

We are rapidly approaching the season of the year that focuses upon the beginning of God's plan for mankind. Obviously, the Passover season.

To me it's exciting how God has set out everything. It's so logical, so powerful in the sense of from Passover to the Last Great Day. It's exciting to be able to see those things that God has placed in a plan that's easy to follow, once you know it, obviously. But you think about things in the world and holidays and so forth and they don't teach anything as a whole. You look at what God has given and it's systematic, it's orderly, awesomely constructed, and it's just an exciting thing to be a part of it all.

But anyway, we recognize in a very powerful way how Passover is the beginning of all that. I love, too, how it states it in scripture, how God has given it. It's not a Holy Day. It's not a High Day, and the reality is you can't enter into that plan unless you observe that day first of all, unless you have that day in your life, the Passover. All these things, to me, are just awesomely exciting. They always are when we focus on them and think about them.

So, since we're quickly approaching the Passover season this year we are going to focus on a journey that's continued over time to lead up to the complete fulfillment of Passover, and we're going to begin, I'm going to make a statement that would be good for us to contemplate, to think about as we start this series.

All contained in the meaning of Passover has not yet been fulfilled. Sometimes we think it has been, in many ways, but the reality is it hasn't. This series then is entitled *The Fulfilling of Passover*, with this being *Part 1*.

It carries all the way through God's plan, and this season, obviously, that we're coming up to is very powerful because it shows the beginning of that process, but it has to carry through the rest of the Holy Days as well. We're going to focus on some of that as we go through this series. This should take us right up to Passover season the way it looks because there is a lot to be covered here.

So indeed, Joshua the Christ came to fulfill his part, to die as the Passover for all mankind. He fulfilled his role of becoming the Passover sacrifice. It's important to note that all who are called by God have a part, a role to fulfill in the completion of Passover, and so we understand that, we know that, but sometimes don't think about those things in that context.

So we're going to read 1 Corinthians 5 here to begin with, verse 7 where it says, **1 Corinthians 5:7—Therefore, purge out the old leaven.** Scriptures like this to me are exciting because Christianity, traditional Christianity tries to say that Christ came along to do away with basically the Old Testament laws. Then you go to certain things, holidays are okay because he

came to do away with the rituals and so forth of the Holy Days, and so holidays are okay in their sight.

So to me, things like this are awesome because all the way through scripture after the first four gospels there, the rest of it then that begins to focus on the time after Christ makes it very clear that the Sabbath is a part of everyday life as far as Christians that followed God and followed the truth. Not every day, but every seventh day, and not Sunday. Those things become obvious. Holy Days are in there as well, and this is one of them that is very straightforward.

So Paul addresses that in Corinthians, even about Passover and how we are to observe Passover. Not a communion that's every week, but a Passover when Passover comes. He goes through those things and gives the example of how we're to do it exactly as Christ gave it on that last night of his life.

Here is another one, **Therefore, purge out the old leaven.** You know, people read this in the world and like, they don't know what it means as a whole. They just read through things because they've never been taught about the Days of Unleavened Bread. It has no meaning to them in that respect.

Therefore, purge out the old leaven that you may be a new lump just as you are unleavened. And so, we understand this kind of language because we understand God's truth, God's laws, and we understand the Holy Days. So, how are we unleavened? We know that we're not unleavened. We're to purge out, as it says here, "purge out the old leaven." That's an ongoing process for the rest of our life as long as we're in this body, "that you may be a new lump." That's our desire, our goal, our pursuit in this way of life.

It says, "just as you are unleavened." Now, that has meaning in the sense that it's about the Days of Unleavened Bread. We are unleavened on a physical plane in our homes and so forth, we get rid of the leaven and leavened products, and we eat only unleavened products. So this has meaning to us. But to the world it has no meaning.

For indeed, Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us. A lot of times if we're not careful when we think about Passover we tend to stop in this area about what he fulfilled. But we have to look at our lives too and how it continues to have meaning throughout our life and how this, what this all made possible for us.

Therefore, it says, **Let us keep the Feast.** You think, what do people see in the world? They don't like to address these things, especially people who teach about what scriptures say. They really don't want to go through this one here because this is pretty straightforward. "Let us keep the Feast." What Feast? Long after Christ was dead Paul was telling the Church to do this. Awesome!

...not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness. So, we see this. What an awesome thing, we're able to see this on a spiritual plane. People before the time of Christ, there was no meaning in any of this on a spiritual plane. To us it has great meaning.

So it says, **Let us keep the Feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness.** Because old leaven, that's what it is. It's about what we're striving to conquer and overcome. It's what we're trying to come out of and desiring to change to become new, a new lump.

...but with the unleavened bread, and this is a sermon in itself, **of sincerity and truth.** That's what God desires. He desires what is genuine inside of us. Not to go through rituals for the sake of ritual. Even in our own lives, not just to go through rituals of prayer or fasting or different things that we might do or going to Sabbath services or tithing or going to Holy Days. It's much more than that. It's what's inside of us and why we choose to do those things and how we agree that those things are right for us, and why we hold on to them with all of our being.

To be genuine, and so where there is sin in our lives we're not being genuine. Because we're cutting off the flow of God's spirit if we're not repenting - which is about Passover in our life that continues on, the work of Passover that continues on. So, not only is it the beginning, not only does it start before the Holy Days, but it carries us through them as well. Because that has to be in our life, this continual process of repentance, of change, of conquering self, getting rid of the old leaven.

...not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. So, it's a beautiful scripture in that regard. Truth. What is truth? It's God, God's word, the truth that He gives us to see, to understand, to grasp as we begin to be called, our minds are opened up to see things that before we couldn't see, that we didn't learn on our own. He had to give them to us. He had to show us. Perhaps by hearing something and we began to be drawn or perhaps reading something we began to be drawn to God.

So over the past couple of years we have really been focusing upon how we know so very much about God's plan that so many before us had no knowledge of. You go through the first four thousand years, and they had so very little knowledge. They really did. About what God was doing. How they lived their lives, that's what was important, in their attitude toward God, their thinking toward God with whatever God gave them at any moment in time. Whatever present truth they had is how they were judged.

That's an awesome thing to understand. Then to see what happened when Christ came along and began to teach things that no one had ever heard before. They had never heard those kinds of things. They didn't grasp the spirit of the Old Testament, of scriptures written by the prophets and so forth.

And then I think of us. I think, we have so much. We've talked a lot about that in the past couple of years because we really need to see that because that will help us to become more thankful, more appreciative, more excited about what we do have, to recognize how awesomely blessed we are above all people who have ever lived. Just because we live now and

have a calling and are able to be a part of the Body of Christ at this time! That's exciting. That's inspiring.

So very many before us knew so very little, in that regard, compared to what we have today. So very little compared to what God began to give through Herbert Armstrong. Then more began to be added rapidly, in a very powerful way. Not just a restoring of truth, it went beyond that. It really did. Not just a restoring of truth to the Church because of what had been lost from the time of the early apostles and what the Church went through during all the different eras, and it got weaker and weaker until the time of Sardis when it almost just totally died out. It came to that point where it was, God said, spiritually dead. He had to raise up the one who was going to lead the next era, Philadelphia.

Incredible history to be able to go back and remember those things and see what we're a part of and see what we've been through. History is important in God's Church.

Our history while we've been in God's Church is important. We're never to forget our calling. We're to remember. It should be something so powerful in our minds to recognize, to understand how we were able to learn the truth.

So again, that first four thousand years. I marvel at that. I really do. We're going to go into that in the beginning of this series and talk about some of those things, and it should help us to see in a greater way what we have now and to recognize what they had then and to understand the incredible vastness of change since that time. Because sometimes we just don't grasp how great the things are which God has given to us.

So, how incredible that we fully grasp that he never had life (speaking of Christ), before he was born of Mary. How many know that?

See, we can know a lot of truth and not grasp, not understand how awesome it is what we see at a moment in time, what we see that others can't see. All who are scattered out there, thousands and thousands of people in different groups in organizations, they can't see that. They haven't been given that yet. One day they'll have to address that in their own thinking, in their own minds, many in the Great White Throne. Some to whatever God desires in this transition from one age to another when God's government is established.

And so, we're given to know that. But I've known a lot of people who got to this point and knew this but didn't really believe it. Not deeply. Because if they had really believed it with all their being in sincerity and in truth they wouldn't have given it up, they wouldn't have compromised. But they had to compromise because they went to something else. Incredible! Incredible what can happen when we sin and we come to a point where we can't or don't repent anymore because we begin to become weaker and weaker and God just cuts us off from His holy spirit. It's happened to so many.

So we're going to go back by looking at different fragments of that long period of time, that first four thousand years, and consider some of the great and notable people whom God called

during that time. Because God does the building and He worked personally with different ones. Not a lot of people in many regards, in that first four thousand years, and that's rather mind-boggling in itself. Not a lot in that first loaf, as I talked about last Sabbath, of the two wave loaves. The first wave loaf pictures the first four thousand years, and then after the Church began in 31 AD it talks about the next wave loaf, both received by God. It's quite incredible.

But not a lot in that first one. Awesome! And that God worked personally? Now, He works personally with us too, but in a different fashion in the sense of an organized Body through Christ. Christ is the head of the Church and that's how God works with us. He does the calling, but we're given to Christ.

Then in a broader manner through the instrument of the Church, through the Body of Christ, God works with a lot of people then in a very powerful way, and given knowledge, ability to see things and ability to grow in ways that didn't happen in the Old Testament. Not in the same way. Awesome!

So let's turn all the way back to Genesis 4. We understand that Joshua freely offered up his own life to fulfill God's purpose. He gave his life as an offering for all of mankind. It's interesting to go back, as we're going to do, and see how God built upon this concept very early on and added more and more and more through time. It's really quite awesome.

I can't help but think of construction when you look at something like this. God just kept building and building and building, and more of the structure then could be seen. By the time we get to the Church, awesome, now it really begins to be fulfilled more in the sense of construction. But it's still going to take two thousand years. What a project when you talk about construction. Our minds to grasp that, not so easy.

So there is much meaning then in what God did and how He fulfilled these things and teaching these things. So going back right now to look at where the first offerings are recorded to have occurred. As we go through the story to me it's just exciting to be able to see how God just kept building in order to give us more. We can go back through and look at some of that and be in awe of where it led. Here in Genesis not a lot said, and yet a lot, as we start through this story.

Genesis 4:1—Now, Adam knew Eve his wife and she conceived and bore Cain (brought forth Cain). So, we know the story and we know what happened here at this point. But this is where God began to teach. This is where God began to lay down part of a foundation. Not the whole foundation but just part of a foundation.

Again, I think of construction. When you're talking about something large and something great, foundation is awesomely important for what it's going to hold up and the work that goes into building it, the more it gets built, and then you can stand back and look at it, ah, awesome.

So she conceived and bore Cain. As we start through Genesis these are just little capsules of time. Doesn't go into a lot, but enough that we're to learn from it.

...and said, I have acquired (I have gotten) a man from the Eternal. Now, we can just read through this and it's hard to grasp what they felt, what they thought. They saw animals. They were around animals. They saw birth of animals because of how some of that process takes place faster. And then, finally, herself. God was there to teach them, to guide them through some things that took place. We don't know how much, but again, she saw God in it at that point, that this was of God.

Kind of reminds me of last Sabbath and even another story I saw not too long ago about the question of whether Adam and Eve had a belly button. It's like, why would they? They weren't born, they were created. They were made. So the reality is they didn't need one, it wouldn't have been there for that reason unless God just wanted to create something like that. But what would be the purpose?

That was the beginning and what an incredible thing. So, "I've gotten a man," "begotten a man from the Eternal." In other words, God has made this possible. Don't understand all this, what's happening.

Then she brought forth again, this time his brother Abel. Now, Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. So, they were different in that regard, had different work that they did. One enjoyed, in this respect, keeping of sheep, the other working with the earth, the ground, planting things and raising crops.

Now, in the process of time, doesn't tell us how much at this point when this happened, **it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the Eternal.** So, this is a first place where we see about an offering, to offer something to God. God had to give them some kind of instruction about some of this and what this meant in a relationship to Him. And so, he followed through with that and did that at this point.

Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock. So, how did he know to bring the firstborn? Because God had to tell him. So again, we're not given a lot here, but we're given enough to grasp a part of what took place. **...and of their fat.** All of it having meaning in what God was going to build on a spiritual plane in a spiritual family. In time it would all lead to that. But here is just very meager beginning of instruction, them not knowing at all what it was about. They didn't know what it was about. They didn't know what it pictured.

Now, the Eternal respected... The word has to do in the Hebrew with "gazed upon" or "looked upon" which basically indicates that, as we understand offerings and so forth, that He received that Himself from him.

So the Eternal—they translated it "respected," but again, having to do with what He received, **received Abel and his offering.** Because that's what it's all about. It's about an offering being given to God and whether God will accept the offering.

...but He did not respect, “He did not receive” Cain and his offering. So already, just by reading that, we know something was wrong with Cain. Because there has to be a reason why God wouldn’t accept it.

Then Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell. He didn’t get what he thought he ought to have from that. Again, it doesn’t tell us that relationship and how God worked with them or communicated with them at this point, but obviously had to for them to know some of these things. Whether it was through their parents and what was given to Adam and Eve, doesn’t say.

Verse 6—but it does say here, **So the Eternal said to Cain...** He communicated directly with Cain. **Why are you angry, and why has your countenance fallen?** In other words, it was an attitude problem and God was dealing with an attitude. So here is his opportunity to look at himself and answer the question truthfully. It reveals right there something was wrong because he wouldn’t answer truthfully.

He was very deceitful in how he dealt with God and how he was communicating with God, and God knew this about him already. That’s why it wasn’t received. Because he wasn’t doing what was right in his life and the offering meant nothing. That’s why God didn’t receive it.

It’s not a matter of going through the motions, it’s doing it for the right reasons. That’s what’s being brought out here. At the very beginning this is what’s being brought out and kind of lost as you go through time then with the Israelites and so forth, and you begin to see something that is just physical. But it reveals something deeper in people and that the answer was never in physical offerings and sacrifices. So, we have to learn that through time. But what an incredible thing that God began to establish a foundation to learn from, to build upon.

So, this is what God said to him: **If you do well**, if you’re doing good, what is right... So what’s it say? He wasn’t. That was the problem. He wasn’t living right. Whatever that was, we don’t know, but God makes it very clear here. **...will you not be accepted?** Literally, it means to be “raised up; received.” “Will what you have given, will you not be raised up, received?” Because there is a reality in a relationship with God that we’re blessed in that relationship when we do right. God raises us up.

Human nature, carnality tries to raise itself up. That’s pride, and God can’t work with pride.

With humility, a humble spirit, God can work with that. That’s all He can work with in human beings because otherwise we’re not going to respond properly. So, we have to have that spirit of humility within us for God to work with us, otherwise it doesn’t work if we take it to ourselves, if we get lifted up. There is a lot of meaning in this just right here.

But if you do not do well, if you’re not doing what is right, **sin lies at the door.** That’s where you are. There is sin here. Made it very clear something is wrong; it has to be addressed. **...and it’s desire is for you.** So, in a very unique way we can look back at that and grasp that on a spiritual plane, what that means, because we understand our nature, our nature “lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, the pride of life.”

We try to raise ourselves up. It's about self. It is about selfishness in our own thinking as human beings, and it has to be addressed. The reality is selfishness produces sin. That's what it produces. It's just a natural thing in our life. God made us this way. That until we come to a point of being drawn out of that, of called out of that, of being able to deal with it, for a change to take place in the mind, we're selfish and it always leads to sin. That's why the world is like it is. Mankind is deep in sin. It doesn't believe that, but that's where it is.

"And it's desire is for you." It's just a natural thing. **But you should rule over it.** So what a powerful thing in the very beginning of scripture here. God is revealing to us that we're not to have sin rule over us in our life. Selfishness is not supposed to rule over us when we begin to have a relationship with God. We're to learn to rule over self. That's choices. That has to do with what governs our life, making choices about what governs our life.

So, this is very basic but very powerful. But he couldn't understand it. But it's given to us, to people who have God's spirit to see and understand what this is all about. Other people in the world, they read this, it's a story. They can't grasp it.

But you should rule over it. Rule over self in order to rule over sin. And we fall short in that, hence offerings and sacrifice are needed. So what does that lead to in time? Well, we understand what it led to in time, but here is where it begins to be built upon.

Now, Cain said to Abel his brother... or he talked to, it says here, but he said to, Cain, his brother, when they were in the field. So, talks about when this came to pass. So, this is very awkward language in Hebrew and how it's translated but at some point here a discussion, there was a discussion about this moment, about meeting together. That's what this was about.

So, they were in the field, **when they were in the field**, so it was a coming together to discuss something, **then Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and killed him.** It doesn't tell us what it was about. It doesn't just tell us what the discussion was about. But the point is is that Cain had a motive for doing all this and it was to lure. He had an intent behind it of what he was going to do, and he was exceedingly jealous of his own brother to the point of willing to put him to death. Mind-boggling. In the very beginning of mankind on the earth and this already happens.

It's the history of mankind, kill, kill, kill, murder, get your own way, destroy, conquer. We see it in the world. We see it very powerfully right now rippling through Europe (at least a part of it), that's going to lead to something else in time here whatever that might be. So, we watch, we're alert, realizing it's only a Thunder. Right now, a very powerful one, but it's a Thunder.

Then the Eternal said to Cain, Where is Abel your brother? Cain's problem was he was deceitful. He's a liar. That's what happens when somebody becomes deceitful, they become a liar. And to lie to God shows he had very little grasp of His creator, truly. Didn't honor that, didn't respect that, went through the motions of something to get something, and when he

didn't get it he became angry and upset. He wasn't recognized. Human nature wants to be recognized. Sick. It really is sick the way we are as human beings.

That's why we have to conquer this. We have to conquer this human part, which is only selfishness. That which is in us that comes from God, that impregnation of God's holy spirit is what we seek to grab a hold on and fight for and have fed constantly continually by God's holy spirit, by a right relationship with God, and we're blessed to be able to have our minds transformed and changed over time. Incredible.

Then the Eternal said to Cain, Where is Abel, your brother? He said, I do not know. What a liar! It reflects human nature, how deceitful people can be about sin, about horrible sin. And yet this is a common thing with human beings. We try to hide it. Just like Adam and Eve when they were in the garden, in the thickness of the trees and so forth, trying to hide from God. They didn't want to have to face God with knowing what they had done. Incredible how we can be, and if we could just grasp that that's the way we are.

That's why sometimes I've made comment that in times past visiting different ones, so often my wife and I have talked about different things about individuals that keep their distance from us, and we see a change and all of a sudden they're keeping their distance from us and not talking, not coming up to us or discussing or whatever it might be. See a pattern. That reflects something oftentimes, very often, because there is this hiding because there is sin in there that hasn't been dealt with properly yet. As long as that exists the person isn't comfortable around God's own ministers. It's a spiritual thing. It's incredible.

Where is Abel, your brother? He said, I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper? What an attitude. I mean, smirky, disgusting; I mean, that's really sick. "Am I my brother's keeper?" It's amazing how we try to justify ourselves sometimes as human beings. This is here to learn from, to be disgusted with our human nature.

"Am I my brother's keeper? Am I to watch over? Am I to guard, to preserve my own brother? I've got my own stuff to do. Why should I have to worry about him? I'm supposed to watch over him too?" Attitude. Justification. That's what people do with sin so often. It's a matter we have to justify it in our minds somehow.

Then He said (God said), What have you done? Still going to lie. What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground. Now, that should have caught him right there and helped him to come to acknowledge, yes, I abhor what I did. But it didn't.

You think, what a sick, sick spirit, mind, attitude. Hideously disgusting. That's the way we should see all sin, especially if we're trying to justify something in our minds, in our lives.

The voice of your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground. So, now you are cursed upon the earth. Awkward translation sometimes of things that are said there "from the earth," blah, blah, blah. Well, the reality is that when sin enters into our life that's not repented of or

people don't try to deal with the sin, to change, to do something right, then there is a thing that happens in life. Because sin brings forth curses.

We had this old thinking about curses and so forth. The reality is your life isn't blessed. God will bless our lives when we're doing what is right, when we seek to change and so forth, when we're seeking to be close to God in spirit and in truth, in sincerity and truth, but the other side of that is if we don't our lives are just going to be unhappy, unfulfilled. That's the curse and wherever that leads. Because sin just leads to more calamity, hardship, evil in life.

Sometimes people get this concept of curses, "You're cursed! This is going to happen to you!" No, the sin did it. Now, sometimes greater judgment is passed; like what we're getting ready to go through in this world, it's a matter of judgment after 6,000 years. Is that a curse? Well, it sure isn't a fun thing to go through but, you know, it's just a matter that God has allowed this to happen now because this is the time. We've always been cursed in human life in the sense of sin. That's what it produces. Not blessings.

So now you are cursed upon the earth, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. He knew. God knew, obviously. But Cain should have picked up on this, but he had to protect self. Incredible.

This thing of "a brother's keeper," it's about how we should be as human beings, especially in God's Family, when we come into the Church and things that we're supposed to think toward one another because it's not just people. It's people who belong to God. It's people who have been brought into a family and that family is to be a unique family above all families on the earth. Yet I have seen so many things where that hasn't been addressed that way in life in the Church.

So, we have responsibility toward one another. That's what God was addressing. We have responsibility, but you didn't follow through and do your responsibility. You didn't love your brother. And I think of John, 1 John, so much that's written, that's what it's about. So, we're to learn that from all this. In life, it's about family, and if we can't learn on a physical plane when we're drawn it's hard to apply it on a spiritual plane.

Let's turn over to Genesis 11, on to Genesis 11, because this is the next time the use of offering is mentioned. It's after the flood, and actually right at ten generations after the flood, from Noah, Noah's time. Noah lived 350 years after the flood. What an awesome thing to understand that up until about the age of 50 that Abram had the influence of his great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great (if I did that ten times) grandfather. He was still alive. Lived that long after the flood. Mind-boggling. Exciting to see how God transitioned mankind from a period of time when people lived for a long, long time and then on into an age and life spans got shorter and shorter. Incredible.

Anyway, we're going to look at some of this as we go on in talking, again, about offerings, and they're mentioned at this period of time, and we're going to begin to consider the migration of people on the earth after the flood. Because that's what this is all about.

Genesis 11:31 it says, **Now Terah took his son Abram, and his grandson Lot, and son Haran, and his daughter in law Sarai, his son Abram's wife; and they went out with them from Ur of the Chaldeans, to go to, or toward, as it is, the land of Canaan.** Now, this is a beginning of a first big movement, in that respect, for this particular lineage, this particular family. And so if you look at the different regions there when they came down from Ararat and that region there, there were areas we know, Babylon and Iraq basically in that region of the world, but a little farther down from what appears to be in every way are the Chaldeans in the area of Iran. So some moved on in that particular direction, which was this family, and that was that particular region, again, a little farther to the south and east of the area of Babylon.

Some aren't going to like the geography part. I love geography. I love places. It's one thing that can stick in my mind better than most things. In the sense of names or whatever, I have to work more at that. But when it comes to locations I can be in one place at one time and go back many, many years later and remember the directions and so forth. That's the way it is with maps and the like.

I don't know if I should tell this story or not. I find it interesting; different people have different abilities doing different things. I think of the first time I wanted to go into ROTC, before I came into the Church, and I knew that if I had two years of college than I could go into ROTC and as soon as I came out of it the next two years, they would pay for my next two years in college, and I'd come out as a lieutenant.

I wanted to go into the air force, as I've mentioned in times past, and I wanted to be a pilot because different ones were going to Vietnam and so forth and I didn't want a machine gun in my hand, I wanted the biggest weapon I could have, and it was in a jet. So, I'd always had a desire to fly anyway. (I fly now but I don't do the flying, and it's not so exciting anymore.)

Anyway, I went down to eastern part of Kansas to go through a bunch of testing and so forth and one of the tests I had flying colors on - because one thing they wouldn't do at that time was accept someone who didn't have 20/20 vision. So, that wiped me out and I didn't even know that, as far as being a pilot. But I went in, and they had these tests where they'd show you different pictures as you're looking down on maps and they would have you pick out a particular map with a different altitude and a different configuration to see if you could (and it's for bombing, obviously), and so the idea was to be able to navigate in through the air at different times, in that regard.

So anyway, I scored very high on that, and they let me know that I couldn't be a pilot, but I could become a navigator. Anyway, that was another story. Which, I wasn't real happy about.

But anyway, some people like this kind of stuff I'm going to go through, the point is, and some aren't going to like it. Sorry. But I would encourage you if you do like this to look up these locations, because to me it brings another aspect to light, excitement to how God, especially what God did in where He led them, because it means more a little bit later in the story here. And so, if you know these migrations and what they did it becomes really powerful, it really does, in the sense of the complete story. I'd encourage maybe to look up some of these places later on. I thought about getting a map up here, but I have to stand back then, the camera wouldn't catch me, and have to try to show the map, and anyway, decided not to do that.

So here we have the story of Terah, which is what his name was. That's how it's pronounced. He begins this journey. So, they're going to leave the area where they had been and where they had settled after the flood. As it says here, took along Lot. So, it's not talking about others who traveled with them, but it zeroes in on those who became important later on in the travels. So, it wasn't just them that travelled but these are the ones that it focuses in on. That's why it mentions them.

It's mentioning, again here, his grandson Lot, the son of Haran, and his daughter in law, Sarai, his son Abram's wife. They went out with them from Ur of the Chaldeans to go to or toward the land of Canaan. And so, they're going to be moving westward.

...and they came to Haran and dwelt there. Now, some of these names as we go through some of the story here they're names that were used in scripture to tell where they were, but they didn't have those names for a while in some cases because certain instances of who was there or what the name meant, then it became known as a particular place.

It's just like the word for "Yahweh," in so much of Genesis here, when it mentions "Yahweh," they didn't know Him as Yahweh. So, that wasn't until that was given to Moses, when God revealed.

That's awesome in scripture to go through that, but they wrote scripture according to that, Genesis, Exodus, and so forth, up to that point in time, you come to Moses. But Genesis, it uses that name, but they didn't know who He was, they didn't have that name. But again, that's a translation that's used. I hope that makes sense to you.

So anyway, moving from Ur of the Chaldees to the area of Haran, **and they dwelt there. So the days of Terah were two hundred and five years: and Terah died in Haran.** So again here, telling his lifespan in a nutshell, not much more, obviously, in that regard, because the scriptures go on to focus on where God was working and with whom God was working.

Again, God inspires these things as well, but there was a reason for travelling in that particular direction, getting closer to an area. So this is a pretty good distance back in those days that they already travelled, where they settled down.

Then we come to **Genesis 12:1—Now the Eternal said to Abram, Get out of your country, away from your family, and from your father's house.** Well, it wasn't back in Ur of the

Chaldeans that He's talking about. He's talking about in the area of Haran where Terah had taken them. So he was the one that moved up that way, but a lot of people settled there who went on the same migration. But it's focusing primarily on Abram, Sarai, and Lot.

So now God communicates to Abram. What an incredible thing. That long, that much time later after Noah and finally begins to focus on the next great step in God's plan and what He was going to do. Incredible!

Move away from your family and from your father's house to a land I will show you. I will make you a great nation. So the beginning of promises. That in itself is exciting when you realize what God did. But here is the beginning of it. God's building starting out very small, but picking an individual because of His plan of what He's going to do. Things that are hard for us to grasp and comprehend, truly.

I will bless you and make your name great. Now, He didn't just start working with him here, because he had to have an influence already of things that he knew. That's why, hence, he knew his great-great-great-great grandfather Noah, and this had to be in his mind, a knowing of these things that he was moved by. Because when God began to work with him he responded very powerfully, ready to go. Because it makes it very clear, it says, basically, he went. That's what he did. He did exactly what God told him to.

I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great, and you shall be a blessing. Still is to this day. It's a blessing to us, a blessing throughout God's plan because of what was built starting with him.

I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse them who curse you. And so, we understand how that is accomplished. Sometimes God did intervene to give them favor, obviously, and those who turned against His nations, turned against them, God did intervene to give them favor to have ability to conquer and so forth others as we go on in the story later on. This is how God did that because He gave favor to Abraham and on through the lineage.

"I will bless those who bless you." Those who will be at peace with you, God blessed. Those who went to war with them, they weren't blessed. Because God had a purpose for what He was building, and it starts in a very physical way on a very physical plane with a very physical carnal people.

...and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed. We're a part of that blessing. We've been blessed because of what God did in working with Abram, and then Abraham. Incredible, how God brought all this to pass. More than a nice story, it's God's design, it's God's work and understanding He's given us to comprehend all this and what it means to us that God did that so long ago directly after the flood.

Verse 4—So Abram departed, as the Eternal had spoken to him. He did it. He's going to do what God gave to him to do. ...and Lot went with him. Now, Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. Then Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's

son, and all the rest who were part of this, as it says here, **and their possessions that they had gathered, and the people whom they had acquired in Haran.** This includes servants and different ones as well. ...**and they departed to go to the land of Canaan.**

So they came to the land of Canaan. So right up to the edge and where it began, and the story continues then in **Verse 6—Abram passed through the land to the place of Sichem, as far as the Terebinth tree of Moreh.** Now, this doesn't mean it was a single tree and all of a sudden they came to this one tree. It's like if you've ever been in certain parts of the country and all of a sudden, maybe especially at different altitudes, of travelling and all of a sudden you come to an area of a certain kind of tree that stands out, and it's noted for that particular area.

I think of some places in Colorado that are like that when you're in the mountains and all of a sudden you come to a certain area there are certain kind of trees. They're not in other areas but they're in this particular altitude. It's the way it is oftentimes when you're travelling in different areas and especially when you go through different elevations.

These are oaks. That's what supposedly these were. But it's just saying when they came to the oaks of this particular region. That's what it's known for. So, you know when you came out of a more desolate area, to an area where now you knew where you were because here you are in the area of these trees. In this case, oaks of this type.

And the Canaanites were then in the land. So reminding again this is where they were, this is where they dwelt. **Then the Eternal appeared to Abram, and said, To your descendants I will give this land.**

Now, if you look on a map and you're coming south, because that's what they were doing, they were travelling south from this high area up there, up into Syria, and they were coming southwards. It's below the Sea of Galilee. The Sea of Galilee, and down below that the River Jordan going through there, and then you come down to the Dead Sea. So, they're up in this particular area a little farther south than of, quite a bit farther south than of this area of the west side of the river, Jericho river, I should say, and they come to the region that's known as Sichem. Canaanites are throughout this particular part of the land.

So, it's a continuing journey. This is a long distance because it's about 500 miles when it's all said and done. So, it's not a small thing when you have that many people travelling and you're travelling through different lands like that. So, here they're going from Haran all the way south. They've come quite a way now into what would be known as Israel today, obviously, and you're below the Sea of Galilee, even through Lebanon and so forth on down.

So, it says here **Abram passed through the land to the place of Sichem as far as the trees of Moreh. And the Canaanites were there in the land. Then the Eternal appeared to Abram, and said, To your descendants I will give this land.** So, that's what He did later. He's taking him right through the land that he's going to have as an inheritance. Later on, it's going to be

given to his descendants. This area here is into that part, that area, deep into it at this point, candidly, and they've already passed into it quite a bit farther back.

But again, what an incredible story that he's travelling through the very land that his descendants later on are going to receive from God, of the different tribes. To me, what becomes interesting too, when you see the different tribes that were up in through there and where God placed them and stuff, it's an incredible story, it really is, the different lands that God gave to different tribes.

He said, To your descendants I will give this land. So there he built an altar to the Eternal. Built an altar. He had knowledge of these things, obviously, of offerings and so forth. That's generally the purpose of an altar, but not necessarily at this point.

So again here, **He built an altar to the Eternal who had appeared to him. Then he moved from there to the mountain east of Beth-el.** So this is going pretty much straight south now and almost across from the area of Jericho was where the children of Israel came into the promised land. That's where Beth-el is. Then Ai is almost like in a straight line going down a little bit toward Jericho.

So, here you have Beth-el and Ai on the side of it, common things that we read sometimes in scripture. So, he's travelling south through this region, comes to Beth-el. **He moved to the mountain east of Beth-el and pitched his tent with Beth-el on the west and Ai on the east.** So, right in that area in between there.

This wasn't known as Beth-el yet in the story, okay? It's referring to where he travelled and where he did this, but it's not called Beth-el yet. That comes on later on in the story. To me that's exciting too when you realize here is where Abram built an altar, and then later on what took place in this particular area. We're going to have a couple series just to get to this point. It's going to take a while to show the significance of what God was doing and what God was building, what God was giving to His people, and the importance of these things as it all fits together.

Then, it says, he built an altar to the Eternal and called on the name of the Eternal. So Abram journeyed, going on still toward the south. Now, this word "south" has to do with the Negev. It's what the word means, basically. That's not a very nice region. If you're talking about the Negev you're talking about a desert area way to the south of current day Israel as well. So, they're moving much farther south here now toward that area of the Negev. The upper portion has more that's there, but you get into it a little bit farther and it's desolate as all get out. So, they're going to come down to the northern part of that particular area.

Now, there was a famine in the land. That particular area, I can understand it. It's pretty desolate out there. I've mentioned that recently. When you're driving down through there it's sparse. You have to have people out there herding goats and whatever sheep and so forth, and

it gets more sparse, and then you get to where there is absolutely nothing until you get all the way down to Eilat in the very southern tip of Israel going through the Negev Desert.

So anyway, they moved down to an area that is not that great, but it's still great depending on how you use it and what the purpose is and what you're going to do. But you don't go too much farther south, so this is where they're going to land.

Now, there was a famine in the land and Abram went down to Egypt to dwell there; for the famine was severe. So, if you have a famine there it's pretty bad throughout that particular region, and so went on down into Egypt.

After the short time in Egypt (just go through part of the story here), Abraham returned to where he had first made the altar to God in the area of Beth-el. So, I'm going to skip through a bunch of the story here and you can read it on your own. But he was a short time down there. It talks about some of the encounters he had and what took place and what he did.

But as Lot and Abram grew greater, the story goes on to tell, they came to the separation of ways. So, you know this particular part of the story. They came to a separation of ways. They were growing greater, so Lot and Abram came to a point where something had to be divided up as far as the families were concerned. You can't have two great families growing together in the same area and be peace and plenty for everybody. There comes a point in time where people want to stake out their own area for their own livestock or whatever it might be. That's basically what they came to at that point in time.

They came to this point of separating their ways and Lot remained in that particular region on down toward the fertile areas of the Jordan River. So, there is that particular area where they were which is in the area of Be'er Sheva, which is kind of in the north part of the Negev but still has decent land but not as green. If you look on a map you'll see what I'm talking about. It's just barely south, and you get a little north of that. But things have changed over several hundreds of years, a few thousand years as well so there may have been more in that particular area. We really don't know, it doesn't say. But when you get in the Negev you know what you have. But again, it starts to show some green because it gets green north of there, but it's not too green where they are right there around Be'er Sheva.

So, Abram moved toward the area of the region of Hebron, which is farther to the north, better land. Abram basically told Lot, "You can choose what you want, it's yours." Abram, he will take whatever because he looked to God. Whatever he had, he knew that God would bless him. And so, basically, giving the right to Lot to do whatever he wanted to do. So this is a part of the story here.

So Lot remained in that region all the way down to the fertile areas, if you look at the whole map here, even all the way up through the areas of Jordan, the Jordan River. But Abram moved to the area of Hebron and more to the west, all the way southward to Be'er Sheva. But he let Lot have the more fertile regions farther up.

It was after this that God appeared to Abraham as Melchizedek. So again, we know this part of the story, King of Salem. After that God appeared to Abraham in a vision reinforcing the commitment to make his lineage great and his inheritance great. So it just keeps building in this story here of how God was working with Abram.

Then we come to when Abram was 86 and Hagar bare him the son Ishmael. Tensions began, problems began. Families. Jealousies. Sarai becoming jealous, and it's understandable. You have a situation like this and what takes place and so she had agreed, she wanted some lineage, and so she couldn't bear children so she gave Hagar, who was an Egyptian, to Abram, and Ishmael was born as a result.

Then thirteen years later we come to this point in **Genesis 17:1—When Abram was ninety-nine years old... Incredible! ...the Eternal appeared to Abram and said to him, I am the Almighty God. He revealed Himself as El-Shaddai. Walk before me and be you perfect**, which means to "be upright and sound in what you do." And where does that come from? Well, it comes from God. It comes from learning from God and striving to live right in the way that God shows.

...and I will make My covenant between Me and you. Now, it's awesome because God had planned this so long ago already. He was going to do this and so He molded and fashioned Abram's life to go through various things. When God works with us and He's molding things in us we don't grasp, we don't really grasp that. We don't grasp what He's doing and how He's doing it. We can look at our own lives, as I've mentioned in times past, and think it's so puny, so small.

I think of the first speech I gave, which I've made comment about before, in Spokesman's Club, and it's like it's an ice breaker to talk about yourself and what have I done? I didn't realize how great my calling was at that point in the magnitude I did later on. Because I would have spoken about that. So, we think about our life, and we don't see it as being important or great. We look at different things in the world and realize we're not, and that's beautiful. That's a good thing.

We need to see ourselves and how God has drawn us out and called us to make us great. God's doing that. Sometimes we don't grasp how great that really is and what He'd doing with us as His people. Our life is so incredibly unique. The more we can see these things the more awesome it becomes, it really does. It's not a small thing. Exceedingly important in God's plan.

144,000, those who are still being worked with for that, how incredible. It's hard for us to grasp and understand that. Those who are going to be the ground floor, if you will, of God's Church in a new age, already having lived this way of life for a good period of time before that government is established on this earth. You can't comprehend what's ahead of you and what God has planned for you and what He's been molding. It's not by accident. You're going through difficult things in your life, God's people always do, and it has to do with God molding and fashioning us, how He's working with the mind to establish Himself in us. He gives us that opportunity.

That's why I think what a horrible thing when people who have so much, but they don't grasp how much they have, and they begin to want something else that's frivolous and meaningless in life. Another person that they think they're in love with and they leave God's Church over lust and greed and desire. Then time passes, and they realize, well, generally it's finding somebody else...and then somebody else. Because that's what sin does. It screws up the mind! We have choices to make. And obedience, loving God's law, His ways, is what heals the mind and makes us stronger. But all the other things are just absolute interference and can lead people away and have by the droves. By the droves!

I think of PKG. By the droves! People have come through and gone right on through, never grasping what they had, didn't treasure what they had. It makes me sick because I think, you don't know what you've given up! For what?! For some pleasure for a short season that you think is pleasurable, that you lust after, that you want, that's forbidden? Why would we do that? Why would anyone? But people do. Get lifted up with pride, think you know something else. You have this special relationship with God - and you've already lost God. Because when you get to that point and you think that way about yourself it's like, wow.

...walk before Me and be upright, be sound. We know where that comes from. It comes from God, the mind of God. So, we're told the same thing. What an awesome thing God was doing. From the time He listened to his great-great-great-great-great-great-great-great-great-great grandfather and knew that story.

His own sons didn't hold on to the truth. They went through the flood, and they disliked what happened. They didn't love God because of how they were saved and carried through to the other side. On the contrary, they became upset toward God because God, in their minds, took their world away, what they lusted after, what they enjoyed, what they liked. You think, how could that be when you experience something of that magnitude that you don't fear God even on a physical way? So you could maybe start learning something?

But Abram did. Unique. So, God was working with him from a very young age. He chose him at a very young age to mold and fashion him, hands on for a purpose. Took him through various experiences. God has the power to mold and fashion our minds, our being for that which is beyond our understanding and all that is good and right. Not to control but to give choices, especially within the realm of the Church.

But here, God in a very powerful way, took personal involvement here in how He worked with different ones throughout the Old Testament to bring about His plan. He gave various experiences, various things happened that would be exciting and moving to the people with whom He worked. He didn't offer that to others because it's not their time. It's to be in the Great White Throne. It was to pave the way.

I mean, to understand these things and how God has worked with people through time, it's absolutely—I can't find the words—a marvel beyond human comprehension. God has to give it to us, truly does.

...and I will make My covenant between Me and you. I think how each one of us is called. At that time God is telling us "I want to make My covenant between Me and you, to give you opportunity to be in My family." For some to be in the beginning phase of that Family. Others the beginning phase of a new age, to be the foundation of that.

Walk before Me, and be you perfect, and I will make My covenant between Me and you and will multiply you exceedingly. We have no comprehension of how awesomely blessed we're going to be in through time. But we believe it. As we grow, we come to believe it more and more, to realize everything that's created out there, that we can't even see the end of, that we've got this little thing shooting through space and it only sees a small, incredibly small fraction what's out there? It is!

You look at that crazy, little thing that's going out through there, a little speck of sand sending back pictures, and we become so intellectual about what it's all about and how it's all done and how it came to be. And you think, we're idiots. We're still idiots. God has to show us, and we get to be a part of it.

To know that there are things planned for us millions upon millions upon billions of years? Can't comprehend that. It's already planned out. It's already planned out. The evidence? Because it's there and God has said it's there for a purpose. Not just so we can look out there and say, "Oh, that's pretty big. Isn't that constellation awesome?" And so we're just going to sit back here on earth and see these things and have greater, better pictures than Hubble and that's going to be our excitement for millions of years? We just can't see. God will show us. It'll be exciting.

So what He told Abraham He tells us. It's a continuation of the story of life, of what God has planned for His Family.

Then Abram fell on his face and God talked with him, saying... He was moved by that in a very powerful way, what he was being told, and showed an awesome respect, and moved, in his mind to be moved in such a way this is what he did, a kind of fear and also an excitement, of something like this that's happening.

As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you. God tells us that. It's what we're brought to at baptism. Each one of us that's called out of this world He wants to make a covenant with us in order to make us great, in order to bring us into His Family. Think of baptism. He brings us to that point. It's a covenant agreement with God. "My life is Yours," and if we can grasp the magnificence, the greatness of that, which we can't at baptism. We can just barely see a few things. But we grow.

My covenant is with you, and you shall be a father of many nations. Neither shall your name be anymore called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham, for I have made you a father of many nations. I will also make you exceedingly fruitful and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come out of you.

Now, spoke in these terms because this is something that he could grasp more on a physical plane. But to grasp what it was really going toward? Not on your life, no more than us being able to grasp much more than a thousand, one hundred years in front of us that we see just very darkly. We don't even grasp that yet.

Even I will establish My covenant between Me and you, and your seed after you, and their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto you and to your seed after you. I will give unto you and to your seed after you the land wherein you are a stranger, all the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God. So, he travelled down through it, he knew where that region was, he saw a lot of it already. He couldn't understand all that, but he honored God, he loved God because of what God told him about his descendants and what would happen. But he didn't grasp how great that was to be and what was to come through time.

Verse 9—Then God said to Abraham, As for you, you shalt keep My covenant, You, and your descendants after you throughout their generations. What an awesome thing what God said there. He already knew what would happen because He designed it, He worked with it to make it happen. He was going to work with different ones in the family line to produce, to do what He said He was going to do. He could work with them and bring them to that point of such conviction because they were being worked with to be molded and fashioned for something very specific.

When God calls us to be molded and fashioned to be something very specific it's done, except by our stupid choices. We're the only ones who can get in the way. We're the only ones who can interfere with that process. But God is handing us everything when He gives us a calling that we have. That's why God has had to call through so many through time here, in the last 2000 years. Many have been called and very few chosen out of that, who have been able to go through the process. Why? Because of their choices. Not because of God.

The Apostasy, that was one thing we had to come to at that point in time. See, if this is God's Church then how could this have happened to God's Church? Oh, we did it. We did it. It wasn't God. Incredible!

This is My covenant, which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you. Every male child among you shall be circumcised. And you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins; and it shall be a sign of the covenant between Me and you. So again, unique what God gave to them at this point in time. Later we learn what this is all about, to lead to something that had far greater meaning. This was a physical thing of a separation as far as a people whom God was going to work with for a long period of time here until we came to the point of the time of Passover, of Christ and the Church being established, and learning that circumcision that God wants and is concerned with is of the heart and of the mind, how we think. Incredible and beautiful.

But things that would happen on a physical plane all had purpose of something in a design that is spiritual by nature and what God is building. The more you see that the more exciting it becomes, brethren, more and more exciting. The more it's in our life, the more exciting it becomes, the more in awe we become of God and what God is doing, the more we love God, the more we love Christ, the more we learn to love one another. Awesome!

Verse 15— Then God said to Abraham, as for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. And I will bless her also and give you a son by her. Then I will bless her, and she shall become nations and kings of people shall be from her. So, same thing that he told him earlier and now Sarai. This is Sarah and this is what's going to happen.

Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed. He's the first to laugh. Sarah also laughed later on. Isaac has to do with the very name "laughter; to laugh." Incredible.

Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed and said in his heart—didn't say it out loud, it's in his mind. God knows what's in the mind, what we're saying, what we're thinking. **Shall a child be born to a man who is one hundred years old?** Now, what's amazing is he had a lot of children later on. It wasn't just Isaac. **Shall a child be born of a man** (it was for Sarah, just one), **who is one hundred years old? Shall Sarah who is ninety years old bear a child?** "This is nuts! It's so nuts it's funny." So, God told him this and his response is to laugh.

So Abraham said to God, Oh that Ishmael might live before you. Now, by this time, what did I say, 13 years later, whatever, he loved his son, saw the uniqueness of his life, and rather than this having to take place, "Sarah. Look how old she is. Look at me. Can't it just be rather than going through this at this age, or her having to go through this, couldn't it be that these things are fulfilled," that's what he's saying, "through Ishmael?"

As for Ishmael, I have heard you. Well, again here, this was his desire. He had a desire there, as it said here. Again, this was a laughable thing to him and so that's why he's questioning God.

So Abraham said to God, Oh, that Ishmael might live before you. Then God said, No, Sarah your wife shall bear you a son and you shall call his name Isaac. He knew what the name meant. He knew what Abraham had already done, laughing that God could do this. Because it's about what God can do. It's not about something physical that they have to do.

I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his descendants after him. As for Ishmael, I have heard you. Behold, I have blessed him and will make him fruitful and will multiply him exceedingly. He shall beget twelve princes. So, they shall come from him, through him. Interesting, God uses that twelve there and used it for Israel.

He shall beget twelve princes and I will make him a great nation. But my covenant I will establish with "He laughs," Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you at this set time next year. So, now he's told when it's going to take place. This is going to happen soon. This is going to take place and it's going to be with Isaac.

Before Isaac is ever born God has a plan of what He's working out, how He's going to do it. None of these things happen by chance, by accident. God waited until they were old for a purpose, to inspire us, to move people later who would read these stories and think, "What an incredible God we serve! To bring His plan to pass, what He has planned, to work with individuals when it's His purpose, and He'll accomplish it, He'll do it."

So, from this point the story tells of how Sarah became jealous of Hagar and Ishmael and told Abraham to remove them. I believe that God has also shown to His Church why certain ones dress the manner they do with the veil over their face, to not be seen, to not be able to be seen as attractive, because of Sarah's jealousy and what she did. They don't even know why they do it.

Just like the serpent on the pole thing it's passed down generation after generation after generation. But Sarah started something here that's carried on for hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of years with a vast number of people on this earth. Sad.

So again, this point here Sarah wanted them removed. Abraham didn't want to do it, but God told him to do what she said, remove them. So he sent away Ishmael and Hagar and they lived farther to the east of Be'er Sheva on down toward the area of Edom farther to the east.

Then we come all the way down to **Genesis 22:1—Now it came to pass after these things that God tried Abraham.** "Put him to the test," literally what it means, put him to the test. This is for us. This was for others who would come later. God knew Abraham already but went through this. God does this in our lives. We're put to the test from time to time. Different ones are put to the test to reveal. Not to God; God knows where we are. But to the individuals, where they are, if they can but see it. Sadly, those who don't go in the right direction can't see it.

I've always referred to oftentimes those two elders up in Toledo area when I brought them together and said, "It's upon you. You don't have time. It's going to happen right now because of what's taking place. Which one do you choose? It's up to you. The people are looking to you in the congregation." That was their time and they failed it miserably. God knew they would.

Anyway, so He does that in our lives from time to time, to bring things to the surface, to reveal them. And so it says, **He put him to the test and said to him, Abraham,** then He said, **Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah,** later, the area around Jerusalem, Mount Moriah, you know that area.

So, He says, take him to the area of Moriah. **...and offer him there for a whole burnt offering.** Now, isn't that awesome when you know where it was? Isn't it awesome when you understand that God got Abraham on a journey and took him through various things and then told him, "Go there," because of what God had planned, that in time He's going to offer His own Son, give him an offering for mankind as our Passover? Now, this is very moving when you see it in that light. God gave a type of something here to show what we're to be like and what we're to do, but it's only a type of what was going to happen later on.

Those things ought to move us very powerfully so. It's not a small thing that God chose the places He did and the things that took place in some of the different regions and the manner that they did, that have incredible meaning to them in a relationship with God and how God works with our lives in the most minute detail of things that so often we don't even recognize until later on we can look back.

I don't have 20/20 vision, but I've grown in a lot of that vision looking back, you know, over time. Because God helps us to see it better and better as time goes on. I look back at those things and I marvel. Because if I hadn't gone through them I wouldn't be up here today. If I hadn't gone through them I wouldn't have the ability to do or see or know the things that I have been brought to know and see. God's done it. But we're able to be a part of it and it's exciting and inspiring when we grasp that. Awesome!

And so it is Moriah. Dumbfounding! Truly. ...and offer him there for a whole burnt offering on one of the mountains which I will tell you. Then He offered His own son. Said, "You can have him." A certain amount of time is given, put him to death, put him in a tomb, and this is what's going to take place, Passover of all mankind. I mean, how incredible the meticulousness, the minuteness, if you will, of how God works in our lives.

We had someone respond recently to an email. Well, it was an email the Church received, and the individual had read about the countdown and basically he liked, basically, things he saw and went through until he got to that part there, "and I just got too bogged down." You got too bogged down in times and details and don't see the importance of all that, but you know what, I do because I know. I know and know that I know that there are specific times that God has given to us as His people, end-time prophetic periods that we've come to understand is 1260 days.

I love math. I used to love math until I got into calculus. Loved math. And you think, what an incredible thing when you see how God does things through numbers, through times, through things that take place, and you realize a period of time that God gave. And dumbfounding, it really is, when you see some of those things, of how they work out. There are still some things working out that we don't grasp nor understand. We will later.

So you look at how God worked through that period of time with different ones and here is something so incredible right back to where it was to picture something in a very powerful way that would happen later on about offerings, about a relationship with God Almighty, about an individual who is ready to give his own son on a human plane because he believed God. It's powerful.

But God had molded that into him. God knew exactly what he was going to do. This was all planned out. It wasn't anything by chance. What would have happened if he went up there and didn't do it? "Oh, that part of the plan didn't work out, what it's supposed to picture and what it's supposed to be a type of." No, God knew exactly what Abraham was going to do. He prepared him for it. Whew.

We should be in such awe of such things that God can do in our lives. But we just have to follow and fight against self, and it's all there.

So Abraham rose early in the morning, saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and he split wood for the burnt offering and rose up and went to the place which God had told him.

I think I'm just going to read this to you for times sake. **Hebrews 11:17—By faith when Abraham was put to the test,** and God had prepared him to pass it. "To make proof of," is what the word means in essence, to go out and try like oxen that a person buys and see how well they do. **...when Abraham was tested offered up Isaac. So he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son.** The moment God told him to do it and he started cutting the wood and preparing it. In Abraham's mind it was already done, and God knew that about him.

...of whom it is said that in Isaac shall your seed be called. Abraham believed that, so much so, **accounting that God was able to raise him up even from the dead.** That sends chills up and down my spine because nothing like that had ever happened. But Abraham believed so much toward God he believed what God said about his son Isaac so much that he believed, "If I do this He will raise him from the dead." Because God keeps His word and God will do what He said He would do.

That's our life. It's why we'll see horrifying things coming on this earth and we don't have to worry about it. We'll see it, but God is there. Our lives are fully in His hand. There is going to be a lot of fear. That's human. But we can fight against that because of things like this and knowing what we know, and God will bring us through successfully very powerfully so. Awesome. And we know it.

...accounting that God was able to raise him up even from the dead. In that respect, he did receive him back, because he believed it and God gave that to him.

Genesis 22:4—Then on the third day Abraham—on the third day—Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the place afar off. What an incredible thing that he was doing. **Then Abraham said to his young men, stay here with the donkey, the young man and I will go farther up and worship, and we will come back to you. So Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son,** in essence, to carry. Can you imagine? You're going to do this. He didn't know that this wasn't according to God's word and God's way of life and God's mind, but he was going to obey what God said, knowing that God would raise him up.

And he took the fire in his hand and a knife, and the two of them went together. But Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, My father. He said, My son. Then he said, Look, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering? Can you imagine? Does that mean it was easy for what Abraham was going to do? Had to be a horrifying thing in his mind just to go through the motions of that, to take your own son's life, to offer him up like that.

God wasn't going to have him do it, but Abraham was willing to do whatever God told him because he knew that He was God Almighty, El Shaddai.

Then Abraham said, My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering. It's in God's hands. **So, the two of them went together. Then they came to the place of which God had told him and Abraham built an altar there and placed the wood in order and he bound Isaac his son.** Now, at that point there you think, what is Isaac thinking? What did they say to each other? Doesn't tell us. ...**and laid him on the altar upon the wood. Then Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife.** Willing to do it, going to do it. That's mind-boggling. It really is. ...**to slay his son.**

But the angel or messenger, message of the Eternal called to him from heaven and said, Abraham, Abraham. So, doesn't get specific about what this is but basically from God, nevertheless. **And so, he said, I am here. Then he said, Do not lay your hand on the young man or do anything to him for now I know that you fear God.** The proof was there. He knew. This is it, sealed, done, over. Incredible!

Now I know that you fear God since you have not withheld your son, your only son from Me. Now, this is an awesome story, it really is, when you look at it in this regard in a physical plane, and yet you see the type of what God Himself was going to do concerning His own Son, to watch as His Son is beaten beyond recognition, a part of that which is prophetic, that God planned this, that He was going to allow His Son to be beaten in that regard, to where flesh was going to be ripped off his face with cat-o-nine tails. So much so that he wasn't recognizable. To suffer, to be in pain to the degree he was, to the point he couldn't carry that pole very far and they had to get someone else to do it he was so weak because of the beating he'd taken and the blood loss that was there.

And then to hang there and die, to watch that, the Great God of the universe. Then I think of, and I can't help it, people who turn to sin and basically spit upon (if they could see in that regard), is exactly what they're doing on a spiritual plane, that sacrifice. Treating it with disdain and disgust because of selfishness, because we want something different, we want something else than what God says we can have. We want it so much so that we'll turn our backs on that sacrifice.

Now, that's not a small thing for someone in the Body of Christ who has been begotten of God's spirit. Would to God that everyone could see it in that regard, in that light on a spiritual plane as they should. But when people want to do their own thing they'll go do their own thing. Fool around, screw around with sin, and sometimes do just that. Sick. Sick. Sick. Sick. Sick.

Then Abraham lifted his eyes and look, there behind was a ram caught in the thicket by the horns. Abraham went and took the ram and offered it for a whole burnt offering instead of his son. So, Abraham called the name of the place Yahweh Jireh, the Eternal will provide, and as it is said to this day, in the Mount of the Eternal it shall be provided. What do you think that's about?

It's what Christ went through, what our Passover went through. That's the way. That's what's provided to us. The way to God's Family, to God's plan, to be a part of it. Awesome! "The Mount of the Eternal, it shall be provided." **Then the angel of the Eternal called to Abraham a second time out of heaven saying, By Myself I have sworn, says the Eternal, because you have done this thing, you have not withheld your only son, in blessing I will bless you and in multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is on the seashore.**

Descendants. Is this just about physical descendants? Not at all. It's all who would come through this to become a part of spiritual Israel. That's what it's about. All because of what started with Abraham. Incredible. God working with him, molding and fashioning him.

And your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies. That's come and gone when we understand it's fulfillment. **In your seed,** the Passover and the Messiah, **all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.** Now the glory is to God because God molded Abraham to go through this, to do this, to accomplish this. Abraham chose to follow God and did it exactly as God had worked with him in his life. It's a beautiful story and it teaches us that's how we should be in our lives always.

So, Abraham returned to his young men, and they arose and went together to Be'er Sheva, and Abraham dwelt in Be'er Sheva.