

Today we are continuing in the series *Our Journey of Perseverance* with this being *Part 3*.

We ended last week while covering some of what is contained in the song sung by the Israelites after God had delivered them out of Egypt. And of course, this time of year is about being delivered out of Egypt. It's about a process whereby God has called us, given us opportunity through our Passover, and so we see all those things that happened to them on a physical plane that we're to learn on a spiritual plane.

For those who are hearing this sermon now there will be those in Australia, New Zealand, Europe, and so forth, different areas of the world who will be listening next week on the Sabbath, and it's Passover day, it's not the High Day yet. And then Johnny will be giving the first sermon on the High Day, and for all of you in those locations then you'll be able to hear that sermon then on the Last Day of Unleavened Bread.

So, this series here then that I've been giving is very much about this period of time. It's about Passover. It's about Unleavened Bread. It's about this journey that God has blessed us with to begin a journey out of sin, which Egypt is all about being delivered out of sin.

So again, this song here was sung by the Israelites then when they were on the other side of the Red Sea there after having been delivered by God, and all the things that took over. To think of the incredible things that God has been revealing to us on a stronger plane, that there are things that God reveals at different times, has been revealing at different times, I should say, over the past 6,000 years. It's a progressive revelation.

That's an awesome thing to grasp and comprehend, to realize that there are those in time, when you talk about Abraham, he didn't know the things that God delivered to Moses. There were a few things about God's law that God gave to him, but as far as a codified law that we have today, Holy Days, there were things that just weren't given.

Now, how much God gave them and what they were to observe at different times, it's not recorded. But what is recorded is the first Passover. That was something that hadn't been done. This was a beginning of a process whereby God was going to use that first Passover on a physical plane to teach lessons on a spiritual plane, which are incredibly powerful and mighty.

You think, that's a long, long time after the first two people were put on this earth. They didn't know about Passover. They didn't observe Passover. There was nothing to relate to a Passover.

Now it began because God was going to reveal more preparing for a period of time that was going to follow. Still a long, long, hundreds and hundreds of years away still, of when the Passover would come to the earth and spill his blood to the earth for mankind, to deliver us from spiritual Egypt.

So again, incredible, the things that God has revealed and how He's chosen to do that over time, and why indeed He worked with individuals on an individual plane, as a whole, for the first 4,000 years until the Church began to be established after Christ's death on that first Pentecost. Then the Church was raised up and now hundreds and even thousands of people in the Church could be worked with by God in an incredible way, in an organized fashion, unique because it hadn't been done like that before.

So again, all this that continues to be revealed. I think of the time we live in and how much we've been given. We've been given more than any people who have ever lived on earth, save Joshua. That's another story. But I'm talking about whose mothers and fathers, human.

So, anyway, it's an incredible process here this time of year, the things that God gives to us, things that He wants us to be excited about, never to lose that passion, that desire, that excitement, that that should stir us up when we think about God's Holy Days and what they mean for us, what they mean as a matter of salvation.

Because after hearing something year after year after year, which happened in Laodicea, people felt they knew it all. And when you think you know it all, when you think there is no more to learn, in that respect, and you have gone through everything that's in the past, you begin to wane, you begin to let down, you begin to drift and still have that attitude and spirit there is no more to learn. What a horrible state!

And yet that's what happened. People began to become complacent and lukewarm. You think, how can that be? Well, that's what happened in that kind of scenario with human beings who are selfish by nature and we think we've heard things over and over again. That's the danger of it.

Don't allow yourself to ever be in that state where you think you've learned it all, where, as an example, Passover service itself is almost exactly identical year after year. Sometimes a few more scriptures, sometimes a little less. But the same areas of scripture, as a whole, that are given to us. And if we're not careful, we can be in a mindset of becoming a little tired, a little bored even while listening to the service.

I'm telling you that has happened. Not just a little, but a lot in God's Church, where a person because they've heard this begins to be a little tired. It's at nighttime, it's after sundown, and you're fighting against that. Well, you need to fight against that if it's a physical thing, but don't let it interfere with a message that is being given year after year after year that is basically the same. Because there are things that God wants us to think about in those conditions and He wants us to think about those situations and what it means to us, and to be stirred by that and to be thankful for that. So again, things we want to make sure we're doing that honor God.

Let's pick up where we left off in Exodus 15:13. This was in the end of *Part 2* last week. Again, this song that they sang, this excitement they had.

Now, you have to understand, too, what they sang isn't something that someone just sat down and began to think about, "Well, look at what happened to us. Let's put this together now." Like some people might write a country western song or some other song and they're kind of moved by something and so they want to write something about it. These are inspired. God is a part of this.

Things that are written in scripture for us that God has recorded for us are for a purpose. They're there to learn from, and these things are there for a purpose. It wasn't just some song that they came up with on their own. God helped them. God blessed them, inspired them in that which they came together with.

Again, probably give a sermon on that. But incredible how God inspires, moves, and motivates us to see and know and understand things when He does. So, this song, this portion of it.

Exodus 15:13—You in Your mercy have led forth the people whom You have redeemed. So again, Passover, Unleavened Bread very much about being redeemed. You have guided them in Your strength to Your holy habitation. What an inspiring thing to understand what that means.

You think, if you look at it just physically and the song physically, and you think of the journey they had physically, and you recognize the things of perseverance that they had to apply in their lives and learn... They didn't really have a whole lot of choice for that forty years, but it took perseverance to do various things, to keep at it. What are you going to do otherwise?

With this it's a lot different because we have choices to make in the length of time we're part of the Body of Christ. We have choices and decisions to make. That kind of perseverance requires battle. It requires a fight. It requires that we pour our lives into it and understand the importance of what we're doing and why we're doing it.

So again, **You have guided them in Your strength...** In other words, "You did this!" They had to make choices of walking through the Red Sea. Not a hard choice when you have Pharaoh and the army back there, so they went through. For us, we have to make choices all along the way and there are hard choices to make. But to understand the strength to be able to do these things, the knowledge we have, the insight we have, the knowing that we have, God has given that to us. He makes it totally possible for us to make this journey.

To know the truth requires the strength, the mind, the power of God that He shares with us in our minds, and we're incredibly blessed because of that then. This is a part of what this is talking about. "You have guided them." God guides us. He leads us. He works with us every Sabbath, every Holy Day, every Passover. He's guiding us, He's leading us along this journey that we're on and gives us corrective courses at times, inspires us at times, all the things that He does to stir us, to help transform this thinking, this mind.

And so, "You have guided them in Your strength." In other words, "You have done this. You have provided this means of being able to be redeemed, of being able to be saved, of being able to

come out of Egypt and delivered from Egypt and that oppressive power that they had.” This is acknowledged, inspired by God to say these things, to sing these things.

...to **Your holy habitation**. Not by accident this was given. What do you mean, “to Your holy habitation?” What did they know? What did they know about a holy habitation of God? Where God dwells? What did that mean to them? They were inspired to say this, to sing this. They didn’t get it. They didn’t know where they were going. They hadn’t been given the 10 Commandments. They hadn’t been given, they hadn’t gone to Mount Sinai yet and had all these things take place before them.

They were on a journey to go there and in a short time they were going to be there. They didn’t think of that place because they didn’t know where they were going as God’s holy habitation. Or the promised land. Is that God’s holy habitation?

So again here, there are things that God has inspired to be sung that they were inspired and moved and motivated by that had a certain kind of meaning to them on a very physical and limited plane, very limited, but they were moved to do it. God can move people in a very powerful way through His spirit.

“You have guided them in Your strength to Your holy...” It’s about us. It’s about everyone whom God calls and has called through time. God is the one that guides us in His strength because deliverance can’t be given to this kind of a selfish life, to one that is laden with sin. Because that’s the way we are. Selfishness produces sin. It’s automatic. That’s why God made us this way, to make it, to enable sin to be committed by us because we’re selfish and it’s something we have to come to see and acknowledge, “I, by nature, am a selfish person. I’m not godlike by nature.” None of us are!

We have to have God’s help to begin to see and think in His way, to be of that unity of mind, of the same spirit. It requires His holy spirit to accomplish that. Just to see the truth, to be in agreement with the truth, requires God’s holy spirit. You can’t do that on your own. You can’t come into agreement with God on your own. God has to bless you in the mind, to inspire you in the mind to see the things that you see. Then you have choices to make as to whether that’s what you want. “This is the journey I want to take and stay on.” That’s your choice. That’s my choice. But other than that, God does it.

Without Him we can’t even be on the journey. That’s why it’s an amazing thing to me when people begin to sin and they begin to lose what they have. They begin to lose the focus. They begin to lose truth in their life. They might have certain truth that they have still that they can remember, but for it to be alive in your mind and in your being, God has to be there by His strength and by His power.

That comes because we’re continually looking at our Passover, crying out to God, “Please forgive me of my sins through, because of, my Passover, our Passover, Joshua the Christ.” We have to do that every time we repent. And how often do we repent? Well, it’s quite often. Day

by day by day if we can see our selfish nature, if we can realize our thinking and when it's not right, when we're not thinking right, responding right, saying something right. We have to think about it and realize this isn't right. Sometimes it's a whole lot clearer, but the more refined you become... Well, another story.

So again, this is about God's strength. He guides us to that; He wants to dwell in us. What an awesome thing. He wants to dwell in us. He wants us to dwell in Him and His Son on a spiritual plane, which has to do with agreement, which has to do with conviction, which has to do with our being inspired by what God has granted us, which has to do with our ability to see ourselves separate from the way of this world and people in this world, to grasp how blessed we are to have this in front of us, that God shows us the way, how to go that way, His way, enables us with His spirit to go in that way. Because without His spirit you can't keep in it.

And so, people that begin to let down, they begin to go astray, and it doesn't take long after they're gone their minds are, as far as the truth, if there is something they remember, maybe something about clean and unclean meat or they learn enough about the Sabbath to have a carnal conviction the Sabbath should be on the seventh day of the week. But as far as being convicted of it and seeing God's plan in all the Holy Days, they start losing it. It's gone! They just don't have it. Those who are asleep start losing those things.

I know of someone dying right now that's a part of the scattered body. There are those in that body that don't have the same kind of hope anymore as far as what the truth is, in the sense of understanding God's plan and purpose and what God works out. But when you have God's way of life there is a comfort and a peace that you have in the worst of times of human life. Some of the worst of times of human life is a time when you confront death. That's not an easy time, but the reality is everyone has to confront it.

There are only going to be a very few who don't have to confront it. Very few. We don't know how many. Maybe a handful. Maybe several handfuls, we don't know. But it says there is going to be a moment in time not only are some going to be resurrected—well, the majority, obviously, of the 144,000—but there are going to be some who are a part of that who are changed in the moment, as it says, “in the twinkling of an eye,” in essence, quickly from mortal to immortal. They never have to experience death.

Now, they're going to be unique, whoever they are, and it's going to be some who are listening today. This is the time we live in.

What an incredible thing, to think we live in such a time that this is the only time that that can take place, will take place in history as far as the past 6,000 years is concerned. Again, there is that peace we have. There is that comfort we have of God's truth and He's the only one that can stir us up in the power of His holy spirit to be excited and moved about it.

But you know what? You have to pray about it, that this is what you want. You want to be moved every Sabbath. You want to be moved every Passover. You want to be stirred up in

strength and in spirit in unity and oneness with Him every High Day. Otherwise, you begin to drift.

That was the whole problem with Laodicea. By the time Herbert Armstrong died there were those at headquarters, huge auditorium there where he would get up and preach at times, and they didn't bother coming to any of his bible studies. They didn't even bother coming to Sabbath services at times because they could stay in their home and listen because these things were piped in because of the way it was set up over there. There was that ability then to pipe the sound into their homes.

So, in the comfort of their homes, rather than valuing fellowship, there were many ministers, matter of fact, nearly all including the evangelists who didn't go there. There was one time in one recorded message where he made the comment, basically paraphrasing this because I don't know the exact words, but looking out over that huge auditorium and saying, "Where are the ministers?" One person toward the back held up their hand or stood up. I don't remember what it was. And basically, what he had to say about that, wasn't real positive, so he knew something else there.

But you think, what an atrocious thing! Because there were a lot of ministers out there. There were a lot of evangelists. The majority of the evangelists were headquartered out there. That's where they were, those in God's work.

Now, how do you think God looks upon something like that? His own people, those who were trained at Ambassador College, basically at Herbert Armstrong's feet, to recognize he is the apostle, and they didn't have the fortitude, the conviction, the stirring of spirit to be there to show their support of God's leader at that time? Even more than that, to recognize what they needed in their life. They needed what he had to say. What a hideous thing that they weren't there!

So, sometimes there are those things we grow in and it takes time to grow in them. It's an incredible thing to understand then, the process of what God is leading us through and how much we have to hunger for this way of life to persevere, to continue on. Because many have gone by the wayside.

You have guided them in Your strength to Your holy habitation. God is the one that brings us to the point. The whole purpose of our Passover, the reason he died... You look at traditional Christianity and what they're going to be looking at this year. And basically, the message is, "He has risen." What does that mean, "He has risen?" There is this excitement about a Sunday morning worship and their feeling of what they think they're reflecting when they do some of these kinds of things at that particular time.

They can't help what they don't understand, but they don't see what we see by any measure, and it's an incredible disconnect in the protestant world of what they see. They see him spilling

his blood to the earth and being our Savior and they don't understand the whole reason behind everything he did.

"He died for our sins." What does that mean? Why did he die for our sins? "Well, so you can be forgiven of your sins." What does all that mean? The whole purpose of what he revealed in John 14 and in through there, 16 and 17 and 18, he did it so we could be forgiven of sin because God will not be around sin and we have to be forgiven of sin because God wants to dwell in us, to deliver us in this journey. Because there is no way to be delivered or be on this journey unless we do that and have His spirit dwelling in us and we in Him. The whole purpose of his dying so we could be forgiven of sin is so that God Almighty can dwell in human life - His habitation.

The world can't go on to that step. They can't grasp it. They don't see it. They don't celebrate that. They're not motivated by that.

How blessed are you that you understand the purpose, that you are guided by God's strength to His holy habitation where He desires to dwell? And so, what are we? Who are we that God would want to dwell in us, as selfish as we are? But He does. Incredible patience.

Like I mentioned last Sabbath, how long, the patience God had, before I could tell Him, "I love You," in sincerity and truth. Because you don't lie to God. You don't go through the motions of something and lie to God. Everything has to be truthful before Him.

The Hebrew for this word translated "guided" literally means in Hebrew, "to lead or guide to a watering place." That's awesome! When you see things like this and understand what it really means in the actual language, it has more meaning to it then, doesn't it? What an incredible thing.

Because we just read it in English and skim over it, "You have guided them in Your strength to Your holy habitation." God guides us. Yes, but there's more to it. "...to a watering place," or "to bring us to a place of rest," as it's also in the translation there. And so, much scripture talks about this rest that we're able to have and how the Sabbath is a reflection of that rest, a beginning of that rest, that peace that we're able to have. To think of to be brought to a watering place, God desires us to be... The holy spirit is referred to in that light.

I think it's good that we take a look at some of that and meditate upon some of those things and to understand that what they were singing was far more for us, far more for God's people who would be called by His holy spirit than it was for them on a spiritual plane.

Because what was happening to them was very inspiring, moving, and everything else, but everything they lived through was for us, was for all those who would become called in time by God, because it's spiritual. They weren't given that which is spiritual to see, to understand, to grasp. It wasn't given. They weren't given the holy spirit. They weren't offered the holy spirit of God.

Sometimes it's just so hard for us to grasp what we've been given. They were given deliverance on a physical plane to teach spiritual lessons, but they weren't given God's holy spirit.

God calls us out of Egypt in order to give us a true watering place, because without it we can't make it. God has to give it to us. It's just as I was talking about the truth, we have to receive this refreshing constantly every Sabbath, every Holy Day, every Passover. It's like spiritual waters He gives to us.

That's why I get a charge out of that one woman that came down to the well and Christ talked about this living water and it was like, "That's what I want! I don't have to come down here all the time doing this. This is a hard job carrying these things back and forth, and that's what I want, this living water." She couldn't grasp. It wasn't given to her to understand, but we're blessed to understand what that means.

We can kind of laugh at some of those things because they only could see things and hear things that Christ said on a physical plane, as a whole. That's the way it was.

So, this Passover season, indeed, is all about how God is accomplishing this phase of His plan for His Family that He's creating. We're in a process of being created. It's a creation. It's an ongoing creation, as we talked about last Sabbath. It begins with Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread.

I'm always inspired, moved, and motivated by God's plan because it reveals everything in greater detail. The Sabbath does, but look how much more the Holy Days plug into that to reveal so much more! Passover to the Last Great Day, it's incredible! The peace we have because of knowing those things and being convicted of those things, and you look forward to the day the world is able to see that because they don't have this hope. They don't have this confidence and boldness that God makes possible through His spirit.

So again, this process that begins with Passover and Unleavened Bread, it's the way toward true rest. It's the beginning of the process. True peace in life, not all the drama that we see in the world around us. This world is so filled with drama right now. But you have to fight, and you have to work for this, the perseverance part, our journey of perseverance.

If you don't do it, God doesn't just give it to you. Because it's not owed to us. God wants to know, "Do you want this? Do you want this? Are you learning to love this? Are you holding on to it with all your being, fighting for it because you value it above everything else?"

I mean, candidly, what is everlasting life compared to this puny, little time we have on earth? But this puny little time becomes exceedingly important to puny little human beings who are selfish, have a selfish mind, and we hold on to it with all of our fiber, with all of our being to the whatever last thing has to be crammed down the throat to breathe. And if our brain is gone or something else, things aren't working right and they're never going to work right again, and we just hold on.

People have this sense that we've got to keep them here longer! We just got to keep them here longer!! You think, what for? They've lived a full life and you want to keep them just breathing and their heart beating for a week longer, a month longer, and yet they have no life?

I hope you understand what I'm saying. That isn't life that God wants us to have. And so, you'd think if people believe what they really believe they'd be anxious to go ahead and die. But that's not the way it is.

Paul talked about that. He was ready to die. That's what it amounts to, what he had to say. He was ready to be with God. He was looking forward to that time. "I'd far rather be there than here, but for your sakes..." basically, what he said. That's why he wanted to be there to help them along the way as long as he could. Awesome!

But human beings, we're like that aren't we? We're going to hold on to it and there is nothing wrong with that, of wanting to experience things and continue in life and experience. I'm not real sure how much of this older age, but you know what? There are things you learn in that. In God's Church there are things you can learn in that on a spiritual plane.

We were having a conversation earlier about people that came directly out of Ambassador College, went right into the ministry and had never had children, would get up and give a childrearing sermon. You think, something is missing in that. You can learn these things in a book, you can be taught them in a class, but until you're there you don't really have too much experience, do you?

How can you get up and give a marriage sermon when you have never been married or you've been married for a year or six months? It's going to be a different kind of sermon that the same person would give twenty years down the road, forty years down the road, whatever. Childrearing, the same thing. The things you learn to experience in life.

Even when we're older and the body is dying, those are valuable experiences, awesome things that we grow in and learn in that we can't learn when we're younger.

Luke 16:10—Whoever is faithful in the least is also faithful in/with much. What an incredible lesson that is. It's so true. That's why sometimes trying to convey that thought, as I have recently done—I don't remember if it was last Sabbath or before, just before that—but basically in one way trying to convey some of that thinking in the sense of our not grasping sometimes how valuable our life is, how incredible it is, our lives are.

It's hard for us to grasp, how incredible they are, that God is dwelling in us, that Christ is dwelling in us and we're dwelling in them on a spiritual plane in unity and oneness and agreement, because we don't think that we're important, that our lives are important, and we don't think the things we're doing, that they're important.

Because who are we? What are we doing? Our job, whatever it might be. But we don't realize that's where God molds and fashions us, whatever it is. Because you're going to learn all kinds

of things through your routines and your daily life, that as you learn to do those things faithfully, in the small things that God has given us in this physical life, the mind changes, the mind grows, the mind can be transformed to where God can give then a spirit life and power of mind far above and beyond anything we can grasp or comprehend. Just flood our minds with it.

But we have to be able to learn to be faithful with the little things of life, our regular, our daily lives. But how much do we really value that experience? How much do we grasp how God is using that? Because we tend not to because we don't understand God in those things. We don't understand that's how we're literally judged.

Because there's a truth, and a very powerful truth in this, that if we can learn to be faithful in the smaller things of life then God can give us so much more. We'll be faithful in those. You don't have to have a lot to be faithful. You don't have to have a lot in order to receive incredible blessings of life later on and incredible jobs and responsibilities in God's Family. We think we have to be something else! It doesn't have to be that way at all. It's what we're molded and fashioned in now.

You don't have to be an apostle. You don't have to be in the ministry to receive greater things than some in the ministry or apostles might receive and will have and molded and fashioned with them. Because they're all different! Were all in different places. It's not a matter of how much we have in the first place, but that's the way we think in a carnal way, in a physical way. We don't have any idea of those things that God is going to give us of responsibility, of power, of importance of life.

I mean, who can grasp that over 6,000 years, 144,000 are going to be ruling over mankind for a thousand one hundred years? What does that mean? Well, hopefully, most of us are going to experience that one way or another.

"Whoever is faithful in the least is also faithful with much," in much, with much. If we have a job, a responsibility in our life where we have struggled to go through various things, it doesn't matter the amount of income that someone is making, but they're out there working, they're striving, they're thankful for the blessings of life they have, it's not a matter of how much they have. But in how they use that becomes exceedingly important to God. See?

That's why this thing, I talk so often about tithing or Holy Day offerings. It's how we think in those things. It's not the amount, it's what's in our hearts and why we do it and whether we're faithful then, because of all things, if we can't be faithful in tithing, we don't belong in God's Church. This is the wrong place for you at this time. You're going to bring curses into your life because of it.

Sometimes I marvel at watching this process, of sometimes people wondering why there aren't blessings in their life and why they're struggling with certain things. And I think, well, until you make it past this one you are never going to be blessed. Because it's a law from God Almighty. So, that's why I cry out about those things.

Then compound that many times over as to choices and decisions we make in life then in our relationships with others, whether we're doing it God's way.

On the job, are we doing things God's way? Are we treating others the way God would want us to treat them or talk to them, and so forth? Do we treat each other in the Body that way? God's way?

Whoever is faithful in the least is also faithful in/with much. And whoever is unjust in the least is also unjust with much. God isn't going to give more if we haven't used what is less wisely and faithfully. There is so much there in that one verse it's not even funny. There is so much said on a spiritual plane that if we can learn to apply that to every facet of our life we'd be exceedingly blessed.

Therefore, if you have not been faithful in the unrighteous wealth or riches... Some of these aren't translated really well, and people can tend to look at this on a physical plane totally and only. But it goes back to a little bit of what I was saying there, in essence, if we can begin to learn it about tithing and offerings and so forth. Why would we ever be dishonest with God and not truthful with God in those things? Because if we can't do it in that He's not going to give us spirit life. He won't give a person spirit life who has lived like that. They can't have it because they won't use that power properly, because they haven't been faithful in the least. They're definitely not going to be faithful in much.

A change doesn't happen just because someone is made a spirit being. Look at what happened to Lucifer! God isn't going to allow any of that kind of a mind into His family!

Therefore, if you have not been faithful in the unrighteous wealth, riches... Wealth. It's about wealth. Look at the wealth—and this is what God wants us to see—that He's given to us, the wealth of all the truth that's in front of us. How much do we value it? Do we understand the riches involved with the ability to know and to see the things we do? And if we value those things, it's going to be reflected in our thinking and what we do and how we do it. It really is.

So, if one hasn't been **faithful in the unrighteous wealth**, speaking of carnal, physical things in this world, **who will commit to your trust true wealth?** Well, that's what we need to understand when we're called into the Church. This is our opportunity, the true wealth, the true riches of life.

Because it's about a way of life. It's about a journey that we're on forever. But the part we're on now is the hardest because it's a physical thing and it's a spiritual thing and the two aren't in agreement. Because when we're physical, our mind, our thinking is against God. It fights against God. It resists God. Our natural nature, it resists God and that has to change. God's giving us the opportunity for that to change in His holy habitation. He'll give us the strength and the power to change to where we can be changed forever.

So, if you have not been faithful in what is another's... And what is another's? Well, it might be on the job. You might think your job is not important. Well, now, let's see. How is God

judging your job and what you're doing on the job? Do we give the full time to our employer? Do we work hard? Or do we just do things kind of to get by because it's just a physical job and I'm not making as much as I should be making, and I deserve more?

I can't help but remember these people at this place that came into the store, a convenience store, complaining about UPS. They worked for UPS. And basically, they were having this discussion about if they would just do things, this, this way, and that, that way, and they just don't understand. It's like, see, now... Are you the CEO? Are you the head of the company? Are you on the board? Do you have any control of all the things that are happening in that company that is growing so fast, that's being so successful and setting an example and a pace?

Because they did. When they started and all the things they have done. Then FedEx, of course, out there. The Post Office is still behind so far, it's not even funny. And you think, there are examples out there, things that Amazon is doing now. You think, they broke through. They began to do things in a different way, and they persevered in it, they worked hard at it.

Then these two yo-yos who think they know so much better than all these people out here who were able to buy all these trucks and all these locations and all of the things they had to do and set it all up, the millions and millions and millions that it takes to do something like that. You have two people come in and they know better than everybody else that's made this company so huge. Instead of being thankful and grateful that they have an incredible job with an incredible company that has incredible growth to it, and see themselves as a part of that growth.

That's the way the human mind tends to think. They're more valuable. "You don't see my value. I should have a managerial job. I belong in management." Now, that's a common thing, and many, if not most young people in life have to go through that in this phase from education to work because we think we're ready for the managerial part. I go and apply for a job, "I think I should be in management." "Really? What is your experience?" "Well, I don't have any but if you give me some, I'll show you." That's just how crazy things are in life sometimes.

So again, I can't help but read something like this and see people like that, the human nature that's there. "Therefore, if you have not been faithful in the unrighteous wealth and riches," of that in the world, "who is going to commit to you the trust of true wealth?" You think of a corporation like that and people.

We have to think about our lives and how are we doing those jobs? Because God judges us by what we're doing with the portion we have. Because it might seem small or unimportant to us, but it isn't to God Almighty. He sees a mind that's working there, and He sees a mind that whether or not it's looking to Him as the best way and the right way of doing that, and "Am I working hard? Am I working to the point where I'm trying to be an example of what work is like?"

Because I've known of many people who have different jobs, and most of us have experienced those kinds of things, where if you're working around certain ones, and you're working harder, you know what happens? People have been asked this at times, "What are you trying to do, make us look bad? Slow down a little bit, man. Slow down. What are you trying to do?" It's like, "If you're doing this..." Well, what's a concern? Well, they could be doing a whole lot more but they're not. Because human nature is lazy by nature and you've got to fight against that. You've got to see purpose in what you're doing and what you're accomplishing and why.

But if you do it toward God because it's God's way and "I'm striving to do a harder job and I'm going to put in full time," and if there is not something else to be done, "I'm going to get a broom and sweep the floor." You ever done that? I know what that's like, and I know what others think about it sometimes. When you've done everything else and you start doing something like that, get the mop out and do some other work. There's always something else or more that you can do or do it harder, do it better. How can you do that? Do we look for that or do we just get caught in a routine?

If your mind is toward God, you're going to strive to improve yourself, you're going to strive for self to change and grow in what you're striving to accomplish. Because it's not just a physical thing in life, and it isn't just about the paycheck you receive, it's about what is up here. It's about how you think and it's about your being faithful. It's about your being faithful and hardworking and especially, as it says here, "So if you're not be faithful in what is another's, who will give you charge or responsibility over what is your own?"

So, we have to go through a lot sometimes to learn what we need to learn in life. We need to value more fully the little things of life, of handling those things well, of handling those things faithfully. Because if we're not going to do that why would God give us more, which is so much more? I'm not going to spend the time of going into all of it.

But then if we can really see the bigger picture of all this, how do we handle now in the Church of God the true riches of life? Passover, Unleavened Bread, Pentecost, and on and on we go. How do we handle those things? Do we ever get tired of listening? Well, many ministers in times past have. They got tired of listening and if they'd been so well trained and have been in environments that there should be no room for something like that, then where does that put us? So, there is so much to learn.

Verse 13—No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate... It means "to love less by comparison." Because we make comparisons in life. That's how we make choices, we make comparisons. And so, the one you're gravitated to, the one you have purpose for, the one you value more, that's what you're going to put more of your energy into. This is a part of what this is talking about.

No servant can serve two masters; for either he will love less the one, in other words, by comparison, **the one and love the other.** So, he's going to love less one and love the other. ... **and either holding fast to the one,** and the words, "and despise" aren't even there, **and will**

think little. It means “to think little of the other.” So again, there is always this judging. That’s a good thing. We have to judge little things in life. Judgment is so important.

If we are able to judge things the way God wants us to judge things because it agrees with God’s word in the smallest of things of life what about the bigger things? Relationships? Sometimes people can’t handle the little drama of life so what makes you think you’re going to be able to handle a lot more? I hope you understand what I’m saying there.

So again, you can’t serve both. What do we want? This world? That’s what it comes down to. Do we want this world or this way of life? Because if you want this and you want to persevere in it - because you’ve got to fight for this. You’ve got to persevere in it. You can’t give up. You can’t let down. It is a constant fight because what you’re fighting is self, first and foremost, our carnal human nature and we all have it.

Even asking God to forgive us of the thoughts and the choices that we make that are not in unity with Him; only in that fashion can we be forgiven. Then to ask God for help to think right, to be in agreement with Him. He will help you. God wants to help us grow and mature spiritually.

You cannot serve God and riches, in other words, what one values. What are the riches? Because too many people read through parables like this and don’t get it, don’t see what’s truly being said on a spiritual plane. You cannot serve God and, in essence, what one is valuing more than God. Because that’s your riches. In other words, it shows what your riches really are. What is it you’re serving? What is it you want?

And you know what? God manifests that in the Church in our lives within the Church areas and different areas of life, and people, things that they’re going through. Because God’s going to know what do we consider the greatest riches.

Do we recognize Passover, how rich Passover is, how valuable Passover is to us? How much do we rejoice in that time that we’re able to spend to listen, to be reminded to think about those things that God has so blessed us to see and understand that the world and those around you don’t grasp at all, the spiritual part of it? But you do. Why? So, how blessed are we and how much do we value that?

God knows what’s going on in the mind and He wants to see those things. Do we persevere for this more than what we have in the world, what we see in the world? And on and on it goes.

Now, the Pharisees, who loved money, who loved wealth, in other words. That was their thinking. ...also heard all these things, and they derided him. Now, they could only see it on a physical plane. And so, this was a very physical, in that respect, parable that one can take, and in this case, Pharisees, be offended by it, not like it. Because they only see it on a physical plane and so they don’t like it. They didn’t grasp anything spiritual.

We're supposed to grasp this on a spiritual plane, see? That's what God has given to us to see and grasp and relate to. What do we value?

And so, he uses very carnal, selfish Pharisees, in this case, self-righteous to the extreme, believing that they understood God's way of life. As we see so much in the world, everybody thinks they're right. It doesn't matter what sect, what group, where they are, what kind of a God they worship, everybody thinks they're right. There is only one truth in the world, one way in the world.

That's why in all the scattered Churches, for them to think, some of them as they do, that God is working with us all in a unique way to bring us through all this together. Think, well, you're not together. Is there something I'm missing here? Do you not understand this? Do you not grasp and comprehend that one group believes certain things and another group other things? So, is God divided? Are there different doctrines?

Because that's what the protestant world believes, "God is working with all of us to bring us through all this in different ways because we're all different, so we can all be there when it's all said and done...and look on the face of God forever." So is the scattered Body on a spiritual plane exactly the same, because they're asleep.

So, how blessed are you to see what you see?

Now, the Pharisees, who loved wealth, also heard all these things, and they derided him. Which means they scoffed at him. So, why do people scoff at others like this when something like this was said? They don't like it. It's a threat to them. They've got to tear it down. What a sick thing about the human mind to tear down something else in order for you to hold on to what you are going to hold onto.

We see it in politics. We see it in news all the time now. They all use the same sick tools against each other, and they don't see themselves, they don't see what they're doing. Sometimes it blows my mind how people can say that they're doing something different than this other group over here. And you think, "You do it all the time! You don't see yourself. You don't even know what you're saying!"

Then sometimes we get God's own people caught up in some of these things where they start taking sides and thinking one group is right over the other and one group is better. No, it's just a lot of unsoundness, a lot that's just so wrong and sick in this world.

...and so, they derided him. Scoffed at him, ridiculed, expressed contempt. That's what the word means.

Verse 15—Then he said to them, You are those who justify yourselves before men. "This is just natural, carnal human nature."

That's why on these news shows and people who have opinions, they're not only finding fault with someone else or different things than what they're doing, they're in the process of feeling

pretty good about themselves. They're in the process of, by saying these things, justifying what they're doing and how they're doing it. "Because, well, my way is right. My way is better than yours."

So, without soundness of mind they scoff and ridicule others. There's plenty to ridicule, isn't there? There really is in this carnal world. There is plenty to find fault with because the reality is there is fault everywhere. You're going to find it.

Then he said to them, You are those who justify yourselves before men. We have that same nature in us, and it's so good when we can understand when we're trying to justify ourselves. Because I hear it very often in God's Church. Often. Of justification of something, why we think a certain way, how we're doing something, and we have to see ourselves. We have to cry out to God, "Help us to see where I'm trying to justify self." Because, when we try to justify self, we're justifying something that's wrong. Something is wrong in our thinking.

Does it agree with God? Is it right with God? Then you can be at peace. That's the goal.

That's why I love the things that Christ said about justifying, about making such decisions in life about judgment, not justifying, but about judgment. Because this is about whether we will justify. But about judgment. He basically said he doesn't judge anyone. So, people were confused. Don't understand. Then he said, "But if I judge my judgment is just." What's he saying?

I love it, how he says it, because if you read all the context of things that are being said, he doesn't judge anyone according to the way we are as human beings, by sight, by what we see. He judges it according to God's word. That's the only time judgment is right. Because God is justified and God is right, we're wrong.

Then he said to them, You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. God knows what's inside of us. Some of our prayers need to involve some of this, "Help me to see what's inside myself," asking for mercy as you do it. Because it's pretty tough sometimes to see ourselves too much at one time. That's a process of growth where God just continues to help us become more and more refined and continually see a little bit more of ourselves. If He showed us everything all at once we'd be so depressed. If He let us see in the beginning of our lives in the Church what we are fully we would be so demoralized by that and think, "This is an impossible thing."

It'd be like the Israelites on a physical plane seeing the Egyptians back there, and here is the Red Sea, and "We're all dead. We're dead. We can't get across. We're going to drown if we try to swim it. Our families are going to be left behind. They're going to die because the Egyptians are coming and we're just dead. There is no way out of this." Think, no, with God, God shows us. So, God knows what's inside.

For what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God. Beautiful scriptures here. Incredible! We tend to raise things up in importance and we miss the mark.

For what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God. The law and the prophets were until John. So, it means exactly what it says. The law that God gave, codified law as well, as we're talking about here, Mount Sinai, and the prophets, the things that were taught, the things that were recorded, basically, in the Old Testament, the law and the prophets and all that God gave and revealed in His plan and purpose and prophesied as far as what would be revealed and given in time (that wasn't understood then), it says, all this was given until John. This 4,000 years, basically, of time. God gave all these things, things are in writing.

It says, **Since that time the Kingdom of God has been preached.** So, since the time of John. We're talking about John the Baptist. We're talking about something is happening here that is an incredible change in God's plan in the sense of timing, in the sense of revelation, progressive revelation. This is, basically, what Christ is saying, "Since that time the Kingdom of God," the purpose, the Kingdom of God is about God's purpose, why He created us, all the things he began to reveal concerning the Kingdom of God and that He gave to the apostles right after that as far as Pentecost 31 A.D. and on. So, this has been preached.

Now, before this it wasn't the same thing. There were things about, out of the law and so forth, but people couldn't grasp them. They didn't comprehend them.

Since that time the Kingdom of God has been preached, and everyone is pressing into it. Anyway, "everyone is pressing into it." You think, that's a bunch of bull. That's not what this verse is about. It's not what it's saying. I marvel at so many things that are in the Bible that have been translated because people don't know God's purpose and God's plan. They have to put something else in there. Most often it's a kind of a protestant wishy washy kind of thing because of what they have believed since 325 A.D. and this thing that's just not real, it's fake, it's false. These things have worked their way into scripture, into translations.

"Everyone is pressing into it, the Kingdom of God." You think, very few in 6,000 years have had the opportunity of even knowing what it's all about, of knowing anything about it at all as far as God's plan and God's purpose or being worked with by God or being judged by God and prepared by God.

So again, this verse is mistranslated because people have not understood what Christ was saying. They just didn't grasp it. Everyone has not been pressing into or for (as the word is), into/for the Kingdom of God.

This word "pressing" is something that is translated in other places as "violent or violence." What does that mean? This word "pressing" - "violent or violence." Because it's a Greek word that has to do with the use of force, of the need to be forceful. That's what it's about. The reality is that it's about, for us, for God's Church, it's about fighting. When God reveals it, you have to fight for it. It doesn't come naturally. It doesn't come easy. It requires God's spirit, but on our part, it requires all of our being, in that respect, conviction, purpose, motivation, focus, fighting, fighting for the Kingdom of God... if that's been placed before you.

You can't fight for that which you don't see nor understand, so people haven't been "fighting for it." They haven't been "pressing forward," if you will. That hasn't been the case in this life, in this world for the last 2,000 years. Because he's talking about it being preached now more than ever before, in that respect, the Kingdom of God, because now it's in full force as far as what the Messiah is about, the Passover and everything else that is going to be given. It's about this fight.

A proper translation of this, **Luke 16:16** would be, **The law and the prophets were until John. Since that time the Kingdom of God has been preached, and everyone must fight for it,** must use force, in essence, **to receive it.** It isn't just given to you on a golden platter. It is not owed to us, by any measure, and because of what it requires it means we have to begin with the battle that's here first and foremost. Self. You have to fight against self.

You can't just wish you would change; you've got to fight on it, you've got to work on it. And you know what the greatest part of that fight entails? Repentance. Acknowledgement of one's own sins, of one's own justification. Because when we justify things we're not repenting, we're not seeing ourselves and our motivation for what it really is.

When we see those things and we recognize what a stinking pile we are as human beings apart from God's spirit, and we understand how foul and how smelly that is, we don't want that. We don't want to be that way. We see so much hurt in the world; we don't want to hurt anyone else! We don't want to be that way. You've got to want that with all of your being.

So, it's about this fight, it truly is. It's about perseverance. You know, perseverance is a fight. It's like the wrestling. That's why that's such an awesome example. He wrestled with God and he didn't quit. Anyone that is ever called of God has to continue to wrestle first of all against self and against the pulls of this world, and against the spirit world out there as well, to fight against that. And how do you do that? Draw close to God. Because you can't fight it. You can't combat it. It's powerful. It's more powerful than you are.

"Greater is He that's in us, than he that's in the world." That's a fight because you've got to get on your knees, or ever how you pray, and you pray to God and you ask for that strength and that power and that life and you know you have to have it in order to fight those things. Those beings can attack you in the sense of spirit, in the thoughts that come at, the broadcasting. But you've got to be of a mindset to say, "No!"

And if you're inclined to be drawn to certain things you pray to God for strength and help to fight, that you don't have the ability and the power. You cry out to God because you know you don't, and you pray for that help and God gives you strength. And with that comes greater conviction to where the more you fight that the stronger you become. It's a mind thing. It's a thing of the mind that God gives us.

Matthew 11:12. We're going to Matthew now, totally shifting gears. How it's stated here: **Now, from the days of John the Baptist until now the Kingdom of heaven,** this is how this is

translated, **suffers violence, and the violent take it by force.** Now, this comes closer in meaning but it still misses the mark.

It's the same thing here, "Since John the Baptist until now the Kingdom of heaven," so it says here, "suffers violence, and the violent take it by force." They're getting closer. Because it's the same word, that "pressing" thing. The violent, the violence, same words. But now here, they try to put that in there, but they still don't understand what it's about yet.

How awesome it is that you can see it! So, this verse, just like the one in Luke 16:16 that we just covered, is likewise mistranslated because of this lack of understanding. They don't grasp what the words means and so how do you put that into words of things that they understood at that time.

The words "suffer violence," and "the violent take it by force," aren't correct here, in that respect, of how they've translated it. The last part of this verse that's translated comes the closest but they're still off the mark.

So, reading this verse again, **Matthew 11:12—Now from the days of John the Baptist until now the Kingdom of heaven is forcing (fighting) it's way forward.** The rest of it isn't even proper translation. Fighting, moving forward. It's about it, the Kingdom of God. It's like this progressive revelation. So, we've gone through 4,000 years, God has worked with different individuals, and now it's time for change. The one that they never understood had to come as the Passover, first is coming, he's there now, and from this point forward now this pressing forward, this fighting.

God's Church has had to fight through time. God's people have had to fight through time because what we've been given is so different from anything in the world. This has been going on since there have been those who have been called by God in the 4,000 years. But the motivation, the focus, in other words, from God has now picked up a momentum that is stronger than ever before because of what God is revealing through the Messiah and things about the Passover that now it can be revealed, that people can be given understanding of that they never understood before in times past.

Now it's pressing forward, yes, but the more to that there is this fight that has to be there in pushing and pressing, in working at, persevering, all these words you could use, that mean the same thing on a spiritual plane. That's why it says it like it does here in Matthew, in essence.

Now from the days of John the Baptist, the same thing as what was in Luke, **until now... until now the Kingdom of God is forcing or fighting its way forward.** The first 4,000 years a piece here, a piece there was being revealed. We see what happened during the time of Moses and a little bit more pressing forward, fighting forward.

There are incredible battles involved. Even physical battles, things that David did later on, things that he went through to learn on a spiritual plane, that he did things on a physical plane

so much of his life. And yet had spiritual principles that he wrote about and gave in scripture in the Psalms and so forth, and things that we've gone through and looked at and learned from.

There's just been this continual fight. Everyone until this point now, including us, there's been a lot of sacrifice. There's been a lot of fighting. It doesn't just happen. It is not owed to us. We have to fight for it. All of God's people have to fight for it because everything out there is fighting against it. And so, it's a war, it's a spiritual war. It's a spiritual battle that takes place.

In essence, that's what Christ is talking about. There is that which must be done by fight, by force. It doesn't just naturally happen. This change that goes on up here, this transformation, it isn't going to be here just because we warm a seat on the Sabbath or the Holy Days or whatever. It's because of how we live our lives in between and as to what we take and receive from those things, from the Sabbath, from the Holy Days, and every time we should see something that we can better our lives by and pray to God about.

It should be involved in our prayers this coming week and things we go through Passover and as we approach it, things we should be praying about. It should be our focus. The thankfulness and the gratitude there. God will help a process of change in the mind then, of a stronger conviction to His way of life, a greater appreciation of and a greater love, a greater love of God Almighty and Joshua, and if we learn it even more so, a greater love for one another because so much of the Passover service is about the Body of Christ and how at times the Body of Christ has suffered because people haven't gotten it, haven't lived what they were supposed to live.

Those things should be received on Passover as well, that it's about this is where God is, God's holy habitation. Do we see it? How deeply do we see that? How blessed are we, every one of us, we need each other? We need each other to fight, to be strong for this way of life. Because if we're not then it pulls at the Body and pulls back and can pull down, can slow down, even the Body.

You smash your thumb. You know, I got this little thing I clipped myself the other day, got a sharp razor and changed it and it's a cutting knife, utility knife. Found out it's, yeah, that new blade is pretty sharp. All week long here because this one piece of skin was popped up and dried out, and you want to get it, but you know, it's connected to some stuff that's pretty tender still. My mind this past few days just keeps going back to that one spot because I rub it on something, I catch it on something. And finally, got rid of it today.

One little thing you can do like that. Smash your finger with a hammer, whatever it might be, and your focus goes to that. You have one part in your body that's hurting—sometimes we have several—but anyway, the older you get. But your mind can tend to think in those ways of those.

That's the way it is spiritually. We can begin to think about different parts of the Body in that way or we are affected by that in our thinking. We need to understand why it's important that we all fight to make the battle easier for one another. We're all to fight for this way of life on a spiritual plane to make the battle easier for the Body, so that God can even use us at times to

say the better things, the things that will help, the things that will encourage, the things that come out of our mouth are things that are in absolute unity and oneness with God to where they can't help, in that respect, by God's inspiration be inspiring and helpful and uplifting and just being together of the same Body.

Just like now and trying to get people to come together again and get this going again as far as being able to meet together. Because we sorely need fellowship. It's a lesson that we're to learn through all this as well. One of the greatest things of all of it might be that that was the primary purpose more than it is for the world. Is that possible that God Almighty in this end-time could take us through a process to have something molded and fashioned within us because of the value it's going to create and mold in us.

Because it's not helped the world one iota, we understand that, but yet it's a witness against the world. They're not changing. They're not asking for help. They're not inclined to want to know what is true when they come across it on a website. Because thousands have. Who is responding? Who is being drawn to it? You know when it is happening and when it isn't. It was happening in 2005 and different periods in through there, 2007 and 8. It's not right now. That's how far the world has gone. They do not care right now.

The reality is, it takes the first event of the First Trumpet. Then and only then will some, sadly, only then will some begin to be shaken to a point they'll want the truth and be willing to listen to it when it comes. But not that many. Then the Second. Then the Third. Then the Fourth. And then, finally, the Fifth when Europe does what it's going to do. Now the world begins to be scared, finally. It's going to take that much - down to the Fifth Trumpet before people will really in earnest begin.

And not all by any measure. Not even half. Not even 25% by that time. But there will be more. Then the Sixth one, China and Russia, finally all out against the entire world, and Europe, fighting a Third World War, destroying one-third of all life on earth, God says. Just that one Trumpet alone. Things we can't even imagine, but it's going to happen.

People at that point in time, by large numbers, but there's nothing there. They were given an opportunity to hear, to listen, but as a whole only those of a scattered Body, potential ability to know and understand things, people who knew certain things. But as far as things going out to teach others, where is it going to be by that point?

Thankfully, Christ is close. He's right behind this. Because by the time that happens, it happens so swiftly, so powerfully on the earth that God has to intervene to stop it, the madness, the insanity, because then the world has been primed and ready, as a whole, to receive Joshua and 144,000. Awesome, to understand. But human nature, what a hideous thing, what we are as human beings.

Again, reading that verse, **Now from the days of John the Baptist until now the Kingdom of God, or "the Kingdom of heaven" as it says here, is, in essence, forcing.** It's that effort in

every way of what God is doing. Because God is doing this. Christ is doing this. There is that work they're involved in. They've always been working for this way of life. The closer we get to the end, the more they're working. They truly are, in a very powerful way.

God has been planning this and preparing this for a long, long time. Then that which must be in us as well, what's taking place in the world, because now it's about here and this long, long battle of 6,000 years is almost over. That was to primarily prepare 144,000 and those few at the end who would go on into a new age. It's **fighting its way forward**.

It's interesting here. Just take a look at the word "take." The word "take" in the Greek can be translated more strongly as "seize." So, something it's you really have to do. If you want it, if you seize hold of something, you've got to put a lot of effort into that. You've got to hold on with all of your being to seize something and it's about effort you put into it. It's about a fight you put into it. It's about the way of thinking that goes along with it. This word "seize," in a sense, "to catch hold of; to receive it." It's something you've got to fight for then. That's what it's about.

Verse 13—For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. Then, if you will... receive it ...fight for it, accept. This word really has more to do in this case with "accept or to take," but it goes in this context here of fighting for it. But "if you will receive it?" What's this mean? You're given the opportunity. If you will receive it, this is what's happening until the time of John, and now that John has come and the gospel, the good news is going out, now the fight is really intensified, we're at a point where there are 2,000 years remaining and the fight is more fully intensified, the things that God's Church must go through over 2,000 years, incredible battling, and fighting, and sacrifice that people have made through time.

Most of that of the suffering of things that people have gone through is even magnified because of the numbers involved since the time of Christ and the things that people have to go through. And so, it wasn't meant to be easy for self to be changed, for what God is preparing for this phase of His plan. That's what these things are talking about.

For all the prophets and the law were until John. Then if you receive it, take it, accept it. You have to take it. God offers it, you accept it, you take it, and you've got a conviction you make at baptism about it, "I am Yours!"

It goes on to say, **this is Elijah who was to come.** So again, very awkward translation but it's telling you something. It's saying, in essence, this is about the one who is of or as it is here, the meaning of Elijah, "Our" or "My God Yahweh." And now he's being, in essence, the word of God is now being made flesh and that life we're able to see and the things that he is teaching. Now that life and the fight that's there is greater than ever before and look what he went through to give us what we have. And so, a beginning of a process intensified, becoming stronger and stronger the more we get closer and closer to the end of this age.

“This is Elijah who was to come.” So, we should know what that’s about. We should understand that in a very powerful way. It’s the 50th Truth. What an incredible thing that God has clarified these things for us, that it wasn’t just about something that John the Baptist fulfilled in part, it wasn’t something about Herbert Armstrong, that three individuals have fulfilled in part that the 50th Truth talks about.

I want to read it. The 50th Truth states “...Over the past 2,000 years there have been three people who will have fulfilled part (as a ‘type’) of the purpose of the ‘Elijah to come,’” To teach us something far more meaningful and deeper about its actual fulfillment. “...**but Joshua the Christ will fulfill this role in its completeness.**”

God has given us types of things to learn from all through time. We saw that in the story about David and the things that were there and his son, types. Incredible, the way God uses these things to help us to learn to grow in understanding on a spiritual plane.

Matthew 11:13—For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. Then, if you will receive it (accept it), this is all about the Elijah who was to come. That’s what this is about. Because this is the time they were living in; this is what Christ is talking about here. He’s starting the fulfillment of it but he’s going to complete it later.

There is that focus, “My God Yahweh.” That’s what he said as he was dying, and they didn’t understand, “Look, he calls on Elijah.” People think it’s, even in the scattered Church, think that’s about Elijah. What does that mean? No, it’s about God.

Verse 16—Now, to what shall I liken this generation? It is like children sitting where they are assembled and speaking to these companions, saying, We played a flute for you... Again, this is a very awkward translation so I’m just going to read it as it is. We played the flute for you, and you did not dance. In other words, it’s using an example here of something in their society at that time of playing music at a wedding. “We played the flute, and you didn’t dance.” ...**we mourned to you**, as in playing music at a funeral, because this is what the word is about, **and you did not mourn.**

So, this is what it’s talking about. It’s saying we did these things on a physical plane. But what does this mean on a spiritual plane? It means so much more. So again, it’s about what God is giving to us, of the truth that He’s giving to us, and it’s about that which has been preached through time and how people have responded to it.

People haven’t rejoiced in the truth that God has given because they can’t see it. Because God has to give that to them. They think they know it and they don’t, and they won’t listen to what, those whom God has sent, because that’s just the nature of man. We have to learn that. We’ve had to learn that for 6,000 years. We’ve had to learn it within the Church. They don’t listen. They don’t care.

So, that helps us to understand why God is going to do what He does at the end. There has to be a change and that's the only way to bring it about. It's the only way to usher in the Kingdom of God ruling and reigning on earth. Awesome, to understand that.

Going on: **For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they said, He has a demon.** I mean, look at the human nature here and how people have responded to God through time. That's what this is about. Look at human beings. They didn't receive him. They didn't rejoice in the things that he gave that were to rejoice in. They didn't mourn over the things that they should have been mourning about, if they'd acknowledge who they were and what they were. They didn't repent. There were those who did repent and wanted to be baptized, but not that many, in essence, as far as the world is concerned.

Those who were rulers and leaders at that time, they found fault, "He has a demon." That's the answer. "Stay away from this guy." "Listen to what we're telling you because he's going to lead you in a different path." That's the truth. He was working to do that.

Then the Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they said, Look, a glutton and a winebibber. You can't win. You can't win! In God's Church, it's a fight. You have to persevere in this way of life, you really do. This is the way it was designed to be.

So we have it rough, we have it tough at times. It gets really difficult at times. God will ease that load. Christ said his burden is light. That's what this is about, they will help to ease the load. It doesn't mean we're not going to have a load. Doesn't mean it's going to get a whole lot easier. Because you might go from one thing to another.

Life is filled with a lot of trials. We've gone through a lot of trials and hardships in God's Church since we began. I think you're on the same boat. Are we all on the same boat? See? So, it doesn't matter where it was you were called.

I love the journey. I don't like all the things that have had to happen in it. I don't like the way people are treated because of it and what people say. But they don't understand. "Father forgive them, because they don't know what they're doing." We have to learn to think that way. You have the truth. They don't. Are you better than them? No. But we have what is better. The truth. Awesome!

Those things help us to judge righteously before God and think righteously and begin to live righteously more before others and not let all their drama pull us down. It doesn't have to bother us. It doesn't have to affect us. But to separate that and to deal with that takes time. Because we have to change our thinking. God is helping us to change if we can see and understand what He is offering us. Then, if we yield to that which is, in essence, small as far as life is concerned... Because it is. We think it's big but it's really small. And then God will give us so much more beyond that we cannot even begin to grasp it. We really can't. Those are the things you hold on to, to realize what's ahead.

To realize that no matter what space of time this is it's pretty small. It's pretty puny, really, in the scheme of things. I mean, I can't grasp the last 6,000 years. How on earth can I grasp millions and billions - well, I really can't - into the future. We have no comprehension of what God has planned because He hasn't given it to us yet. He hasn't told us all about it yet. But it'll be so exceedingly exciting, awesome, because God's way has been the same from the beginning - growth, expansion, a family, a unity, a way of life that is just filled with nothing but good.

It's hard for us to think that way because our life is filled with a lot of bad. We see it all around us and it affects us, and it affects the way we think so often and it's hard to shed those things from us and realize that's not us. That's not what God has placed before us.

Then the Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they said, Look, a glutton and a winebibber. Doesn't take much. "Oh, look at that house!" They take a picture of the house that has another neighbor's house connected to it and it looks like it's a really big house. "And there's a golf course out there in that area so, man, they're living high on the hog, aren't they?" If you take the value of that house and go to California you barely get into a house. Sick, the human mind and how people think and work.

So, you work through different things in life. You go through different hardships. People are going to find fault with you. "You're a sect." God's Church has always, by those who really have a problem, "You belong to a sect." Well, we really do now because we're so small and, you know, like, "Listen to him. I mean, Look at what he's done!"

...they said, Look, a glutton and a winebibber. What an incredible thing! **...a friend of tax collectors and sinners!** "A friend of tax collectors..." Well, I don't have any problem with that one. Just kidding. "...and sinners."

But wisdom is shown to be right by what comes from it. In other words, what is brought forth from what is said by what comes to pass from what is said. So, beautiful when we see what God is revealing to us.

Then he began to express fault with the cities in which most of the mighty works had been done, because they did not repent: Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! Both of Galilee. For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.

Now, this is an incredible statement! It really is. Just looking at a carnal, physical world. But because of their upbringing, because of their history, their minds were tainted because of that. And because of those things they couldn't judge things when God intervened and did various things. They had to justify what they had, like the Pharisees and others who listened to them did. Yet he's saying, "Look over here at Sidon and Tyre." Now, if you know some of the history of things that happened to some of these places and things that they went through, and he says here, "If..."

Well, look at what happened with Jonah. A people fasted and they repented. Gentile! People who were looked down on by the kingdom of Judah, in essence, yet he's saying they would have repented.

Now, sometimes these things are hard for us to grasp. You mean they would have repented? It's what Christ is saying. Yes, they would have repented long before. But he's talking about a natural, carnal reaction. He's not talking about a spiritual one. He's saying if the deeds of things that had been done, if they had seen them, they would have been moved by them and humbled by them because there is such a difference between the gods that they have believed and seen and what they see God doing.

This thing of thinking we know what is true is a very dangerous thing. That's why it's going to be very difficult for many in the protestant world. It's actually easier for some in that great big false church to repent than it is for many that are in this other one, if you understand what I'm saying.

Verse 22—But I tell you that it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you. Now, that is an incredibly strong condemnation. Because, here all these things, basically, Christ is saying, that I have done... “All these things that you have seen and witnessed, and what are people, how are they responding?” They're listening to the Sadducees and the Pharisees. The vast majority were.

Now, there were large numbers who came to Jerusalem who believed that he was the Messiah, but there were incredibly vast numbers who were of the mindset and of the following of the Pharisees and the Sadducees. The vast majority.

He told them because of this, can you not acknowledge that God has done this? In essence, you're going to listen to the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the Zealots, different ones out there and believe what they... be swayed by them? Or are you going to believe what you've seen and acknowledge only God can do this? Lazarus raised from the dead? Who can do this? Heal the lepers? Heal the lame? Who can do this? No human being can do that, “Get up and walk.” The blind can see.

It says, if these things had been done in Tyre and Sidon they would have repented, if they'd seen these things, because they would have known this is a power that it has to be of God. Because their minds were wrong in their thinking and their judgments about God and what they thought they knew. It shows how sick the human mind can be.

So, I tell you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you. Even you, Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven. In essence this is a word meaning, what the word means here in the people evidently there, it's kind of like it's a name associated with boastfulness or prideful, proud confidence, if you will. So, they were noted for that. So, it's showing here “...your judgment and what's against you. But there were different ones who

would listen to God. There are different ones who would have responded, even those who thought great of themselves, in essence, who would repent before you.”

Verse 23—Even you, Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven, will be brought down to the grave; for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say to you that it is more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for you.

So again here, just throwing out different things, that if they'd seen the things that Christ had done, because of their thinking that was in their minds, what would have happened and what wouldn't have happened, whether they would have responded or not.

But I say to you that it shall be more tolerable in the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for you. It's easier for people to judge people and say, “See how bad those people were? Sodom and Gomorrah,” and yet in the day of judgment, which is what, the Great White Throne, God says it's going to be more tolerable for them. They know what happened to them. They know the kind of life they lived. They're not self-righteous in what they believe, in the sense of they had this hold on God and they were right.

It's harder sometimes when you think you know everything. That's why sometimes when people are a part, and they leave, it's so incredibly dangerous. Because they know they're right. That's exceedingly dangerous even for the future.

Verse 25—At that time Joshua responded and said, I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth... So, when he says something like this it's for us. There are things they couldn't grasp nor comprehend but it's written so that others later can grasp and comprehend what he's saying and why he's saying it.

He says, **I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and the prudent and have revealed them to babes.** So, the greatest behind all this is to understand what we have to be like. To be of a humble spirit, to be of a humble mind to receive what God gives. A willingness to change, a willingness to acknowledge what we are.

You know, we had to do that. Those who came through the Apostasy had to come to a point where they're willing to acknowledge, “I am a Laodicean.” Now, if you'd lived through that that was not an easy thing to come to. I remember dealing with the fact about the parable of the 10 virgins and there were those who were slumbering and sleeping and it was so hard. I thought, “I was kind of slumbering. I wasn't asleep but I was kind of slumbering.” I could see the slumbering part. No, slumbering and sleeping.

I had to go through a process to get to that point where I could say, “Yep. That was me.” That was everybody. Everybody that went through it, everyone that had to be separated from God—because we were all slumbering and sleeping. There were times we were slumbering and then there were times when we just fell flat asleep. That was our state on a spiritual plane.

If we can't admit that God can't work with us. If you can't acknowledge who you are and say, "I am," if you were part of that, "a Laodicean." Because, if you understand what happened in Philadelphia and the teachings of what was taking place in the Church at that time, it was like, "Laodiceans? They're really bad! No one ever wants to be a Laodicean. You never want to be lukewarm." "Do you think you're lukewarm?" "No!" And yet Herbert Armstrong knew that there was and he said, "I wonder if 10% of you get it!" That shows we were right at the edge of Laodicea, the entire Church getting ready to go into Laodicea, because he knew it on a spiritual plane. Incredible, what we've lived through.

We learn so much through these things and those experiences that are molded and fashioned in us by the things we go through and it's a fight! It's not easy. I mean, it just rips your stomach out at times, your heart out. It's just like taking it out and stepping on it and the pain of relationships and things that we have that are no longer there. It's horrible!

People we draw close to, when they go away and go astray, and then they can turn against you and say the most vile things about you. Those things hurt because you used to walk to God's house side by side, and counsel blended sweet. But you learn through that that's the way we all are. You have to fight not to be that way, not to let down, not to coast, never to become lukewarm.

Even so, Father, because it's a good thing in Your sight that all things should be delivered to me by my Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father. In other words, by or through the Father. **Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son,** in other words, by or through the Son. It's true. It's so powerfully true.

We can't come to know Christ, we can't come to know him as our Passover, our High Priest and our soon coming King now except that God the Father begin to draw us. We can't know God the Father except that God has given all power and might to Christ to lead and guide and direct the Church. Christ has to work with, does mold and fashion the entirety of the Church, gives to us what we need as we need it on a spiritual plane so that we can come to know God the Father more and more. That's what it's about and both are working at what they do in a very powerful way.

So, that's what it's talking about, no one... It's both of them and they work side by side to accomplish, to fulfill, to bring into so many more into God's Family. Then in the Millennium this is going to be expanded exponentially, incredibly so.

Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal. So, all power has been given to Christ, truly has, to bring everything under his feet, first and foremost. When that's done that means it's all under God's feet in the sense of all power that resists God is now gone and everything is brought into unity and oneness with God.

Come to me, all who labor, so there is work to be done, **and under heavy weight**. So, we do carry heavy weight, burden in the sense of what we feel in this life. But as it says, **and I will give you rest**. From what you are carrying.

We live in this world, and the things we go through are not meant to be easy, and God will help us in the loads that we tend to carry ourselves, that bag of rocks, as Johnny so often talks about. You want to get rid of the rocks as fast as you can and this weight that you're pulling behind you. But we all have them. It's a part of life and it takes work. It takes a lot of work.

Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, God's way. It's about persevering. It's about fighting. Because the Kingdom of God can be received in absolutely no other way. You have to want it, be dedicated for it, be focused upon it and willing to do everything it takes, everything.

So, what is our life? God's. Leave it in His hands because it is in His hands anyway. But if you're with God, part with God and with Christ, and in His holy habitation, and He dwells in you, you have it made, you're in His family.

Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls, for your life. Because that comes from God. It is something that only God can give us. Because in this life we have nothing but war and drama.

That's the way the world lives and it's not good, it's not pleasant. It's full of heartache and sorrow, evil. They don't even grasp all the evil that's around them because they don't know how to measure it anymore and they don't realize how hurtful and painful it is.

But we learn it and we know it and we're convicted of it, and we're convicted that there is only one way to have true peace with God's mind, with God's way of life and to have it you have to fight; you have to persevere for it.

He says, **For My yoke is easy and My burden is light**. We don't think it's so easy, but on a spiritual plane and with what He can give you in your mind, He gives you the peace, He gives you the ability to keep moving forward.

But every one of you has to be convicted to persevere, and if you understand what that word persevere means you understand the battle that's involved and the wrestling right along with God. Because it's about what God has offered, His Kingdom, and you're wrestling with it. You want it. You want what He's offering you and you don't want to let go. That's the example that's there, that's given to us.

What an awesome thing, beginning with Passover, and the ability to come out of sin, it takes a lot of wrestling with this against the world for God's way of life with all of our being.