

## Our Journey of Perseverance, Pt. 2

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Last week we began a new series that will carry us through this Passover season of the year. It's amazing how quickly things are coming. The sermon is titled, *Our Journey of Perseverance* and, of course, this is going to be *Part 2*.

This series will be focusing upon our journey out of Egypt and the perseverance required to accomplish it. It's an awesome thing to consider the timing we're in, the things we're living through at this time in our lives.

I was watching the sermon from last year when I was here, exactly right at a year ago as far as the Sabbaths are concerned, and listened to quite a bit of that, of things that were said there at the beginning, and announced there in that particular sermon that we were going to follow the guidance and direction being given by the government in the sense of backing away from meetings. Then after that things began to shut down all over the place.

So, it's been right at a year ago, and I even asked people at that time, started talking about the need to stay at home for Passover. I'm still struck by that, that you look at a time when people are all told, asked to stay at home to observe the Passover. We weren't going to have it with any groups or anything together and to consider the possibility, the reality that there may not have been another time like that, in that respect, since the children of Israel were in Egypt and told to observe it in their homes.

And yet this year here, just to let you know, we're going to do that once again in that regard, but you can have more come to your place or whatever, or get a group together if it's small, if you're within a short range of, you know, of 10-15 minutes from each other. But if it's a long distance, we're cutting all that out this year. Half hour, forty-five minutes, hour, don't want people travelling on those days coming together in larger groups just to have a larger group.

A lot of you will be observing it alone again, and where some of you might be able to, especially families and the like, that's fine. But that involves everyone everywhere all around the world. A unique time for the Church indeed, a time to persevere. That's what this series is all about.

Anyway, we ended *Part 1* when we had covered how God led Israel by the way that didn't exist. I love those scriptures when you start going through stories like that and you know what they mean. Here, God is leading them but not the way you'd normally travel if you were going up into that part of the world. There's an area closer to the Mediterranean that was well traveled but God didn't take them that way and He took them by a way that didn't exist.

When you say "of way" we're talking about like a highway. That's the same sort of thing. It's a way normally travelled that everyone would be familiar with, was able to do. Well traveled for trade and those things that took place back in those times.

But God didn't lead them that way. He took them a way that didn't exist, and when they got to where they were at the Red Sea, again, incredible lessons to be learned through all of this that we're going through and talking about, some of these things. Because so much of what God has done to set a type of physical things that took place are on a spiritual plane as far as we're concerned. We'll be continuing to learn those things even in the future when Christ is here.

There is so much more to be learned that we don't get to a point in time where we understand it all or know it all. God just continues to add to it as a part of a building process. It's also a part of a process that God uses to inspire us, to excite us, that the reality is we don't have it all and there are things to be learned that are hidden, that are not revealed until God, candidly, reveals them. That's up to God. It's a spiritual matter.

He reveals things to our minds to help us to grasp and understand and be moved and motivated by what we see.

So, anyway, going to go back here now and read Exodus 14. We ended *Part 1*, again, when God was leading them in a way that didn't exist, up to the Red Sea there, and how that God destroyed the army of Pharaoh. We talked about some of that as a part of a process and we're going to pick up the last two verses then in Chapter 14.

**Exodus 14:30—So the Eternal saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians, and the Eternal saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore.** So, in other words, it's something that He caused. He allowed this. He made this happen. I mean, He didn't allow it; He made it happen. Incredible, what took place. When this power took place as far as the waters coming back together there were those individuals, people a part of that army that were washed up on the shore dead.

**Thus, Israel saw the great work that the Eternal had done in Egypt; so the people feared the Eternal.** So, to see something like this on such a massive scale... Because when they were on the other side they feared for their lives. They saw Pharaoh's army coming and then this pillar of fire by night, pillar of cloud by day, massive as it had to be, because we tend to think of a small little pillar, or whatever. But this was massive because they couldn't enter into it, the Egyptians couldn't. Then a fire by night or of light... That's how they described it, fire, but it's something that lit up the entirety of the sky for the Israelites. Incredible!

Again, these things that we're able to follow that God gives as examples of things that He does for us on a spiritual plane, that there are things that we're supposed to see and understand how God's intervening in our lives and to be thankful for those things and not just brush them off as coincidental.

If you look at your life and understand things you've gone through in your life, you need to understand that God is leading you, guiding you, molding and fashioning you because He does this work, Him and His Son, of working with His people. Because we all go through different things and God molds and fashions us all for a different purpose, a different place. That's why

we're not to all be alike, like yellow pencils. We're to be different. We're to be unique, in that respect.

We're to be alike in the sense of being of one mind with God, of being in agreement with God and God's way of life, but we're unique, every one of us. We learn from that and we learn from that in the Church. God didn't draw people who are all alike, people you might walk up to and have that sense of knowing them or sense of wanting to know them or be friends with them.

Christ wasn't like that. That's one thing that's told about Christ. He wasn't that type of individual that someone would automatically look upon him and want to get to know him. Awesome, to understand that.

All of us, there are many of us, if it was times past and we weren't called and we didn't have what God has brought us together in the sense of a unity and an understanding of who we are, even if we lived in the same block together, we would never be friends. We would never be close together. We wouldn't choose that because we're so different.

Sometimes those differences in God's Church, my experience has been, it's been like sandpaper at times they're so different. Sometimes people can be so different that they have to work at that sandpaper issue because certain personalities can rub you the wrong way because you don't think that way, you don't function that way, and we can be harsh in judgment toward one another if we're not careful. Awesome!

God brings us into a family and we're to learn to love the family because that's learning how to love God. Something we're to learn. Because how we treat one another in reality is a proof of our mind toward God and our love to God. Because if we love everyone whom God calls, we love God in truth and spirit.

I wish we could drink that all in, what was just said, powerfully so, because it's something the Church hasn't fully understood in times past, hasn't really latched on to in every way in the sense of understanding, in the sense of motivation, that motivates us to change, that we see our weaknesses and we recognize this is about God's Family.

Now, if you judge things that way and you judge each other that way, we're talking about God's Family, those in whom God and Christ dwell. Not a small thing with God; how we treat them, how we think towards them, to the degree we love them, pray for them, want to see them succeed, don't harshly judge and criticize and condemn.

See, that's not my experience in God's Church, as a whole, in times past. Been a lot of criticisms, a lot of judgment, a lot of harshness, because we've had to mature through time. The more we mature through time and the longer you're in God's Church the more refined we should become and the more we should understand then that we are a family and think of each other in that regard as God's Family.

So, how should we treat others in God's Family? That tells a lot. It reveals a lot about our mind toward God, it really does, in a very powerful way.

So again here, incredible lessons to be learned as far as a way of life that God has called us to, a part of a plan of salvation that He has and the things that we see Him do in our lives that should be meaningful to each one of us because God has worked with us individually.

And if we really see those things, of how God's working with us, and we have this prayer life that we've established with God that's a personal one, and we've shared our lives, the most inner part of our being with God. Because He knows it all anyway, but He wants you to share that with Him because that has to do with your mind then and your thinking toward Him. As you're changing then God will work with that and mold and fashion us. But we should be able to see that and understand that.

We look at something like this of the Israelites going through the Red Sea and this beginning part of salvation and we're moved by that on a physical plane because we think of the power that was there to save Israel, a power that destroyed an entire nation of people. Because it destroyed their government. It destroyed their government. It destroyed their military. It destroyed their power. All the other nations around there heard about it quickly!

It wasn't something that happened in a corner. All the nations not only knew about it, they knew about it many, many decades later. Even when the children of Israel were going into the land that God was giving them, they all knew who they were! They knew they were out there! They remembered the stories of what happened to Pharaoh and his army, and to Egypt that was a great nation until that time and God brought them down.

And we're moved by that, and we should be, but we should individually and collectively, as far as a Body is concerned, be moved by what God has been doing in the Church, by what God has given us in the Church. Just the truths alone should be that which stirs us, moves us, and motivates us.

I was thinking this morning again about the scattered groups out there since the Apostasy, who are still waiting for the 1<sup>st</sup> Seal to be opened. They have no concept that there are Seven Trumpets that have already blown. Their events haven't happened yet, but they've already been blown, which is a matter of what they have to say. They've been announced and that's what God does. They can't understand those things because of what happened after the Apostasy and the sleep that's there.

You hurt for them because you wish they could hear. But the longer time has gone on the more steeped they are in that. They won't even acknowledge that they're a part of an apostasy. Yet even on a physical plane by intellect that should be fairly clear. They're still waiting for an apostasy because to them it hasn't happened. As a whole, for most out there, that are scattered, an apostasy hasn't taken place. What a horrible thing!

I look forward to the time that they're able to see that and address that in their lives so they can be free and embrace what God revealed to them a long, long time ago.

Those kinds of things should mean a great deal to each one of us. Those kinds of things should mean more to us because of a personal relationship we have with God and that we're blessed to be here to hear what God gives, that we're able to hear His truth. Because they can't. They're still waiting for the Apostasy. Why? Because they know they have to be of a certain size, 144,000. If you believe in those things, of not understanding, they have to be that large at least to be able to fulfill what they have always believed.

How blessed are you to understand that it's about 144,000 over 6,000 years? That's awesome!

So, those things are personal to us and they're greater than what God did when He led the children of Israel through the Red Sea. Greater. He's led us in a way that we haven't known. We wouldn't know, we wouldn't be here if it wasn't for the fact that God has a purpose for a very small remnant at the end of an age. If it wasn't for that and the fact that God's going to fulfill that and draw certain ones to fulfill that... That's the only reason we're here. We're not special above and beyond, if you were a part of that era that led up to the Apostasy, we're not special above and beyond, more talented than any of those who fell asleep. Because we fell asleep, and God had to awaken us. It's part of God's purpose.

It's like when we were called. Who are we that God would call us? But He did. So, you yield to that process. That is a very personal relationship with God that should be very moving and motivating to us and help us to grasp how blessed we are.

The children of Israel should have grasped very quickly how blessed they were that now they're on the other side of the Red Sea and the Egyptians aren't chasing them anymore and can't. But we're very physical carnal people and it doesn't take very long if you don't have water, all of a sudden to start murmuring and complaining and "Why did Moses lead us out here in the wilderness to die?"

It's an amazing thing how human nature is. And so, for us, we're blessed to see things on a spiritual plane and be moved and motivated by it.

Do those things move us? Because that's going to determine so much about your ability to persevere. Because we've had a smear of people, more who have gone since the Apostasy, who have come to the Church of God - PKG. We've had far more come and leave than who are remaining and that's the way it's been for so long. Ever since the Church was established - many are called, and few are chosen. Few persevere. Give into different pulls, different weaknesses, begin to drift, don't put God first, begin to desire something different than what God has placed before us, and because of that one can't grasp then what God has really given. Only in looking and focusing upon those things, thinking about them, meditating upon them from time to time, can we understand how blessed we really are and thank God.

**Thus Israel saw the great work which the Eternal had done in Egypt.** God's been working with us since the time He's called us, drawn us, leading us out of Egypt. We still dwell in that environment around us but we're not to be in it. We're to be separated from it in our thinking, in our minds.

**Israel saw the great work which the Eternal had done...so the people feared the Eternal.** And we should. It's not a matter of being afraid of. Now, they were, they had more of that kind of fear where they were afraid of God. That kind of power, they didn't grasp. Didn't last too long. At different times it wasn't long lasting. Only when something occurred that was on a big scale were they sobered once again. But it didn't take very long for a lot of this fear to dissipate.

But for every one of us we should have a mind that would fear to leave, to not persevere, to not hold fast to what God is giving us. That should be fearful. Yet every year people go by the wayside. It's already happened. Even more happened this past week that became very clear in someone's life. You're not going to continue with us. You're not going to be with us. You're not coming back. Sad. We have choices to make.

**And, it says, they believed the Eternal and His servant Moses.** To a point. Until they didn't have food and water like they wanted. They didn't have the things they wanted. Then they started murmuring and complaining against Moses and so forth. So, it's just, again, we know the story.

Even as it states here it talks about a particular time. It says here, "And the Eternal saved Israel that day." So, very unique. It's a quick event, in that respect, that happened as far as their being removed from Egypt and what took place with the army. But we go through a long process. That was a relatively quick thing that they went through on dry ground and came to the other side, and God destroyed the army.

But for us it's a long process. Salvation is a long process. That's why I love some of the scriptures here. We'll turn over to 2 Corinthians 5 because it speaks of here a day of salvation. It's for us now. This is our time of salvation.

We've had many, as I said, who have left since the Apostasy even, who have been with us in fellowship. Sometimes people don't grasp how serious it is to turn one's back on God to go and do something different. That's pretty bad judgment. Yet there are going to be those of those, because not necessarily all of them, but there will be of those whom God will resurrect in the last hundred years and have to go through human life once again, to make those choices. That will be their day of salvation because they didn't respond to the one that God offered them.

This is the time that God is working with us to redeem us. A lot of work goes into that. God's ever working. Christ is ever working in our lives. We don't really know that as a whole. Every day of your life God is there to work with you, Christ is there to work with you, ready to

respond to the things you pray about, ready to work with you, your mind, to work through things with you in your life.

It's not that everything happens immediately, but He works with you because it's about your mind. Because that's what He's saving. It's not your body He's going to save, it's your mind. That's what's being transformed and changed.

**2 Corinthians 5:17—Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, they are a new creation.** Beautiful expression here. We ought to be very moved by what God is saying here. We understand the creation didn't stop during creation week. It was only just barely getting started.

The creation that God intended, the greater creation is about His family. A lot of work has had to go into that. The last 6,000 years, a lot of work. Even molding and fashioning nations and things that happened with nations, events that happened in the world because God is working with His people.

Different things that happened to people in the Old Testament that you read about, God molded and fashioned and worked things out even with nations in order to work with His people, to have such an impact on His people, that certain responses were there. He worked with different leaders through time, raised them up for that very purpose because of what He was molding and fashioning in some of the different ones, prophets and so forth, that He worked with. Awesome!

But so often we don't see ourselves that way. We don't think we're that important. You are and that's hard for us to grasp. It's hard for us to grasp how important we are as a part of God's plan and God's purpose. The more we grasp that though the more thankful, the more grateful, the more excited we'll be, the more we'll desire to persevere, to do whatever it takes.

**Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, they are a new creation.** So, something is taking place. We know what that is. It's in here. It's in the mind. A creation is going on. Because that's the hardest thing for God to do. It's the greatest thing that God can do, create His own family.

As far as the universe, as far as anything physical, as far as any power that exists out there, He has full control over. But He's chosen not to have control over human beings. He has chosen to give us free moral agency to have our own choices in life and to be responsible for those choices, and that whatever choices we make we're going to reap the results of those choices. God has let for 6,000 years the world reap from its own choices. And how has that gone? Not too good.

Wars. Wars. Greed. Injustice. Abuses. It's always existed. It doesn't matter what government, what peoples it's been through 6,000 years, that's just the way it's been because human nature is selfish by nature. It doesn't strive to live by God's truth because it takes God's spirit to accomplish that. That's the only thing that can change that direction. We're almost there.

Again, thinking this morning, what an incredible thing to understand what we do. We're waiting for the event of the 1<sup>st</sup> Trumpet. A scattered Church is still looking for the 1<sup>st</sup> Seal to be opened. They don't realize all the Seals have already been opened, all Seven Seals.

That helps a lot. That has a lot to do with the sense of preparation, the sense of preparedness and where we are. We know this world is about to go into a third world war. I am dumbfounded by the news over this past year. Every month it just gets, as it were, more prophetic.

Reminds me of the scriptures that speak of "Who can help but prophecy?" And so, in the news when various things are told, that's what they're doing. They're saying, they're actually saying things that God said would come to pass. That's what that means when you read those verses back there in the Old Testament.

And just like (I should have brought the article), I think it was the air force, they have these war game scenarios that they run every once in a while, and one was against China and certain events that would take place. The reality of that was, which we told the whole world now, we lose. This nation loses by a real scenario that the military has put together of various events, that if they're done this way, we lose, powerfully so! Not a little bit, but powerfully so! Incredible! We tell the whole world this is our state. "You can conquer us. You can win. We can't win against you."

You know, God condemned Israel at different times for doing stupid things like that, you know, inviting different ones in to see their strength, and so forth. Today, we tell it to the whole world. That's not smart when it comes to a military. You don't do those kinds of things.

Even the government now acknowledges their navy is far ahead of ours now, their ships are far superior to ours now. There are some weapons out there that they're using that we don't have. And now, they have hypersonic in Russia and China, missiles that we can't stop, that we can't blow out of the sky. They're too fast. We have nothing. So, we tell the world this is your time!

That's exactly what the world had to come to because this is the first nation to fall. That's what God says is going to happen. Because He's the one who raised up this nation and He's the one that's going to bring it down. It was a fulfillment of a promise that He made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, that at the very end, the end-time, one nation that would be the greatest nation the world has ever known, the most powerful nation the world has ever known.

All the riches that God gave, we as human beings tend to take it to ourselves. The reality is, no, God gave it, just like He gave the promised land that they went into, gave them that wealth. This far more for the end-time to fulfill the things that needed to be fulfilled. Incredible.

**If anyone be in Christ, they are a new creation.** If we're faithful, persevere, and desire to dwell in the Body of Christ (that's what it's talking about), and we want God the Father and Christ to dwell in us because we know that without God's holy spirit we can't fight the battles we have, we can't see things on a spiritual plane, we can't even hold on to the truth except

that God bless us to hold on to it, and that has to do then with our choice of a relationship in prayer and so forth with God.

To persevere. That means you've got to fight your own carnal human nature. You've got to fight. It's a battle. That's why so many things are talked about in the New Testament about wars and fighting and armor, and all the other things that are associated, conquering, overcoming. That word "to overcome" is a word that means "to conquer" in the Greek. It has to do with war.

**Old things have passed away; Look, all things have become new.** The closer we get to the end of this age the more true this becomes. **Now all things are of God who has...** Everything is God's! And primarily, His purpose of what He's doing, even more so if we grasp what God is creating.

**...who has reconciled.** Now, this is a compound word that means "to change accordingly." "Who has reconciled," "to change accordingly." According to what? According to what God is molding and fashioning in us, to transform the mind so we can be different, a new creation, as we just read.

**...who has reconciled us unto Himself.** That's what He's doing, bringing us to Him through this incredible lifelong process that we live. **...through Joshua the Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself.** So again, think of the things we see and grasp and know.

The Word of God was made flesh. The mind, which is about the revelatory thought. That word has to do with the revelatory thought, the thinking of God, the mind of God, became flesh. That mind of God in His Son. There are things about that that we will have the opportunity to learn once we're resurrected as spirit beings in God's Family. There are those things that won't even be able to be grasped and comprehended fully until that happens.

Some things can be told to physical human beings, but to see and grasp those things on a spiritual plane for what they are? We have to be spirit. That's what it's going to take to come to more fully grasp what it meant and what it means that the Word of God was made flesh. That's why as a child, twelve years old, at the Feast of Tabernacles he was able to go in, quote various scriptures and dumbfound the scholars who were there, to dumbfound the leaders of the different religions.

I say different because the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and different one who didn't agree with each other. They were there but they were dumbfounded at a twelve-year-old who was able to get up and expound on those things, of things that they were in awe of what he had to say. Awesome! It's because of that mind he had.

Now, that was in him and he grew as a human being, but that uniqueness of that oneness and things he knew, he just knew them because it was of God, the mind of God, the being of God. Awesome!

Anyway, didn't mean to go in that direction, but to understand who our Passover is, to understand who our elder brother is, is an incredible thing. One who did not exist until he was born of Mary. He came into existence, the Word of God made flesh, and he began to grow, and his mind and his thinking and his experiences. There is so much there.

Then, finally, the final 3½ years of his ministry and he knew what his job was, he knew what his commission was - something we're about to observe - to die as our Passover.

He even told the disciples ahead of time, but they didn't understand what he was saying, and they didn't understand what he was saying about "destroy this temple and in three days I'll raise it up." They didn't understand the things he was telling others, that he was talking about the life, because of what he's lived that he has to die first.

That's why I love that story we read first early on here, about how Peter and that other disciple, that they were walking back from the tomb and had heard these things about what Mary had said, and so forth, and they were walking back to an area to reside that night. Christ just came to them and walked up to them and started talking to them. "What is this you're so down about, mournful about?" Basically, they ask him, "Where have you been? You must have just arrived," basically, "because Jerusalem, this whole area, everyone knows what has taken place here, and so many people who believed that he was the Messiah, the Christ." They didn't grasp all that, what that meant.

Then he went through all the scriptures with them telling them about "Wasn't it needful that the Messiah first die?" He went through those scriptures showing that it wasn't just about the Messiah coming to reign, but that he had to die, he had to suffer.

When you go through the scriptures in Isaiah, it tells about how much he had to suffer, that he had to be beaten so much that he couldn't even be recognized, the skin ripped off his face, off his body with the kind of cat-o-nine-tails they used for beating him. He wasn't even recognizable as Joshua.

And so, he went through the very scriptures, and they didn't know who he was. God had blocked that from their minds, their ability to recognize. Yet he looked just like Joshua, he was Joshua in appearance. But they couldn't see it. Then he revealed himself, who he was, when he was breaking bread with them. Awesome! God opened up their minds and let them see him. Incredibly moving stories.

But what an incredible thing that the world, so many have never understood that the Messiah, and those who have beliefs and ideas about a Messiah, that he had to come first as a Passover and die. But he's still coming as the Messiah! That's what the world doesn't grasp. Even Judaism has lost so many of those things, so many within Judaism. He's coming to be a ruler in God's Kingdom over this earth for one thousand years. Incredible!

That's why I marvel at those things when people talk about certain parts of Revelation and they won't talk about a second death that's very clear when you start reading Revelation 20 and it

talks about a second death. How can you die a second time unless you live twice in a physical body? But they can't deal with that because they don't understand God's plan and purpose. One day they will.

Again here, **Now all things are of God who has reconciled us to Himself through Joshua the Christ as Passover**, and that's where the process begins, **and has given us the ministry of reconciliation**, what we have to go through, how we have to persevere on a journey that God has given us, that doesn't happen in a week or two weeks after baptism, but it takes a lifetime to go through making choices and decisions, to be desirous of God's way of life and to be willing to fight against self and everything else around us to whatever it takes.

**...and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them.** So, an awesome thing that was revealed, of why Christ had to die. The reason, the purpose of all those things that have been revealed throughout scripture is that his blood had to be spilled to the earth in order to be forgiven of sin but the purpose of all that, of being forgiven of sin, is so that God can dwell in us and we can dwell in God. Awesome! This is all part of the word of reconciliation that it's talking about here.

**Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ.** In other words, our lives should reflect. Doesn't matter where we live in the world, our lives should reflect. Doesn't matter in comparison to whatever religion might be out there, our lives should reflect something different.

We are unique. We should stand out as being different because of what we're living. So, it begins with the Sabbath, the Holy Days, and on and on it goes, about a different way of thinking, about a different lifestyle. Friends and family, coworkers, different people, you don't hide this from them. They begin to see you're different. Sometimes they like certain results and most often they don't, they don't like what you believe as a whole. One day they will. But we're still supposed to live it, ambassadors for Christ.

**...as though God were pleading through us, we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.** When that process begins there is this plea here, as it were. "We implore you on Christ's behalf." Christ is in heaven and has been there for the last 2,000 years at the right hand of God Almighty. All power has been given to him, in essence. That's what that means.

All power in heaven and earth has been given to Christ. He's returning as the King of kings though all power has still been given to him already. That's what it means to be at the right hand of God Almighty. Then he comes and establishes that government and that rule over the world for 1,100 years. Then when everything has been reconciled to God, Paul makes clear in Corinthians, that that returns to God.

All power is God's anyway, and he does God's will, but the reality is he has that responsibility and that power to accomplish everything that needs to be accomplished until all their enemies are made their footstool. Beautiful scriptures.

**We implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.** God has a process whereby He teaches and guides and directs us, and has for the past 2,000 years through the Church, through the ministry, and implores us, pleads with us, cries out to us, encourages us, admonishes us, corrects us, whatever it takes that God's spirit leads us in to give to the Church because God desires to do a great work in us to change us, to transform us, a new creation that's working within us until we become born into His family.

**For He has made us/brought forth sin on behalf of us,** as we've gone through these verses before. In other words, **for our sake.** So, he's brought forth sin to the forefront to be dealt with. The New Testament reveals how it's dealt with. Beautiful. It starts with Passover, what we're getting ready to observe very soon now.

**Verse 21,** again, **For He has made/brought forth sin on behalf of us,** as the scripture should be translated here. Some of these are very poor translations sometimes because they don't understand God's purpose and God's plan and what He's doing, and so, they put it in different words.

You know, when you translate something it's very unique. We learned this with some of the books that went out there, when they went into different languages, that you can't try to translate something by words. In other words, this is what this word means in Greek and you put this word in then in your particular language. Because the reality is you have to understand what that definition is there, how it's used in other parts of whether it be literature or society at that time, because it may take other words to express something that was being said whether it be in Greek or Hebrew.

We found that a lot in translating, that you might have a certain word or a certain phrase, but you've got to have a whole sentence to explain it in your language. It's not just an automatic if you just could, what is it, some of these translator things you can have that you can speak into and it gives the words back. That doesn't do it.

That's what we have in the Bible. We have a lot of words that have been translated, and sometimes by words, but they also have translated their thoughts because they haven't understood fully God's plan and they still put in their own thoughts. That's over and over again in scripture.

But anyway, an incredible thing to understand. A good thing to understand that it's the mind and it's the thought of what's being conveyed. That has to be conveyed properly according to God's mind, according to God's purpose, according to God's will and what He's doing, and if you don't know it you can't translate it properly. That's why the Bible is like it is.

That's why you have words like "hell," and people have these ideas through medieval times of this place somewhere maybe in the center of the earth or somewhere where little things are running around with these little really hot pitchforks and they're shoving them in the butts of people as they're running around and torturing people. There is all this fire because people are suffering. They have these Dante's Inferno, this weird, weird...

I'll tell you, when we went through the Vatican, the pictures, the paintings, they're horrible, horrifying! A lot of it's just like I really wish I hadn't come in here because these images of things. They believe about these things through time, that this is their concept of hell or of God. You think, this is horrifying for human minds to be held to such ideas.

But anyway, they don't understand that the word simply means "a hole in the ground." When people die, they go to hades. That's right. And they go to gehenna. Well, won't talk about that. I shouldn't have said that. They go to hades or they go to sheol, sheol in the Old Testament. Both mean a hole in the ground, basically. It's talking about a grave.

What an awesome thing that you understand those things, simple little things. Your mind isn't confused because of them. You're able to read the Bible and know exactly what it means.

So, in other words, what we just read in Corinthians, he paid the price for sin. It's through Christ that we're able to be redeemed from sin. That's what the Passover pictures. I don't care how many times we observe it we'd better never get dull of hearing it and thinking about what it means to us personally. Because that means we can sit in a Passover services, listen to all those scriptures that we've heard every year since we've been called, and if we're not careful—because this has happened to a lot of people through time in the Church—we become familiar with them and they don't move anymore.

The only reason they don't move one anymore is if we're letting down spiritually and not persevering in the way God tells us to. Because there are ways to persevere and there are ways to let up and to coast and to do other things that are exceedingly dangerous. Many have gone by the wayside because of that.

So, it's always good to ask God to stir you up in His spirit, to be excited by His word, to be moved and motivated by the things He gives, to see the depth of that which is spiritual that should stir and move us, and if we feel we're lacking that kind of excitement and inspiration from God, God will give it to us if we cry out for it and ask Him for it. Because that reveals whether or not we're hungry and thirsty. We'll come to that later in the sermon series here.

**2 Corinthians 6:1.** These verses just continue on in the next chapter, in their content, in other words. Man put chapters and verses in there, but the thought still continues on. **We then, as coworkers together**, in other words, with God. We have choices to make as to whether or not we're going to yield to the process, whether or not we're going to respond to the process of what He guides and directs and leads us in, in the way that He wants us to live our lives.

**We then, as coworkers together, or workers together, also plead with you...** Again, this word, it's just like saying to implore you, **not to receive the grace of God in vain.** We can read through something like this and it maybe doesn't move us. But it needs to.

Because we've had thousands and thousands and thousands of people over the past 2,000 years in God's true Church who have heard the same – well, not all the same things you have but have heard the truth, have been called by God, who have received of His holy spirit, and have made other choices and gone other ways, have let down their prayer life, have let down in their thinking toward God and their desire for God and have decided that they want to do other things that God says we shouldn't do.

**For He declares, In an acceptable time I have heard you, and in the day of salvation I have helped you.** So, this is about us. This is about every person who reads this that's in God's Church at any moment in time, whenever that is. That if our minds are opened up to understand what we're reading, and we know what God is saying, we're incredibly blessed and this is our time.

But as so many have, we can give it up, and only by the mercy of God will we have another time later on to continue in it or have another go at it, as it were, in the Great White Throne. That's why I love the scriptures that talk about there is going to be that time when there is going to be of God's people—because that's who it's talking to—weeping and gnashing of teeth because they didn't live at that time when they were called what they were given opportunity to do.

So, this is a time that God has given us as we enter into a particular season of the year, to examine ourselves, to look at ourselves. Because that's what it's about. We have to look at ourselves. We have to be honest with God and ask God to help us even see the things that aren't clear to us, the things that are hidden from us yet that we can't yet see. Then to give us the mind, the desire to conquer and overcome whatever those things are that we're weak in.

**So, now is the accepted time. Listen, as it is saying here, now is the day of salvation.** Powerful! It should ring out in our minds.

Go back to Exodus, Exodus 15. So again, as it was previously stated, we are to clearly see God working to redeem us, something that we should be aware of. Only you can do this in your relationship with God and how things have happened in your life, whether it be over the past year or ever since the day that you went under the water and what you've done in your life and how you've responded to God at various times, good and bad, and to learn from that and to desire to grow more above and beyond where we are now.

God has given us that ability to see, but we have to ask Him for help to be able to see it clearly. Because there is that relationship we should have, and we should be able to see it and be thankful for it.

**Exodus 15:1—Then Moses and the children of Israel sang this song to the Eternal.** Now they've come through, they're on the other side, they've seen the nation of Egypt destroyed, as it were, it's military, it's power, it's might, no longer a great nation at all. They are keenly aware of this and they see what God has done. There is this song then that they were given, that they came to embrace, and this is what it's speaking of here that is written.

**...the children of Israel sang this song to the Eternal, and sang, saying, I will sing to the Eternal, for He has triumphed gloriously!** Now, when we read something like this, we shouldn't just think about what God did back then and what God has done through time. Because God has done great things with a nation, a physical nation of Israel. But that's not what He's saving. He's not saving a physical nation. He's saving a spiritual one.

How blessed are we to understand that? That God's Church is referred to - the Israel of God, the Church of God, Mount Zion, Jerusalem, when it's all said and done. That's God's desire, to be a part of His family.

"I will sing to the Eternal." Do we? I'm not talking about singing physical words. No, you can sing and you can go through some of those songs at times, and hopefully, we have some of those in our mind. Because from time to time those are awesome things just to go through and remind ourselves of that we're not able to have as a regular part of a service anymore.

But again, it's more than that which is physical in speaking in song before God. It's a matter of what's in the mind and what's in the heart, that we rejoice. That's what it's talking about. It's about a rejoicing before God. It's either true in our lives or it isn't. We should be able to rejoice in what God is doing. We should be able to rejoice about what God is doing in our lives, what He's given to us as a people before God's Kingdom is established, of things that we see and grasp and understand that no one before us has ever seen.

I ache somewhat inside because I don't feel that we grasp that, the reality of what that means. Moses did not know what you know. Paul, Peter, James, John didn't know what you know, and yet they wrote much after the time of Christ, wrote scripture that we're blessed to have to this day. The entire book of Revelation that John wrote, do you think he understood what it was about? Not at all. But he wrote it as a prophet. God gave it to him on the Isle of Patmos to write. But he didn't know what those things meant.

Things that were to be taking place as some of the first things revealed in Revelation have to do with Church eras, of which he was in the first, Ephesus. The very first era of God's Church. Then there were six more to follow through time, Thyatira being the longest, over a thousand years.

Then to understand what happened when the printing press came along during the time of Sardis and all of a sudden people weren't spoken to by priests who spoke in a tongue that they didn't grasp nor understand (Latin). They didn't understand many of the scriptures that were

there, and they were told, basically, what supposedly was being said in scripture. Basically, they were prisoner to what they were told.

Now different ones were able to have a book written in their own language! Written in German. Written in Dutch. Written in English. That began to spread in the world when the printing press came along, and because of that, God's Church suffered mightily through that period of time. Because now there was a different mindset that began to grow in the world, a freedom from what they were held captive to as far as a great church was concerned. Incredible, what took place.

God's small Church through time almost came to a point of non-existence because it was dying. Three basic truths left. Awesome, to understand these things.

Then Philadelphia, time that God raised up an apostle, Herbert Armstrong. Incredible, what took place. Had a magazine, religious in nature, over eight million copies a month going out in many languages throughout the world. The largest publication the world had ever known. Far greater than *Time Magazine*, which at that time was the largest as far as on a secular basis is concerned. Yet *The Plain Truth* went into far more languages in far greater numbers.

Radio broadcasts all over. Television, far bigger than any other religious organization on earth. But who knew about it? Who acknowledged it as a whole, as far as the world is concerned? The things we have lived through.

Then Laodicea after Herbert Armstrong died. The last era of God's Church. A Church that would become lukewarm, as Revelation stated. John didn't know any of those. He didn't know about what was going to happen. He didn't know what was going to happen to the Church. Even we, as we were living through Philadelphia didn't know what that fully meant. At a time, thinking that maybe Laodicea and Philadelphia would be all the way to the end and not realizing, no, an era is an era and when one ends the other begins.

Then it talks about then an entire Church that was going to be spewed out of God's mouth, separated from the presence of God? We didn't even know what that meant. John didn't know what he wrote.

So, how much have we been given, especially since the Apostasy? To understand that Christ has not eternally existed is an incredible blessing. Because the world was told an incredible lie, that God is three and somehow one. They acknowledge it's confusing and we can't really understand it. Well, yeah, it's confusing because it's a lie.

Thank God He revealed to Herbert Armstrong that there was no such thing as a trinity, that there was no such thing a "Holy Spirit," because even that was misquoted, has been misapplied in scripture and they called it the "Holy Ghost" to try to make it a being! And you're not fooled by those. You know what it is. You know it's the power of God's mind, His power to convey to the human mind His will, His purpose, His mind, His thinking. That's what Christ was made; the Word of God made flesh. Awesome!

Sometimes it's so good for us to go back through the things we do know. That's why I think it's very hard for us. When you live something sometimes and we see ourselves scattered as we are, we're not important in this world. We're puny!

I won't go into what people think and what they even thought of Worldwide when it was much, much larger. Because it was still puny when it was only up to about 100,000 baptized members worldwide. It was like other churches that have millions, like, "You're a cult. You're too small. You're weird. You're doing some weird things. You have some weird beliefs." No, it was the truth. Now we're much smaller, so how much weirder would we be?

But if we see the truth and we know the truth what an awesome thing. But we need to value that and recognize how blessed we are. And if we don't have that then how can we have this kind of rejoicing inside of us in a response to God? If you see that you are incredibly blessed? If instead you see the hardships you have in your physical life, of maybe jobs or relationships or family or other things and that weighs you down in your life and you feel pressed and you feel this pressure of physical things all around you in life and they weight you down, you can lose sight of what's really valuable, that there are things that so exceed the price of any of that, the cost, the whatever you want to look at. How blessed are we?

**So then the children of Israel sang this song to the Eternal, saying, I will sing to the Eternal, for He has triumphed gloriously!** Are we in life, in what we're able to conquer and overcome, the changes that prayerfully we've been seeing in our lives over time?

I'll tell you what. I hope that as we have focused more as a Church on that number one, who should be number one, if that's your number one. Because it's my number one - that God Almighty is one, number one in my life. Anything else that I raise up against what God has told me or tells us to live, that's idolatry. It's against God and we don't want that.

Anything else that follows that, the number two's, three's, four, whatever it is we have our greatest weaknesses in in life that we know, that we're aware of. And if they happen, you know what? Number one is broken because we raise up idolatry. Every time we sin in our number two or weakness in, in number three. You know what I'm talking about.

I hope that as you focused on those things you've seen changes, because that'll tell as to whether or not we're working together with God to conquer and overcome. Because that's what this has been all about that we're talking about here. Together with God, as workers together with God in what He's given us to work upon. What has He given you to work on? I know what He's given me to work on. This big pile.

So, when Mr. Armstrong used to talk about what he felt like on a spiritual plane as far as his mind was concerned, a burned-out rusted hulk of a vehicle. I know he believed that with all of his being. Because that's what we are without God. Because we're weak as human beings, we have sin as human beings. And so, we cry out to God regularly, "Forgive me!" Because you know that if you don't do that and you don't repent of your sins that God won't dwell in you.

That's why Christ died, is so that God the Father and Christ could dwell in us. That'll reveal then whether or not we're able to really rejoice before God. We're forgiven. We're blessed. We have incredible, awesome things before us no matter what we go through in the next whatever period of time it is until Christ returns.

So, how far away is the beginning of that great war? Something we really can't grasp and comprehend, how horrifying it's going to be. But we've been prepared for it for a long, long time up here in the mind. That's where you have to deal with it.

**The horse and the rider He has thrown into the sea!** Do you see things that happen in your life, where God's intervened for you, given you favor over certain things, and you realize what you'd prayed about been conquered? Something has happened perhaps in family or a job or whatever it might be, and something that you'd gone through at a particular period of time?

I hope that's happened to you. It's happened to me where I had one occasion I remember where it was a year later and finally thought, "It's not there anymore, that trial that was coming at me, whatever. God has intervened." Incredible! Things that God had done for us. We have to be able to see those things because it's our prayer. Then if we see that there are things that have happened in our life, not coincidental?

**The horse and his rider He has thrown into the sea! The Eternal is my strength and song.** So, how can I give that? It's what we all experience. When we read through something like this how does it affect us? Is it our strength, what God gives to us in the mind? I cannot read through various scriptures without having this in my mind, "my strength," "my song," "my rejoicing in what He has given." Because we see it. It's not a mystery to us. And yet, to the world and to those who are scattered in the Church after the Apostasy, they can't see it yet.

We're able to rejoice in what God has given us now that we can see. When you read things like this it should stir us up in spirit.

That's why I think about at times the Passover service itself. Because it's the same every year. As a whole, the scriptures we go through are the same because God desires that we focus on His Son and the purpose he came as our Passover every year, of what it means, of what he did and what we're to learn from that - to love God's way means sacrifice. You have to sacrifice self. You have to sacrifice your will. It's not an easy thing to do. A greater desire for others takes God's help.

**The Eternal is my strength and song, He has become my salvation. He is my God, and I will praise Him.** It took me (I told the Church this before), because of my life and growing up, took me a long time to be able to tell God "I love You." It wasn't until I was ordained that I was able to say it.

We come out of different scarring in our lives, we come through different trials in our lives, and we keep moving forward and we keep fighting, and God blesses us. It's incredible. He

blesses us in developing a relationship that we come to know is true and alive and powerful. What an awesome thing.

I couldn't say it before that because it had to be true and real in every way. You think, "Why would God have ordained you? All that time and you didn't tell God you loved Him." Well, that's personal for me in a very big way. Shows me the extent of God's mercy, God's patience, God's love, and God's knowing.

We all have those things in our lives that are unique to us in things that God does, and it shows His power to deliver us. What a beautiful thing. We're able to rejoice in Him more and more and more, to be able to honestly and truthfully look out, or wherever you are, maybe at a Feast of Tabernacles, and say, "I love every one that is here. I hold nothing against anyone. I do not judge anyone. We are a family. We're God's Family." That comes from God.

There is a lot of prejudice in this world, a lot of prejudice. And you know what? People can't change it. People try; they want to. Different stages of life that people might think they're in or are in, whatever judgments that people use, things of race and so forth, things of sex, male, female, incredible prejudices exist. It shows the mind of human beings and what we're like.

But that can't ever be cleaned up. That can't ever be made right until self is made right by God's spirit. That's what God has given to us. What an awesome thing to grab hold of, to love, to be thankful for, to know in your heart and mind that you're being healed and you don't have these prejudices in your heart and in your mind. Because they exist all over the world, but they shouldn't exist in your heart and your mind toward others

**He has become my salvation. He is my God, and I will praise Him. Verse 6—Your right hand, O Eternal, has become glorious in power; Your right hand, O Eternal, has dashed the enemy in pieces.** So, we should see the things that God gives us victory in, the things that God gives us help in.

I think about this period of fighting on number two and three, and I'm incredibly encouraged by it. Because of a stronger focus we have that ability to grow that much more. And so many have.

**Verse 7—In the greatness of Your excellence...** That alone, it's hard for us to grasp the excellence of God, the perfection, the beauty. There is so much we don't even grasp yet.

**In the greatness of Your excellence, You have overthrown those who have risen against You.** Think what God has done through time and what He said He's going to do in the future.

I look forward to the time that one being is no longer going to exist, one being alone who has wreaked havoc in God's purpose in the angelic realm and then upon mankind as soon as he was created, right there in the garden deceiving the first two human beings, fighting against God's purpose and God's desire for mankind.

But it was part of God's purpose to allow that to happen. We understand that. All for the purpose that no one in God's Family will ever be allowed to have that kind of vile, selfish, evil

mind. But what a blessing to know that he's not going to be able to bother anyone during the one thousand years, nor during most of that one hundred years, that the world is not going to have this presence around anymore, and those who are with him, those demonic beings that could be into the millions and millions that we don't know how many there are, one-third of the angelic realm who rebelled against God with Lucifer, who became Satan, a real being.

**In the greatness of Your excellence You have overthrown those who have risen against You.** That's why I think of different scriptures that talk about, if we grasp it, who can fight against God's purpose being worked out in anyone's live within the Church? They can't. Paul made it pretty clear, different ones, Peter talked about some of those kinds of things. Different ones made it very clear, what's the worst anybody can do to you? Your life. But your life is in God's hands. Which one is greater?

**You sent forth Your wrath,** which is "the execution of judgment," not wrath like man thinks of wrath, that God is a vengeful God, or a God filled with anger, that gets so riled up He turns red hot, type of thing - human emotions that He doesn't have. He executes judgment, and it is a wrath, in that respect, as far as mankind's judgment is concerned, because the execution of judgment comes upon man in a wrathful way because it's destructive, it's powerful.

God destroyed the world by flood at one time except for a few, one family. He's getting ready to let the world enter into a world war, it says, is going to destroy one-third of all life, candidly, just by what happens by one of the Trumpets, the 6<sup>th</sup> one. Just by the 6<sup>th</sup> Trumpet. That doesn't include all the numbers that are going to die before that, but that's the maximum at one point in time that's going to be there, that's going to be the most by what they do.

China and Russia. We already know who they are, the main culprits of what takes place in a world war. And so, it's the execution of God's judgment that God is allowing mankind to come up to that brink and then He says no more...no more, and He sends His Son and 144,000 to stop that war. It says He's going to destroy those who are destroying the earth. How many will that be?

**...it has consumed them like stubble. Verse 9—The enemy said, I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil.** I think of different ones. I think of whether it be the Church or different ones in the Church. I think of through time the different ones who have gone through various things that they've been pursued, even to their lives being taken.

**The enemy said, I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil.** People that want things their own way. They don't want anything that interferes with what they believe, with what they want to accomplish, what they want to do.

**Yet my life shall be fulfilled upon them.** God gives us victory in His time. **I will draw my sword; my hand shall destroy them.** So, everything is a matter of God's timing. That's where we are at the end of an age. What a horrible thing that the world has to go through what it does in order for God's Kingdom to become established, finally, on this earth.

**Chapter 15:13—You in Your mercy have led forth the people whom You have redeemed.** So, very physical what happened to them. Very spiritual for us. He's leading us. He continues to lead us. He continues to work with us. We have to make the choice to continue to hold on to, to persevere in this way of life.

**You have guided them in Your strength to Your holy habitation.** That wasn't Israel. That's us. That's God's Church. That's God's people through the past 6,000 years. That's what God has been accomplishing and doing in those He's molding and fashioning. That's what this is about.

**You have guided them in Your strength...** It's God Almighty that reveals the way, the way to change, the way to a new life, the way to becoming different, not being selfish by nature, which we all are as physical human beings, but to become something new and different, unselfish, loving, caring, giving, righteously so, justly so, desiring what is best for others. Not judging and condemning others. Not being prejudice in our thinking, whatever that might be, toward others.

**You have guided them in Your strength.** So, it's God Almighty that's accomplishing all these things and all that's in the life of those whom He's ever called. ...**to Your holy habitation.** Where is that? It's in His people. It's in His people until they become a part of His family, and then He dwells in them forever. Awesome, the things that God has given to us.

I'm going to stop there today. But again, we're getting close to Passover here and just a reminder to people again here, how we're to observe it a little differently this year. So, what do we have? One more week, Sabbath Service, and then after that Passover? So, it's coming fast.

Is that right? Two? Oh, I keep thinking about Australia and New Zealand and Europe and them being a week behind. It's last week it was two weeks for them. This week it's one week for them, so, it's two weeks for us? Okay, I think I got it.

It's coming fast. It's amazing how fast things take place anymore.