I know what we were given at the very beginning of this way of life. I remember coming up out of the water and being as cold as could be in a lake in Nebraska in September. Incredible.

So, we go under the water and we come back up and we're to walk in newness of life and to be zealous for a way of life that God has given to us. And so, we put this old self to death. We look forward to it. We want to change. We don't want to remain this way. We want to be something new, something better, far better, far better than human life.

So, "to persist in anything undertaken." Persist at it. Keep at it. Persist! You don't give up. You don't quit. You don't slow down! "To persist in anything undertaken." When we talk about this way of life that should mean so much.

"To maintain a purpose in spite of the difficulty." Well, fighting this thing, self, is not easy. Each one of us have this job, to fight self. That's the greatest battle anyone has! I'm not talking about the satanic world, demons and so forth. They have ability to broadcast and the like, but we make choices as to whether or not we're tuned in to any of that kind of stuff because of our carnal human nature. We have to make choices as to what we're going to do and what we're going to fight for and fight against.

"Maintain a purpose in spite of difficulty." I keep thinking about Jacob wrestling. God manifesting Himself on an equal plane with Jacob to wrestle, to wrestle, to keep at it and so to see how Jacob is going to be. He didn't manifest Himself in a way that was overpowering, as someone who maybe works out in a gym on a regular basis and can run 10k a day, whatever it might be, and huge, big shoulders and able to pin him down and put him out right away. It wasn't like that. It was an equal so that Jacob could keep wrestling as long as he wanted, as long as he was determined. And how long was he determined?

That example for us should never, never, never escape us, because it's a definition of what we're supposed to be. "To persist in anything undertaken; to maintain a purpose in spite of difficulty, obstacles, or discouragement. To continue steadfastly." Steadfast. I think of scriptures that talk about we're to be steadfast in what we're doing and what we're living, to be steadfast.

Another definition: "To continue in a course of action even in the face..." It's just saying some of the same things in different ways. "To continue in a course of action even in the face of

difficulty or with little or no prospect of success.” Now, I like that one, “with little or no prospect of success.”

Because if you rely upon self, you’ll have no success. But God has given us the means, the ability, to not just have success but have it powerfully in our lives through the power of His holy spirit. That’s the difference. That’s what we need. We have to persevere for that. We have to fight for that. We have to desire that. We have to, every day when we get up, as a matter of looking to God and saying, “I need You! I can’t rely on this. I can’t do it on my own, or otherwise there is no success. I’m going to fail over and over again, more than I otherwise would.” God gives us help. He wants to give us help.

Now, after giving last Sabbath’s sermon and arriving at the end of it there was that which jumped out at me, a time and a place, a purpose, frankly, to lead into this because of how God is feeding us. The most difficult part of it was when I tried to tear the pages and they weren’t tearing. Then I remembered you can, sometimes if you have something bundled together too much and it’s too thick... Even a few pages like it was like, “You’ve got to be kidding me!” I could have just thrown them, but no, I’m going to finish this job. I’m going to persist until these pages are torn. And so, tried to spread them apart a little bit, you know, so you can start it. Then when that one part starts then the rest of it is able to go. And finally, I had success.

Now, I didn’t enjoy going through all of that. I don’t enjoy doing those kinds of things at all. I hate it with all my being. But there is a time and a place and that was it. We’re to learn from that. We’re to grow from that. God’s molding and fashioning us.

It brought to light that it is a shame for us if we are not vigorously persevering after God. We must be persevering, vigorously so. It’s not a matter of a little bit of effort, it’s a matter of throwing your life into it. It’s that thing that has to be number one in our lives. What is first in our lives?

And if God is first in our lives, His way of life is first, the recognition, understanding we have to have His holy spirit in our lives to change, then we have to work at that, we have to put effort into that. We live in an age where that’s becoming less and less as far as ethic is concerned, the way we think as human beings and all this fast-paced thing that’s going on here with technology.

I’ll tell you, there are some deep evils in those things, there really are, and the misuse of it. Someone sent out a thing the other day here that I thought was really good. I wish the whole Church could have it passed around to them. But it basically was an individual giving a lecture and talking about the dangers of cell phones, the misuse of cell phones in society. That’s just a small, smidgeon. But if we could really get it! And talking about then this thing of relationships, basically, is all it boils down to.

What’s God’s way of life about? It’s about relationships. His law is about relationships, relationships with God and one another.

I was looking over where my phone is over here in a bag because it's on silent mode over there in a bag and we learn in services we put it on silence. What if we had them on all the time and getting calls and getting texts and getting, you know, whatever it is and looking down to see what...? What would that show God?

I would hate, I would dread something like that before God! And if we really get it then with our relationships with one another same thing is true. Relationships with others and example we set and on and on it goes. I didn't mean to get into some of this, but you go into a restaurant and everybody has their head down. Come up for air once in a while. Basically, all that's happening. People walking down streets, people walking across streets, people driving, and the majority of the time you know what they're doing.

A lot of times I'll pull up to an area and I am at this point where I may not make the next light, and so I pull into another lane that's less because it's not the one I want to be in because I got to get clear over traffic. There's an area we live in where that's very much the case. But if there's a little bit of an area on this one side that people don't like to get into, I get in there because the vast majority of time—talk to my wife—somebody is going to be on their cell phone. You can bank on it! Somebody is going to be chugging along when they finally do start because they're so deeply involved in this fast communication and they can't live without it.

And basically, that's what this individual was going on about. Saying it in different terms but showing, basically, people are captive to the stupid thing. Are you? Are you captive to your cell phone? Because we can become that way if we're not careful. Sick, sick world. It really is.

So, in going through that, talking about how it's a shame for us if we're not vigorously persevering after God, Christ, and the way of life they have been leading us to receive. God has sacrificed so much. Christ has sacrificed so much to give us this way of life. What a horrible thing when we turn in some other way, when we don't respond in the way that God desires us to, when we don't utilize the tool of prayer, of communication with God, of crying out to God for help. He wants us to cry out to Him for help to be delivered. He wants to redeem us.

But that's a part of a response on our part as to whether or not He's able to, because it all comes back to our choices. What choices do we make along the way? But He's laid everything out for us, but we have to choose.

Now, while I'm at it, as I was addressing this and speaking of the need for feedback from those to whom I am preaching I think some felt that I needed feedback from the Church maybe on a regular basis, or whatever. That's not what I meant. I was referring to when I'm in an area, when I'm speaking anywhere, that if I see someone that's fully disinterested it's kind of like that cell phone thing.

If you're sitting at a meal with someone and they're just constantly going to their cell phone and not having a conversation with you, and yet they met you and they wanted to be with you, whether it be a business meeting or someone, friends, whatever, and you go out and you have

this time together and someone is just constantly looking at their phone. Every time it rings you've got to look. How does that make them feel? How do they think? What did I come out with you for? What's the purpose of all this? Why did we even bother? Why the expense? Could have saved some money! And so, it reveals a lot.

In Sabbath services things reveal a lot to me at times. If I see something that doesn't reflect a desire to drink in God's way of life and I see something that's the opposite of that and kind of like someone with a cell phone texting or something and you think, "This is not a good thing."

So, I think you understand what I'm talking about. That's the kind of feedback. It's not feedback in the sense that I have to hear from people because I'm having such a hard time, a difficult time, and if I don't hear from people in the Church I'm just not going to survive the week. It's not that at all. Okay? Please. I'm making a little bit of fun with that.

But I appreciate the concern, the love that's been expressed this past week in many different ways. Kind of been bombarded with it. But it's good. But I couldn't have that all the time because I wouldn't be able to handle it. That's why we have the ministry, because things are funneled in through the ministry for that very purpose because it helps us then to focus on the things that need to be focused on even more so as far as a spiritual plane in taking care of the Church.

So anyway, I appreciate the texts, the emails, the phone calls, different things that have happened, but that was last week. I think you can all understand that. If someone is interested in, has a desire for, you can tell that they're involved in what you're saying. What would it be like then if someone shows the opposite of that? Well, that's what I was talking about, that kind of feedback. A speaker needs that, basically. If everyone is out there on their cell phones, like, I might as well get a chair and kind of join in with them. I'm just kidding. But that's what I'm talking about. I'm talking about that kind of feedback.

So, getting back to what God has been giving us, what He and Christ have been persevering to give to us. Sometimes we don't realize that, that God perseveres to give to us more and more and more, and if we don't receive certain things when they're given then what does that mean? It means it must be revisited because it wasn't received. Because it's a building process. And so, it slows down the building process.

Every one of us is needed in that process of building and how we respond to what God is giving to us. And so, they persevere to give to us, to mold and fashion us, to help us to be built in a manner that can be received by Him at whatever time and whatever place and whatever circumstances need to be by that point in time. Hence the name "Israel" and it's deep meaning.

It's clear that not all persevere as they should. God is letting us know that. We can all look at ourselves and realize, "I can do more to persevere in this way of life, to fight for this way of life, to put more effort into this way of life."

Again here, we see this in a very clear manner. Every year it's clear that not all persevere as they should and we need to be stirred up in this Passover season. You know, we, basically, go through the same ceremony every Passover. There's very little deviance from that. As a whole, it's just right down the line as far as a process that God Almighty and Christ have given to us that we're to go through.

Because we're to be reminded every year about its meaning and it's a specific focus. It's not a matter of a choice and going off and talking about different things. It's the focus. It's a very strong focus about its purpose and its meaning and what it should mean to us. But if we're not careful as human beings even the Passover sometimes it's like, "Well, I've heard that," and we know the verses and we know them well. Don't ever let that happen to you. Don't ever, ever, ever take a Passover and let that happen to you.

Fight against your nature because that can happen. Start through John 13 and on through 17, 18, some of the verses in there, I know them exceedingly well because I've been molded and fashioned in those for a long, long time in order to give to the Church later on, candidly. Chapter 14 to me is one of the most meaningful, inspiring, powerful chapters in all the Bible in what God gave to us at that time, in what Christ taught at that time. He reserved it at a moment in time to be given, to be taught before he'd no longer be here on this earth in human form and have to go through what he went through as our Passover.

And yet, he was revealing the very purpose of why he was getting ready to sacrifice his life on a physical plane for something far, far greater. It can't even be compared with the physical life. But he's willing to do that. Because in this body, it's not easy to do.

So again, it's clear that not all persevere as they should, and we need to be stirred up in this Passover season in order to more fully grasp the name God seeks to give us - Israel. It has great meaning in it, great purpose. That's why it was mentioned in the sermon within that sermon series that this matter of his name being given to him was not a last-minute thought of God. "Oh, he persevered in wrestling with Me so I'm going to call you, Israel!"

God determined at the same time He planned that He had to have a Son be born. Because everything is built upon that. Everything! Everything that was ever created is built upon that powerful truth about His Son and how God was going to create a family and how He would do that. Spirit. Filled with His spirit always because He would always dwell in the entire family and the family in Him.

He purposed those things long ago, that there would be an individual. That's why it speaks of in Romans and other places that there are those things He predetermined before time. Predetermined so long ago as a part of a plan and purpose. Then we were predetermined as far as, if you want to look back, especially the 144,000, a predetermined number. And yet God didn't reveal that through time until, finally, He gave that number in Revelation to John. But they didn't know what that was, what it meant.

Even within Worldwide we didn't know what that meant, 144,000. We thought the Church had to be so large at the end that 144,000 had to come out of that and then a great multitude would also come along. That's not what it was about at all. Put things in perspective when we had an apostasy and everything was shattered, scattered all over the world. You know God's word is true, so what's the answer?

Every group out there should be able to address that and say, "We're not even getting close. We're not growing at the rate that the Worldwide Church of God was growing, the Radio Church of God and the Worldwide Church of God under the leadership of God's apostle, Herbert Armstrong." So, what can this mean for the Church, for the scattered groups, of whether it be 5,000, 6,000, 7,000, or 14-15,000 as it was in the beginning, and then that one cut in half and less and people scattered again. This just continue whittling down. Not growth.

So, when are they ever going to have 144,000 to fulfill those verses? And you realize, God leads you by His spirit, because He's the one that reveals it, but He reveals it through circumstances that we live through. We lived through different circumstances but knowing as we should God's word is true. So, what is the answer? What is the answer to what happened to us as a matter of God's Church? That's all you can do. Then God will show you, "You were cast out of My mouth. Every last one of you was separated from Me." That's what it means to totally cast it out of your mouth.

When you puke and you vomit and you hurl and everything comes out of you, it means it comes out of your body. He made that very clear that's what happened to the Church. It was hurled away from Him because it can't be a part of Him because it's filled with sin. Laziness, lackadaisical spirit, lukewarm. God won't accept lukewarm. Yet we have some lukewarm today. It's every year! And lukewarm leads to what? Being separated from God! In every case it will always lead to being separated from God Almighty!

So, we've had too many since God began PKG. Hundreds and hundreds and hundreds, and into the few thousand who have come and gone. It blows my mind! But it's a part of something to learn from and what God is doing and what we're like and what our human nature is like. We're ever learning. We've got a lot to fight, every one of us. Self is hard to fight.

In this age, an age of technology and all the garbage that's out there in the world, you're being bombarded in ways that mankind hasn't been bombarded since the days of Noah. They were just so steeped in it they'd become professional at what they were doing as far as human nature and selfishness is concerned. They were so far along, well, it's very much like it is today.

We're bombarded and we're no match for it. That's why we need God. That's why we have to cry out to God. If we see it, we have the choice to believe it, and if we can believe it and ask God to see it better, then the more you can see it the more you'll hate it and loathe it and fight against it because you'll realize how dangerous this is.

That's why I hope that everyone realizes just how dangerous it is not to be in fellowship with others in God's Church, and if you have the ability to travel an hour or two or three or whatever it is from time to time and you don't do it, shame on you! I'm sorry, I don't mean to do that. But I'll tell you what, shame on you!

If you think you can be out there on your own and you don't need to be with God's people, you're sadly mistaken...sadly mistaken. We need each other. It's a powerful tool that God has given to us to grow by. He's helping us to see that more and more, more than we ever have as a matter of God's Church.

If you don't grasp that you need each other, that you need one another, you're out there in lukewarmness drifting along. So, you need to fight. You need to fight for this way of life.

We're going to now enter a new series that will carry us through, as I mentioned earlier, the Passover season, and it's entitled *Our Journey of Perseverance*. Because that's what it is.

If we're living what we need to be living, if we're growing as we need to be growing, if we're looking to God to be as we need to be looking to God and His Son as our Passover and High Priest, then we have to understand it's a journey of perseverance, of throwing ourselves into it with all of our being.

Our life belongs to God. It's not ours. Now, we have to make certain choices and decisions. That's why I think about whatever we enter into as far as anything we do in life, it's just a means to an end. Whatever it is. If God is first and His way of life is first, then we'll see it as a means to an end. That's the goal. That's the desire. That's what we're pressing forward to.

So, let's begin by backing up here all the way to Exodus 13. Because there are lessons we can learn from those things that God began to reveal way back then, as we can learn from all the different ages. Just like we went through and talked about Jacob and his name change, just as we've talked about in different things concerning king David and then Saul before him, and on and on it goes, the different things that God shows us that happen at different times that we're to learn from on a spiritual plane. All those things set there for a purpose so that we can learn things on a spiritual plane.

Exodus 13:17—Then it came to pass, when Pharaoh had let the people go... So, I think of the different things we have gone through as a Church, that there was a time when Satan pulled back and didn't pursue the Church anymore. But look what had to happen to the Church in order for that to happen. We had to be scattered all over the place, all over the world, and many into different ideas and latching on to different groups out here who had different ideas about Passover, 14/15 Passover or all 15th Passover. Different things about Pentecost that were so off the wall. Different ones, the teachers that were doing these things, so far off the wall.

Yet every time I went through someone's different arguments and looking at things they were saying in some of the scattered groups—because we were trying to address those things and trying to help people—and God said very early on you can't get caught up in their arguments

because they're so stupid. Why learn about the ignorance of what they're saying? Now, you have to know what they're saying in order to counteract certain things, but you know what you do that with? The truth.

That's why God showed focus on the truth. Then when we know God's truth all those things will be clear, how stupid they really are, how dumb it is to go off on a 14/15 Passover or a 15th Passover. It's just dumb! It's not even intellectually smart. I'm not talking about anything spiritual; I'm just talking about something that should be normal and practical as far as looking at God's word and saying, "You shall not..." Yet you try to explain how, "You shall... You can..." Dumb!

First thing that popped in my head, I couldn't help but think about when the Apostasy took place and an organization was caught off guard, the ministry was caught off guard who was pushing this stuff, this swill, and all of a sudden, all these clean foods out there. Now even catfish were clean because "They're fed in clean water tanks. They're not bottom feeders anymore because they put grain in there and they eat this healthy grain. They're not eating garbage. They're not cleaning up, like, you know, they normally might be, so they're okay to eat now."

I mean, that's the kind of intellect we see in today's society when people are asked, "What do you think about that?" "What is your opinion? Let's stop and pause and think about your opinion for about half an hour here while we talk back and forth." People watch this, and they call it news. You think, "That's news? Wow!" That's why I kind of want to gag and do a little vomiting on my own, you know. Give me the barf bag. Here we go again. Why do I even watch the stuff?

I guess just to see that man, we're really in a cess pool. I get reminded every day we're in a huge, deep pile of cess pool stuff and it's not getting any better. It's just getting worse and worse and worse. There's no soundness of mind, and it's sick from the top to the bottom. That's why we shouldn't take sides.

That's why we don't listen to conspiracy. Anything that comes close to a conspiracy theory, you should run away from as fast as you can because it's a trap for you. Don't be stupid and fall into the trap! You should be able to smell the swill before you get too close to the edge. How close do you have to get to a round hole...?

Well, we used to have them at home when I was growing up. There's this little box we would build with a little roof on top and you would walk in there. It has a hole in there and you would go in there and eliminate waste and it just fills up. And you know what? In the wintertime it's not so bad except when you have to scoop the snow off because it comes in through every part that has a possibility of getting in there. You scoop the snow off and you learn how to kind of... I don't want to get too descriptive here.

Then in the summertime you take a stick that's always there because then you take the cobwebs. Because you know what? We had black widow spiders that like to make nests there,

and recluse spiders. And so, you want to make sure you take care of that because you don't want the bite there, you know, so you do certain things, and you learn how to do it.

But you know what, especially in the summertime, before you ever get inside you can kind of tell you're getting close to a bad area. Because it's not like today where you can press the handle and it's gone. Eventually, it leaves quicker. But if it's always there, it's always smelling.

On these stupid conspiracy theories that smell like you-know-what, why on earth can't we tell that we're getting close to a bunch of you-know-what and get away from it? Why do we want to be close to it? Why do we want to bring that into our lives and then share it with others in the Church? It just blows my mind because it just continues on and some of you have been entrapped by those kinds of things, that are listening out there today.

So, I get riled up because I want what's best for you. You know why I do? Because God Almighty does! God Almighty wants what is best for His people and He wants to feed us what is best for us. He wants to nurture us and embrace us and love us and live within us. And if we know that, then we're going to respond properly and we're going to persevere for His way of life, we're going to fight for it, and we're not going to go off on these different tangents. We're not going to get in the old outhouse and dwell in there.

So again here, **Exodus 13:17—Then it came to pass, when Pharaoh let the people ... that God did not lead them by way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near, for God said, Lest perhaps the people change their minds when they see war and return to Egypt.**

I love what's shown in these verses. I love the first time I ever saw when it talked about the children of Israel leaving Egypt and how God was going to lead them. He was going to lead them "by the way of the Red Sea," because it wasn't a way. It's like a highway. That's what the word means. It's not a way travelled by anyone. Never been travelled. It wasn't travelled.

So, it says here, "lead them by way of the Philistines, although that was near." It would have been easier to go that way. It would have been easier for the people in as far as their thinking was concerned. Because when they came up to the Red Sea, you know how they responded. They saw an army coming after them, it was like, "Moses! What have you done?! Look, mountains on the side and the army is after us and we have no way of escape!" Well, God led them there for a purpose. We have to keep our eyes on God all along because we can't tell the way.

It's like when I came up to this series here. There was some different ideas and thoughts, and I thought, I don't want any ideas and thoughts of my own. It was one of those great big Red Sea moments when I went before God and just basically pleaded, "I don't know what to give to Your people! I need help." Then all of a sudden wham, wham, wham, wham, wham, sermon series. That's how God's always worked. He has to lead us and guide us and direct us. It's always a matter of looking to God and Him leading us and guiding us and directing us. It has to be our way of life.

So again, **God did not lead them by the way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near, for God said, Lest perhaps, again, they change their minds when they see war and return to Egypt.** We learn from these things on a spiritual plane.

You know, when God first draws us and calls us we go through different things, but it's an amazing process. We may have some difficult things we have to address, but there is not so much that we pull away from it and go back into Egypt because we decide that there's no way. Now, some because they don't make the right decisions in the beginning, and that's a matter of choices, but as a whole, God doesn't put too much on us.

He makes it possible so that our choices are free and it is possible, it is possible to go His way. When He calls us, it's possible to go His way. Yet the overwhelming majority of people don't choose that. That's their choice. But God's made it possible.

And so, that's the way it is with us and we learn to live by faith. We follow God and what happened to them on a physical plane happens to us on a spiritual plane. It's a beautiful thing to understand.

That's why when we go through things like this, every time we see a verse like that it should inspire us. We shouldn't be trying to wake up and be a little sleepy physically and having to pinch myself, although if I have to because it's been a late night and I couldn't sleep and I have to, so be it. But at least do it, whatever it takes. Slap one's self. I'm not going to do that as hard as I do sometimes because I've hurt myself at times. So, whatever it takes. Go splash some water on one's face, whatever it takes. Pinch, whatever it takes! Because you value, you know the importance.

So God led the people by way of the wilderness of the Red Sea. I love that verse! Every time! I don't care! If you read it and you know what it means, it cries out. Look how beautiful this is! God leads us in a way that isn't there as far as anyone is concerned. He has to show it. He has to make it clear this is the way all along the way. You can't do it without that help and that guidance and that direction. So, we make choices as to whether we keep following along that way.

So again, read something like that, if it doesn't inspire us, move us, and motivate us as we go through many things like this, bring up something that we've gone through and learned lessons from, we're starting to sleep, we're starting to drift off, we're getting tired. God's word stimulates because that reflects God's spirit. It reflects the degree to which God's spirit is able to be in and dwell in us. And if it dwells in us mightily all these things are going to come to life, because God's word is alive.

That's what it means. When it said, talks about God's word being alive, this is what it's talking about. It isn't just reading through a story and maybe after we've heard a story for so long, we do, we can get sleepy, and maybe a little bored because we've heard it so long, we know it, we can repeat it. But not with God's word! It's alive because of God's spirit. That's why we have to

cry out for God's spirit, so it's always alive. Otherwise, it won't have life in it like it should, like God intends. Only God can give His word life. Truly!

So again, **God led the people around by the way of the wilderness, the Red Sea, so the children of Israel went out of the land of Egypt like an organized army.** That's what the words mean, "like an organized army." Massive, the numbers of people.

Verse 19—Moses took the bones of Joseph with him, for he had placed the children of Israel under solemn oath, saying, God will surely visit you. What an incredible thing that continually through the different ones, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, now talking about Joseph, and you think about their lives and what God gave to them and what God gave them to know and to say at different times because it's through the power of His holy spirit because of something that God was molding and fashioning.

Then something like this where he said something that was prophetic. They didn't grasp the full meaning of that. And yet, it's there for a purpose and a reason, for us to learn from, that God gives things at different times and fulfills them at the right time, His time, and on and on it goes.

So, he said here, "Take me out with you when you go," because he knew they were going to go, they were going to leave. "So, when you leave, when God takes you out of this country, finally," **God will surely visit you, and you shall carry out my bones from here with you.** "I don't want to be left here!" Now, you don't know it, but there are still different ages of time and things that people feel. And so, anyway, there is that connection and "I just don't want to be here. Take my bones with you (or dust), whatever it is, but ever how long it is, take me with you. I don't want to be here. I want to be where God is leading us and taking us."

Because they believed the same thing, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God's going to deliver them and give them better land. That's what was passed down through time. "I'm going to make of you many nations." Incredible. "Like the sand of the sea." Over and over it goes and they believed these things and passed them on to their children.

So, they took their journey from Succoth... Their journey. And we have a journey. When God works with us, takes us out of Egypt, we all have a journey. There are things we should do on that journey and there are things we should never do on that journey. Israel is filled with that history, the people of Israel on a physical plane. We have a history on a spiritual plane. We're to learn from that.

So, they took their journey from Succoth and camped at Etham at the edge of the wilderness. So again, this was just the beginning, and this, indeed, was going to be a journey of perseverance. They went through a lot on a physical plane. We do it on a spiritual plane. We go through a lot. And it's by design. It has to be that way. We can't change except that it be that way. We can't be transformed except that it be that way.

We go through many things because God brings us to the point where we have to address different things in our life. Because if we don't, we can't change, we can't be transformed. And so, we have different obstacles along the way, but we persevere past those things and God helps us to understand them, to see them, to recognize them and the dangers that are there. But we have to make choices all along the way, and to persevere at it, to keep at it and to not let down.

Verse 21—The Eternal went before them by day in a clouded pillar to lead the way, and at night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so as to go by day and night. God was always with them. The reality is, if we grasp it on a spiritual plane, God will always be with us if we make the right choices. In other words, He's there, but we have to follow Him, His way. We have to make those choices all along the way. It's a part of persevering.

Prayer is a choice and persevering at it is a choice. Fasting is a choice. Persevering at it is a choice. Being more deeply involved in fellowship or sacrificing in order to make sure we can have it as much as possible is a choice as to what effort and work we put into it. That's why I got a little riled up a moment ago because I know of some people who just sit at home and don't travel and don't go when they have the ability, at least on an occasion, to go and be with God's people somewhere.

“Well, we do meet together; we have three people.” “We have two people.” “We have four people. We meet together.” Yeah, and about an hour and a half, two hours away or whatever it might be, you have a lot more people. And you need them! Incredible! So, what can I say? What can I say more? What can God give more? He's given it over and over again through time. This isn't the first time I've mentioned these kinds of things. But sometimes we don't hear because we don't listen to God. We're not listening.

That leads into other parts of this sermon in time that we're going to get to that are very powerful. We live in a world that doesn't listen. They don't care. They don't want to listen to anything about God. They really don't. Not the truth. It's like, “It doesn't matter, we've got our lives. We got this. We got this to battle right now. Don't bother me with that. I don't want to think about it.”

God's got to humble this world in a powerful way. This is so filled with haughtiness and pride and divisiveness and evil and drama and people are thriving in the drama because that's their life. They've learned to thrive, to thrive in drama! Satan thrives with drama. He loves it! That's what he loves. Perverted mind! Loves evil, loves confusion, loves chaos, loves to see it.

He did not take away the pillar of the cloud by day or the pillar of fire by night before His people. Point being is, God was always there. You can bank on it. You can count on it. That's why we can go before God anytime. He's there. He sacrificed much to redeem us, and that's a powerful tool in redeeming us, this matter of prayer life and a relationship with God.

It doesn't have to be a regimented time, that you have to do it a certain amount every day. But we need to strive with all of our being to do it every day of our life. And yet I know it's not happening in God's Church fully, not with truth, in truth and in spirit.

Exodus 14:1. Various parts here that we can focus in on and learn incredible lessons from of things they went through in their journey. **Now, the Eternal spoke to Moses, saying, Speak to the children of Israel, that they turn and camp before Pi Hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, opposite Baal Zephon; and you shall camp before it by the sea.** So, God is very specific about how He leads us. It's right there, right there in front of us.

For Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel, They are in confusion in the land, and the wilderness has closed them in. So, with that kind of a mind, with that kind of a thinking and they see them up there, it's like they've got them. A confidence. Not a smart confidence but the way of the world, the way of thinking so often of different ones. The way of, oftentimes, those who are... How do you put it? Working against us, our enemies. Because if they come at you, they have a purpose behind it, and oftentimes are moved and motivated by sources of power they don't even comprehend. They will throw things out because there is a purpose behind it and there is a distorted, perverted kind of confidence. And yet, if we're close to God, God will turn those things around against them. Maybe not right away, but in time it happens.

Pharaoh had this kind of mind just as a spirit being has this kind of mind. That's why I love the verses that talk about being close to God because "Greater is He that's in you than he that's in the world." That's our strength and our power, that life, of being close to God, because that's the strength and power we have that comes through Him, from Him, and then in His word and in fellowship and all the other things we have as tools and instruments.

For Pharaoh will say to the children of Israel there, They are in confusion in the land, and the wilderness has closed them in. Then I will harden Pharaoh's heart. I think about how there has been debate in times past going way back, and some not understanding some of these things. It's like, "Well, that's not fair." No, God didn't make him. It's like God forced him. God didn't force him, but because of circumstances around him, knowing full well what he'd do under certain circumstances. Just like when the plague came along and then it was removed, those are the circumstances that Pharaoh judged by. But he was so filled with haughtiness that what happened after every time? "Not going to let you go." Go back on his word, lie, because it's not here anymore, it's not bothering us anymore.

That's exactly what the world is like today. Things are starting to open up a little bit here and there and there is this greater freedom and we're going to get things back. There's all this talk about economic recovery and this big boom that's coming in front of us in ways that we really can't grasp and comprehend while we're busy printing more and more money. Someday it has its end. In God's time. Any moment in time whenever that is, because it's everything's inflated. Everything is blown up so big it just takes a little poke from God and it blows up, the whole thing, everything, top to bottom.

Well, we're ready for that. God's people are ready for that. We're prepared for that. We know it's coming. There is a certain amount we can do, but overall and above all we know that we keep our eyes on God. God is the one who saves us and delivers us. But we make choices along the way of certain things we can do for ourselves, and we're to do that, and then the rest, obviously, and above and beyond all that is to understand our life is in God's hands and He's shown us things we are to do and not to do and so forth.

Again here, going on, **Then I will harden Pharaoh's heart so that he will pursue them.** So again here, happened very early on here. They were beginning to bemoan, now they're gone and who is going to serve us? It's like going way back in time like that it's like, you've lost all your workers, the electricity isn't there anymore, the cars don't run, things don't work right because there's not that there to keep that going. That was a different kind of society. Today, that's about, you have to relate it to something else when everything is gone and taken away.

So, here it is, they went through a horrible thing and then hit themselves in the forehead type of thing and it's like, "What have we done, letting them go like that?" And so, Pharaoh was ready to destroy them. He didn't want to just go after them and bring them back, he really wanted to do a lot of damage. He wanted to destroy a lot of people in the process.

This is a process here by his choices because, again, over and over again here it just shows the hardness of heart. The more we grasp this, the more we grasp why this world has to do through what it has to go through. People don't care. COVID, I don't care if it's a hundred times worse than it is right now... Can it be worse than a hundred times? Anyway, maybe not because there wouldn't be anyone left. But if it's much worse, is that going to stop everything? No.

People use it for many different reasons. Some use it for greater control, for controlling people. Well, anyway, I could go on and on about that, the human nature that's involved here and the haughtiness and the pride that's involved. And it's going to take so much! That's why I know, and I know that I know, powerfully so, it has to be the first nuclear weapon that goes off that starts it all. That will only be a smidgeon of the beginning of a process, because even then other parts of the world aren't surrendering, still have a great deal of haughtiness and pride. Until more weapons begin to go off in the world will people begin to be more fully alarmed and in fear and begin to be humbled more. Incredible, what we have to go through.

Then I will harden Pharaoh's heart so that he will pursue them, and I will have honor over Pharaoh and over all his army, that the Egyptians may know that I am the Eternal. And they did so.

God chooses various times in history to do great and mighty things to reveal Himself and His power. This was one of those times. It was a long period of time before that. Basically, the flood. Now, again, great intervention that God was giving to a people. Before, a family, now a much larger people. On and on it goes.

All this being a part of a journey that God is taking different ones on at different times to be a part of His government, to have to go through various things so they can be fit into place. Because they have to be molded in a different way of things that are in them. Incredible, how He does these things. Because His desire is to share it within a family. Awesome! Awesome, awesome, awesome!

Now, it was told the king of Egypt that the people had fled, and the heart of Pharaoh and his servants was turned against the people; and they said, Why have we done this, that we have let Israel go away from serving us? So, he made ready his chariots and took his people with him. So, again, this army. It's not just "people" here, it's about an army. That's what it's about.

Also, he took six hundred choice chariots... And so, there are those that are at the forefront, as it were, that would always be with Pharaoh and around Pharaoh, and that which had more glitter and the like to it. It's the way he travelled; like kings have always travelled, as a whole.

...and all the chariots of Egypt... So, all the rest of the army as well, the chariots and the like, **and the captains over every one of them.** So, his entire army was with him, that which was the elite and all the rest as well. That's what it's making clear here.

So, the Eternal hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he pursued, chased after. Now, God is allowing this world right now to have a very hardened heart and it's getting harder. The more of this they go through the harder it becomes. The next thing that comes along, or if this escalates at some point, whatever happens next, as a whole, if there is that which is next before the first nuclear weapon goes off, this time between now and then it's hardening the heart of people. It truly is. That's something to observe and to learn from because it's exact same thing that's taking place, that God is allowing certain things in certain ways to drive a point home. We'll get to that later in the sermon.

So, the Eternal hardened the heart of the Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and everyone who was with him, **and he pursued** (chased after) **the children of Israel as the children of Israel went out with a high hand.** God was there.

That's how we are. We have so much that the world can't grasp. They don't know it. They don't understand that. You can't explain it. You can't tell it to anyone. They think you're just nuttier than a fruitcake if you were to even try.

Verse 9—So, the Egyptians pursued them, all the horses and chariots of Pharaoh, his horsemen and his army, and overtook them camping by the sea beside Pi Hahiroth, before Baal Zephon. Then when Pharaoh drew near, the children of Israel lifted their eyes and saw the Egyptians were moving forward, following after them. So, they were very afraid. Now, not everyone could see them, but those who did, when you're in that particular area, because you're talking about a massive number of people, hundreds of thousands of people. Those toward the rear that were closer to that area saw this and the word spreads quite rapidly

throughout the entire lot of people. They knew that Pharaoh and his army was coming. They could see it.

They saw this, and it says they were very afraid. Well, again, we go through so many things in our lives and there are things even coming that we can't comprehend, that if we're not careful we're going to let fear become too strong in our minds, in our lives. And you can't do that. Because God is there and it's something we need to grasp and comprehend.

Whatever we go through, whatever is there, whether it be things of the past - we've gone through all kinds of things in our past - but if you look forward then to things then that are in front, we're going to go through a lot before this is over with. It's a part of what we must experience and a part of what we're going to be a witness of in the future.

Many of us have been called to be a witness, which means you're going to live through that period of time to see things happen. You're going to see things as far as human nature is concerned, as far as people are concerned, and on and on it goes, and be witness of those events. God has witnesses through time of those periods of time, and these are some of the greatest of times that are in front of us, they truly are. What you have opportunity to witness is awesome. Proof. The truth.

So, they lifted up their eyes and they saw this and so they were very afraid. Too often people can become afraid and overwhelmed by various things going on around them. What a horrible thing. God is right there. But some physical things can be so weighty in our minds and our thinking because of our thinking and our thinking has to be changed to this part that is a matter of being at peace with God. Because there is something about that when you know that God is there, when you know and understand His purpose for you, when you know what He's doing in your life and all the things that have been fought in times past to bring you to where you are now, and when you realize how few, it just becomes richer and richer in the sense of a relationship with the Great God.

He's there, powerfully so, and will bring you through anything that's in front to whatever His purpose is at that moment in time. That doesn't always exclude death for some. Okay? Especially those who are a part of 144,000.

It says when they were afraid, when there is a fear that comes along, when you see something that's so distressing that it can begin to cause this battle in your mind **...and the children of Israel cried out to the Eternal.** That's what you do. But you do it all the time so that it is a part of your life anyway, and all the more so at certain times you may stress more, just like I told you about in not knowing where to go with sermons, what to do next, what is to be for the Holy Days. Should there be a sermon or two or something before that, before the Days of Unleavened Bread or what? I don't know. And basically, since I'm going to be preaching on Sabbath I kind of need to know. God knows all this, but He wants me to know these things.

So, it's a matter of thinking, it's a matter of a process you go through that's more solidly built within you, strengthening you. Again, there are those times that we just cry out more to God, more put into it in the sense of zeal, in the sense of urgency.

That's where we should be in our lives, a greater sense of urgency. If you want to come out of a slump, if you want to come out of something that's pressing you, that feels weighty, that feels like a load, the more pressing it is, the more you should cry out to God in earnest and God will give you the strength you need to forge forward, to persevere! You can't do this on your own. God perseveres but He will help us to persevere and move forward and keep moving forward. It comes from Him, Him and His Son.

Verse 13—Moses said to the people, Do not be afraid. Stand still and see the salvation of the Eternal. So, that's what we come to in our lives at different moments. You have to come to those moments in time. You know what that moment is like? It's a moment of peace. You might be going through something really difficult but all of a sudden you have this time that you can't explain as you've lived through it at different points of your life because of certain things that have happened, and there's this peace that's there. Because it's a matter of a confidence that God is there and I'm not going to go through anything save that God is there.

“Whether it be good, whether it be bad as far as something I'm going to go through and experience, God is there.” When you have that confidence and you have that closeness with God through His holy spirit and you're crying out for that, it's just something He gives. What a beautiful thing this peace, this calm. Everything else around you can be in chaos and you're at peace. It's a spiritual thing. It comes from God. What an awesome thing to be able to receive from God to help us go through whatever. It doesn't matter what it is.

We have a lot in front of us. There's going to be too many moments like that, a lot of moments like that, that can make you so much stronger, mold and fashion things in you that can't be molded and fashioned in any other way. Because God has a place for you, a purpose for you of something. He's allowing those things to be molded, and must have those things molded in you, to fit you into those places, whatever they be.

They'll be more inspiring, more exciting, more fulfilling than anything you can even begin to grasp and comprehend. We really can't until we're there. And then even in the God Family we're going to be in greater awe of God in the God Family, truly, and we're going to grow in that awe as time goes on and be able to look back and realize the moments and the times of certain things that were molded in us to prepare us for a place that He's made for us. Awesome!

Moses said to the people, Do not be afraid. Stand still and see the salvation of the Eternal, which He will accomplish for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall see again no more forever. What an awesome thing.

The Eternal will fight for you. Again, that's a confidence we either have or we don't. We must know. God fights for us. What in this world can stand against that purpose? What in this world

can stand between us and God? It's our choice if we let it. But if we rely on God, look to God, awesome!

The Eternal will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace. What a beautiful expression to understand it in the light of what we've just talked about. "And you will hold your peace." Just be at peace. Awesome!

Verse 15—And the Eternal said to Moses, so again here, said, Why do you cry to Me? Tell the children of Israel to go forward. So over and over again, these different spots of things that are filled with that which is rich in the sense of meaning and purpose. Because this is the way of life we are to live. "Tell the children of Israel to go forward." It's like this matter of Israel, persevere, go forward.

How many different times in our lives have we heard things like that, "Move forward. Continue forward." We are often admonished to do that. We have been through time. Which, we understand, is to persevere even more so in the way that God has placed before us. You have to fight for it.

Lift up your rod and stretch your hand over the sea to divide it so that the children of Israel can go on dry ground through the midst of the sea. We have things on a spiritual plane that happen to us, of things we receive in sermons and things we're to do at any moment in time, whatever that might be, and that's where our focus needs to be.

What is it to hold up a staff like that? It's obedience. "God said to do it, I'm doing it. Because it's in this way that He's going to bless us, that He's going to help us. It's a small thing. It's simple thing. A lot of things in our life are small and simple but we have to do them in a matter of unity and oneness toward God. Things we hear in announcements, whatever it might be, we seek to have that harmony, that unity, to be an organized army, small as we are, to keep moving forward. That's what God does in our life, helps us to accomplish on a spiritual plane.

So again here, **so the children of Israel can go over on dry ground through the midst of the sea. For I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians...** So, it's not just Pharaoh, it was all the Egyptians. They were of the same heart, the same mind, the same pursuit, the same spirit that was in them. There was a lot of that which was of a different spirit in them.

For I will harden the heart of the Egyptians, and they shall follow them. And I will receive honor over Pharaoh and over his army, his chariots, and his horsemen. What does He mean by that? Well, look, we know the story. We know what happened. God is glorified. The power of Almighty God and how He intervened and what He did, of things that to this day people, "Where did they cross over and how did they do this?" And "Maybe it was up here where..."

Because they can't deal with something that God does on a massive way where He just parts the sea, and so some choose to believe something that could happen kind of more in a physical way. They have these different arguments and things that they go through because they just

can't believe God did this. On and on it goes, some of the stories and how they're twisted and distorted.

Verse 18—So then the Egyptians may know that I am the Eternal. So, He's going to do this. He's telling them, "I'm going to have honor over Pharaoh and his army and his chariots and his horsemen." We know how. Showing His power, that He's great, they aren't.

So then the Egyptians may know that I am the Eternal. So, they're going to lose their lives and they're going to learn in a resurrection He's the Eternal. "Look what He did to us! Look what happened when we were out there." All the rest of Egypt, no more Pharaoh, no more army. "Look what God did, He delivered the Israelites. Mighty! God is mighty. Their God is mighty." They'd never experienced anything like that with their gods.

So then the Egyptians may know that I am the Eternal, when I have received honor for Myself over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his horsemen.

Then the angel of God, who went before the camp of Israel, moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud went from before them, in other words, from before the children of Israel, and stood behind them so that it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel. Thus it was a cloud and darkness, and by night it gave light. So then the one did not come near the other all that night. So, in other words, the Egyptians nor the Israelites. They were separated by this. God separated them and didn't allow anyone to have any movement, especially the Egyptians, to come on. They couldn't do it because of what this massive pillar or power of a cloud, fire, and then cloud at other times, and something that's hard to grasp and comprehend, but miraculous.

Not just a little stream but something massive that separated them. Because you're talking about hundreds of thousands of people who received light from all this on the side where they were, all the Israelites. What an incredible thing to take place.

Verse 21—Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the Eternal caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea into dry land, and the waters were divided. Now, it could have just separated and made it dry, period. But He used physical things, things that they could see and things that they could experience, and they saw something that was moving to them in a sense, and fearful to them. Because, here it is, an entire sea and the waters are being held back and this mighty wind that's coming through there. They experienced this, by the might of God. He used the physical things to do something that was very physical, but He did it powerfully so through the power of His spirit. Not His holy spirit, His spirit, the power.

So, the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea. It talks about they were divided, the waters were divided. **So, the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea on the dry ground, and the waters were a wall to them on their right side and on their left. Then**

the Egyptians pursued and went after them into the midst of the sea with all of Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen.

Now, it came to pass in the morning watch... Here they had started through and the children of Israel going through there, had gone through there, and so there's this point in time finally now, it says, **that the Eternal looked down upon the army of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and cloud, and He troubled the army of the Egyptians.** So, as they were trying to pursue after them in the midst of this area God caused some problems here with the chariots. **And He caused their chariot wheels to be removed so they were heavy to drive...**

So, again, things we don't comprehend but things that it says that took place. Then you have these removed, the chaos that was ensued there, you have horses pulling something, it just gets heavier and heavier, horses get weaker and weaker, slower and slower, and this is a part of what God allowed them to experience.

Some have tried to say it's all because of the mud, but it doesn't say that. You know, "The wheels got fully caught in the mud and because of that they couldn't move." It isn't saying that. The words used in Hebrew is that the wheels are gone. So, God caused this confusion and they're just heavier and heavier and you're dragging this thing along, the resistance that's there. It's not like having wheels. You can't move as fast. That's what He's showing here.

The Egyptians got to experience this moment that wasn't real thrilling to them because there was nothing that could have caused it that they could grasp and comprehend. If there were, it'd be a little bit easier to deal with and they might have handled it in a little bit different way.

So, He caused their chariot wheels to be removed, as the words mean, so that they were very heavy to drive, so the Egyptians said, Let us flee from the face of Israel. Now it got their attention. What could have caused this? So, they have this problem they're dealing with. **...for the Eternal fights for them against the Egyptians.** So, they begin to acknowledge some power here. This was so not normal. There is a power at work here, and so this is their response. So, they acknowledged it. **...for the Eternal fights for them against the Egyptians.**

Then the Eternal said to Moses, Stretch out your hand over the sea, that the waters may come back upon the Egyptians, on their chariots, and on their horsemen. So, Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and when the morning appeared the sea began returning to its place and the Egyptians tried to escape it.

Can't even begin to imagine that and at what rate, we don't know. But they had that moment in time there where they tried to escape what they saw happening was coming upon them. **So, the Eternal overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea.**

A lot of times we'll relate to maybe a movie and think that's how it happened. So, we have to be careful in some of those things. And yet to acknowledge indeed whatever way it happened,

but oftentimes not the way it's portrayed. Just like it's portrayed that Pharaoh is back there watching all this. No, he was down there with them.

Verse 28. Let's finish this chapter. **So, the waters returned and covered the chariots, the horsemen, and all the army of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them. Not a one of them remained. But the children of the Eternal had walked on dry land in the midst of the sea, and the waters were a wall on their right side and on their left.**

So, the Eternal saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians, and the Israelites saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. Thus Israel saw the great work which the Eternal had done in Egypt; so the people feared the Eternal, and believed the Eternal and His servant, Moses.

Now, not like we do through being drawn by the holy spirit, but it's like they saw this happened and they saw the army destroyed, and here they are on the other side. There was this fear of this power and this God that they didn't know. They didn't know Him. But there was that which was there which is healthy for a very carnal and physical people. How long does that last? Well, not too long as you see in some of the stories here as soon as they start griping and complaining and finding fault with Moses and on and on it goes.

Anyway, to read a story like this, again, we'd be amiss just to look at it physically. Because there are those things we are to be moved by, inspired by, to understand that happened to us on a spiritual plane, that God works with us in ways that we so often don't grasp, don't comprehend, don't see, but we are to strive to see them and acknowledge them. Especially those things that happen to us personally, how God has brought us along the way and brought us to this point in time.

I think of everyone that went through the Apostasy. You talk about a journey? What an incredible journey! Then those called at different times and going through a point in time like between, well, right at 2012 and 2013, what an incredible journey. We keep going forward, not fully understanding everything but learning along the way as much as God will grant us. We keep moving forward and we're moved and motivated by what God gives to us, the truth, the word of God that is very powerful in our lives.

We're to see those things and be moved by those things and to understand then a closeness we're to continue to have and persevere for that God has made possible. Because we're here for a reason.