

This will be *Part 2* of the new series entitled *God's Glory and Greatness*.

Last Sabbath we focused on how the physical nation of Israel could not see God in His glory and greatness. They saw the results of some of those things and recognized that; they were in awe in the sense of the power that they witnessed. But to see it in the sense of the mind in order to respond to God in a manner that we see God in a greater way, they couldn't do that. It was just all physical to them. There's a big difference in that. They only saw God in the physical plane.

I don't know how to describe some of this, but God is showing us more and more about Himself as we've gone on through time. A lot of that started in 2005, obviously, and it's gotten greater and greater as we've gone along. But it's like everything has been speeded up in the sense of what He's blessing us to grasp and comprehend, to see of Him on a spiritual plane.

To me, I find that immensely exciting. Sometimes it is hard to grasp. What do we have to compare it to? You don't have a whole lot to compare it to, and that's part of the problem. It's hard for us to grasp sometimes what God is giving us. That's the bottom line. We just begin, if we're not careful, to take things for granted, that this is the way things are. Anyway, it's hard to see how much that He's giving us.

Those of us who went through Worldwide, went through Laodicea, and then the Apostasy, there's a contrast there that is night and day in the sense of how God's been working with us, and it's all because of where we are in time and what's coming, and His preparing us for it. I love the name.

There is going to be a lot of history in this series in the sense of going back and looking at Judah especially, a little bit of Israel but mostly Judah. I find this immensely exciting, I really do, because there is so much that God did in working with nations and working with individuals, working with prophets during a period of time there that puts things in a light that shows how much He's been involved in people's lives, how much He's done things as far as nations are concerned when it came time to make a change.

That's why we're going through a lot of these things because it reflects the might and the power of Almighty God in fulfilling and accomplishing His plan, and that it didn't just happen overnight. He doesn't do things and build things as He goes along, these things have been planned for so long. Anyway, hopefully we'll begin to grasp some of that stuff in a better way as we go along through this, because especially as we get deeper into this, because to me it becomes even more exciting.

So again, it may seem difficult to see some of the distinction between how Israel was and seeing things physically and how the world is today, even of traditional Christianity and what they think they see. But they don't see God in any fashion or form like we do because they don't grasp the purpose of God and what God's working out, and because of that they can't see God. To do that anyway, as the whole point of some of this was, is that it requires God's spirit for Him to reveal Himself to us. That becomes more exciting as we go along.

So again, the ability to see God's greatness and His glory is on a spiritual plane, not a physical one. It's a spiritual matter.

Last Sabbath toward the end there we went through Psalm 8, what David saw on a limited scale. To me, that's an interesting thing to see in itself. David was able to see things at his time. We can call it the present truth at his time. He was able to see things in a manner that he understood what God was doing in a very unique way with him, with mankind, in a greater way than others around him obviously did as God worked with him. He was a prophet, and much was given to him. But still he couldn't see how these things fit together.

Just as Christ came along later on and even went back and quoted many of the things that David said because they were for a different time, and gave the spiritual understanding of those things, what God was doing. Because everything that God has done, so much of it that's physical that's been given, even examples of people's lives and so forth, it's part of a plan and purpose of teaching things on a greater plane later on, which is a spiritual one.

So, anyway, he saw this part, in that respect, on a limited, physical plane. Then we came to where Paul was given to explain this and reveal other things here on a spiritual plane. So, we're going to go back through that just to catch up and then go on.

Hebrews 2. So, he's quoting things that were written by David that God had given to him. **Hebrews 2:5— For He**, speaking of God Almighty, **has not put the world to come, of which we speak, in subjection to angels. But one testified in a certain place**, speaking of David, **saying, What is mankind that You are mindful of them, or the son of mankind that You visit them?** Attend to them, visit them, have a purpose and a plan for them.

You have made them little lower... Again, what an incredible thing here to reveal this is not the word for "angels" at all. The word back in the Old Testament is not "angels." So, it brings you to the point of realizing I truly believe that there are those who translated scriptures later on that changed things because they didn't understand. To compare with God was something they weren't given to see in the first place, but in their minds this had to be about angels because it was greater, so that's how they translated it.

Because they didn't, this couldn't have been translated properly. We don't have the original writings of Paul in these things. Things have been translated in different languages, Latin and Greek and so forth.

Anyway, this here is the word in the Old Testament, Elohim. What an incredible thing to understand, that if we had known that back in the different eras of the Church, even then to know some of that, it reveals something powerful, in that respect, it truly does.

So, it was given to Herbert Armstrong to understand this is why we were created. But right here it tells us that, "A little while lower than Elohim." It shows the purpose of God is that we're not going to be up there in some form, not like angels or like angels, and some talk about maybe having wings, some of the crazy things that people come up with. No, it's the Family of God, Elohim.

So it says, **You were made a little lower than Elohim.** It's Psalm 8, from Psalm 8. That's what he's quoting. **...crowned with glory and honor, to rule over the works of Your hands.** That's explicitly what it's saying. So again, what an incredible thing to understand. It's been out there for a long, long time, took a long, long time. We can't even begin to comprehend that, the creation of those things that are out there all for a purpose. We're going to be busy for a long, long time. It's meant to last and last and last and last and last, and we're ever going to be learning and learning and learning.

Sometimes we think we see a lot and we grasp a lot, and we do compared to so many in through time, but we don't know anything, really, in the sense of what God is going to give to us once we're a part of His Family and the things we're going to be able to continue to learn. There will be no end of learning. That's an amazing thing to know, no end of learning through time. We can't comprehend that.

...crowned with glory and honor, God's purpose in why He created us, to become part of Elohim, **to rule over the works of Your hands, putting all things in subjection under their feet. For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing...** So, more is being given to Paul here to teach, to show. God gave him more to understand about this. **...nothing that is not put under him. But now,** literally in the Greek, **"at the present" we do not see all things put under them.**

But we see Joshua. So, he was inspired to show the beginning of all this, the first of the firstfruits. **We see Joshua, who was made a little lower than,** and it says **"angels,"** and I don't believe, personally, that Paul (and I believe that's been given), that Paul used that word at all.

...but for suffering of death, crowned... And you think, just something like that. If they would have just quoted things. But they changed a lot of things, obviously, throughout scripture anyway because they didn't understand God's plan. So, man is very limited when it comes to translating things.

...for the suffering of death, to become our Passover, **crowned with glory and honor, so that he, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone. For it is fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory,** so, the Family of God again. That's what it's about. **... to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.**

Since we had just covered a series that ended in focusing on the story of Esther and Mordecai, that's really what has kind of led into some of this, obviously, and that's how God leads us, by taking us through things. We don't know where things are going until He gives it in the sense of teaching us the building blocks of our life, if you will, of learning. But they're all tied together and we're eventually going to come up to that point in time.

So, this is going to be a fairly long series. Yes! I love it when I know where we're going in a particular series. The next series it's like, okay, you're at the Red Sea again. "Show me."

We're going to go back a little farther in history and then come up to this point again of Esther because it was all planned out, all purposed. Even the story of Esther, they were among those who were brought out of the captivity. So, we're going to go back and focus on the captivity, things that led up to the captivity, and the captivity itself. That took a long time before they went up to Babylon, and then many of them

stayed up there. They didn't all go back to—in times of Ezra, Nehemiah, they didn't all go back. Certain ones did, large numbers, to an extent, but the larger numbers it appears anyway by everything in history, stayed up there in that region.

So, we're going to go back and see what led up to the timing and events in the book of Esther. Incredible, over a period of about twenty years beginning in approximately 740 BC... I'm going to be talking a lot about dates. Some people like dates and some people don't and this can get a little confusing as you go along, but it really shouldn't, but probably will be a little bit, especially when we get into Judah's captivity.

But this is 740 BC, God sent the Assyrians against the ten tribes of Israel who were to the north of Judah. Obviously, we know some of that history there. They're up there to the north in the area that later became known as Samaria because they brought in that particular part of the world, Samaritans in the time of Christ, that lived there. They weren't originally there. They were brought in after the Israelites were taken out.

So again, over this period of time of about twenty years they were taken captive. Just like Judah. Judah had a period, it didn't happen all at one time in one period when the Babylonians came down and took everyone up; it happened one event after another event after another event after another event before it was complete to the point God wanted it to be. Similar sort of thing happened to Israel, in a sense, but again, there were different wars.

So, they were taken into captivity into lands farther north. Right after they had split from Judah, after Solomon's death, beginning in the reign, first, of the reign of the first king, Jeroboam, there is an expression that's always used in scripture as well about all the kings that followed after that in the north. It's said, basically, about them, that "they followed in the footsteps (paraphrasing) of Jeroboam the son of Nebat," who obviously, disobeyed God, went against God, changed the holy Days to holidays, changed the Sabbath, began worshipping the Sun God and all the things they did on a Sunday.

All those things that kind of set the stage for things that were to happen later on even in the northern areas there of what happened with the Church. It wasn't the Church, but it was those who claimed to be the Church.

So, to think about this we're talking about this period of time, and I think of the period of time that followed then. We're talking about nearly 250 years later before Judah went into captivity. Now, this is all for a purpose. God had planned this a long time ago.

To grasp the power of Almighty God to plan and prepare things that were going to happen in nations for a purpose – and this is a great purpose, of what He's doing here – because they were only to continue on physically for a period of time for incredible reasons of God's plan that had to take place, frankly, to lead up to this end-time. Because that's what it's all about. It's about what God was going to do through time in leading to the end-time before Christ would come as the Messiah, as the King of kings (let's put it that way).

And so, we have this period of time and finally they were taken into captivity. They became known as the lost ten tribes all for a reason. It was God's purpose. You let people go and do a certain thing.

God knew what was going to happen to the Church by certain conditions that would happen in time. He knew the Apostasy was going to be the result after seven eras of the Church. God doesn't make people make those choices of how they're going to respond to God. But God knows how they're going to respond to Him under certain conditions in the world and God is the one who determined the conditions of the world at different times for a purpose.

These things, the more we can see, the more we can grasp, we truly come to understand the glory and the greatness of God more and more and more.

Let's turn over to Daniel. After the fall and captivity of Israel, which was all a part of God's design and purpose again that would lead to the end-time, we come to when it was time for Judah to come to its end. So, Assyria came down and captured, took Israel, the ten tribes into captivity.

Again, God knew what they would do once they were separated from Judah. It wouldn't take that long. You get one king, Jeroboam, to take in the different religions of the region. He is the example of that, and if God's not going to work with him you know what's going to happen? They're going to continue doing the same thing king after king after king. And that's exact!

Every kind that followed Jeroboam did exactly the same thing because they had some of the same thinking. They didn't want Judah or the people to go back down and look to Judah for leadership. That's just carnal human nature. God knew that about them, so He left them alone, in essence. He wasn't trying to save them. That's not God's purpose. Because salvation is a spiritual thing and He wasn't working with them on a spiritual plane, He was working with them on a physical plane to lead to the end-time.

They were taken captive, 250 years pass, and God had determined – and He didn't just determine it then – He let Judah go on for a period of time, the period of time He'd already planned before He would take them into captivity. He would allow certain things to happen to them knowing what those kings would do. When you would have occasions where some would come back, like toward the end when you come to Josiah, and you see a king whose heart was more like David, and he tried to turn the nation back to serving God as they did in the times of David. He'll come to some of that. But if He's not working with them?

So, if God intervenes to work with someone, to bring them to repentance, they have an opportunity to change. But if He's not doing that and they're allowed to go off on their own carnal way they'll do the same thing the Church did. You allow a Church out here to go off and do their own thing because they're rich and increased with goods, because they're lifted up, and you take away, allow an individual to die, which happened to Herbert Armstrong, he died, so what's going to happen to the Church? God knew exactly what was going to happen to the Church!

He knew exactly what would happen to ministers who already started the process of deciding who's going to be next and who are we going to support? Different individuals out there who had different ideas about

what they thought should have been changed as far as doctrine is concerned, and they were already doing it in Church areas anyway.

Individuals, because they listened to an evangelist at headquarters who taught about a 14/15th Passover, and those ministers went out and they didn't fully teach it because there were times they would have gotten canned. But on the side they would privately talk about certain things with individuals. Those things have come out, to know what people have done.

But inside they believed it, and so when they had opportunity to push something they did it. That's why there were so many rebellions and things that happened within the Church because you can't control it. Herbert Armstrong tried and gave a trust of faith to individuals who went through Ambassador College, that they would go out and faithfully do what they'd learned. That's one of the greatest lessons of 6,000 years, that even baptized in God's Church and being taught the truth you can drift away.

If that guidance isn't there, if there isn't someone who is there, like Herbert Armstrong who had the sense of urgency, to constantly put that before the Church, that held a certain core together. But as he said, as time went along, if he wondered if half...if half, basically, had already gone as far as Laodicea was concerned, if even half were a part of the Church in the sense of Philadelphia.

Then it got down to the very end and he said, "Is there 10%?!" He's probably right on because it was ready to change to Laodicea totally. How can you go through things like this without thinking about it? Our history, we're to learn from it. We're to learn what God has given to us, the opportunities, and we're to be on guard against those things that lead people away.

So, was it any wonder that when there was no longer an apostle in God's Church what would happen to the Church? That's why I know what would happen to God's Church if there was any length of time and there is not an apostle. It won't last very long because of human nature. Be thankful we are where we are in time. God can raise anyone He wants to at any time, but we have no evidence of that right now whatsoever. We have evidence that we're at the end, that we're almost to the point where Christ is ready to return.

Thank God for that, because we're human beings and unless God stirs you up and intervenes in your life you know what happens? If He didn't have that purpose to bring you through you know what would happen? You wouldn't all come through. We can't. Because we're human beings. I hope that makes sense to you. It's by the grace and the mercy of God, His plan and purpose of working with us to give us opportunity. Not everyone chooses that. That's why we've had to go on like we have. Some lost their crown because they made wrong choices.

God has known what human beings would do at any moment in time depending on the conditions. God is the one who would control the conditions. Not for the purpose of the Millennium nor the Great White Throne, but for the purpose of bringing us through, if you will, 6,000 years.

That's why technology wasn't given until the end because look what it's done. It's made us like the days of Noah in a very short time. It's a sick, sick world, and it's getting sicker very fast, much faster than what it did in their day. Incredible!

So again, I'm going to read my stuff so I can get back in the focus here.

After the fall and captivity of Israel, which was all part of God's design and purpose that would lead up to the end-time, because that's the focus, that's what it's all about. It's about His Son going to reign as King of kings. But you've got to go through 6,000 years first. To bring mankind through 6,000 years as He has, by design, by purpose, awesome. Through that to choose and mold and fashion people who are going to be a part of Elohim, because certain things had to be molded and fashioned in different ones to fit God's purpose for His Family and that structure of government that will govern.

So again, now we've come to the point of time where Judah, it was their time to go into captivity, to cease to be a nation, to cease to have it's own government as it had experienced up to this point. To end it's continuing as a nation and a lineage of kings. It's to come to a screeching halt; no longer to have kings of Judah reigning over Judah. But even in that is an awesome thing because there is a lineage that continued on, but now they were to switch to Israel. It's all in scripture, all in prophecy. It's a beautiful story.

I'm looking forward to going through Ireland on the way to the Feast this year to visit a particular location where ancient kings have been crowned, if you will, to rule. Well, it's a part of a process that God made sure that there were those who escaped (one in particular) the captivity, and was sent, if you will, up to Ireland to continue a lineage. She was able to marry into a line of kings that were already there, and it began a process of a new lineage that would be Jewish to fulfill what God said about David. Incredible, things that God has done through time to bring us to the end.

So again, now this was some 120 years after Israel's captivity at this point in time. I think I made a comment here a minute ago, and I might have misquoted that. They continued for a time. Anyway, this was a period of time after that, for 120 years after Israel's captivity, that events speeded up that led up to Judah's captivity. So, they'd continued on for a period of time of I think I'd mentioned 250 years. But anyway, Daniel 2:20, let's read that.

Daniel 2:20—Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, for wisdom and might are His. He changes the times and the seasons, He removes kings, and He sets up or raises up kings, meaning even kingdoms. So, yes, He does over and over again through time. God has been very instrumental in molding and fashioning the kingdoms of this world, who would be able to reign on the earth and who wouldn't. He's allowed different ones to do it. At times He's been very instrumental in making certain that things came out a certain way because of His purpose.

Egypt is an example, that they reigned for a certain time. Then it was time for them to come to an end and God saw that a different kingdom rose up. Then it was time for that kingdom to come to an end and another kingdom to rise up that would be in the time of Daniel and be spoken of by Daniel and written in

prophecy that would lead up to the very end. Hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of years God molding and fashioning and bringing it to pass.

So, we're talking about God's great glory, His greatness, and His glory. To see Him, to see His power, to see that mind at work, to see how He works with human beings who think they're so great – because we tend to think we're so great. We get so lifted up with pride and haughtiness and think we can change things. But we all die, and kingdoms fall, and kingdoms come to an end. Who thinks that this nation is going to come to an end? Nobody.

But every kingdom that's ever existed has come to an end. So, we're pretty stupid to think it's not going to come to an end in time! That's just not smart! History itself should teach us, but we don't want to learn because we're going to be different, we're going to change it. No, we're not. That's even without God, that's just the way we are as human beings. But God worked within that, of what we are, filled with pride, haughtiness, thinking we did it. The different ones who have risen up in kingdoms think that they're the ones doing it. If God gives you something, He gave it to you.

God gave an entire, rich, rich, the richest, wealthiest nation on earth, that it's ever known, and George Washington got to be its first president. Awesome! Talk about wealth. You see this country, you visit other places in the world, and you see what was here (because we've destroyed a lot of it already).

So, it says, **He changes times and seasons. He removes kings. He sets up** (raises up) **kings. He gives wisdom to the wise.** In other words, where does wisdom come? It comes from God. So, for those with whom God works He'll give more. It comes from Him. **...and knowledge**, really more about, it means **“the power of knowledge” to those who know understanding.** So, those who have a teachable spirit, those who want to know more, God can work with. But it's about God. These are the things that have to do with God's purpose and plan.

So, Israel had been taken captive by the Assyrians, but after nearly 120 years later it was, again, time for another kingdom to rise who would conquer the Assyrians. It's time for Babylon. Because God had already planned out that Israel was going to be taken captive up there, that they would go through many, many, many generations of people. They would come to a time of Esther as well, but even going farther back here of the things that God was going to do and the migrations of people and where they would be taken and why, God's purpose being fulfilled.

Even God's Family, because different ones have been called out of different environments, different molding and fashioning. To be molded and fashioned a different way you have to go through different things. You have to go through different experiences. Not all the same. It doesn't work that way when you talk about God's Family, when you talk about what God is molding and fashioning in the mind.

All of us who have God's spirit, because of what we've gone through, because of what we've experienced even since the Apostasy as far as PKG, there is that which is unique to us because God molded and fashioned and prepared, planned it that way, that we are different than different ones at other times, different from the ones during Ephesus or Thyatira, because they were unique as far as what they had to

experience in the sense of in the world as well and how God would work with them to prepare them for places in His Family.

We can't all be in the same place, nor do we want to be. To me the most exciting thing, and I hope we can begin to grasp that more in about the third part of this series, or the fourth even, how God works with us, how He molds and fashions us. It goes beyond the ability to explain in words, it truly does. I hate to keep using the word – it's awesome! Because we should be in awe!

We should be in awe of God's power, His greatness, His glory as He shows us things that He's doing and accomplishing, and to realize if you're in His hands, why would you want to be anywhere else? If you really understood that why would you give into something in this world and leave God's Church? And yet the majority have even since PKG began. The majority of people who have had fellowship in this Body have left for other things. What?

I think of one, I'm sorry, I think of one that left because of the teaching that not everyone can become a part of 144,000, so he went somewhere where he could be a part of the 144,000. You don't decide that yourself. I don't care where you go, I don't care what you do, you don't decide. None of us decide if we're going to be a part of 144,000. God determines it! And if we're so blessed to be a part of that, awesome! If we're so blessed to live on into the Millennium – awesome! We're in God's hands! There is nothing greater than to be a part of His plan and what He has planned in the future.

But people want more. Evangelists wanted more during the days of Herbert Armstrong. They wanted power and they wanted to teach certain things and so they started their different groups. Different ones, ministers, started siding with them. Then another evangelist over here and over here secretly talking to others, and they were backing him. Sick, sick, sick, the human mind.

I hate to get distracted by some of this but I don't think it's distraction going back and talking about our history, because it all is a part of a process, and we have to understand, and we have to see it and be in awe of God.

So again, it was time for the Assyrians to be made small. It was time for Babylon to rise because Judah was to be taken captive, not by the Assyrians now but by the Babylonians. God had a purpose in that.

So, the Medes and the Chaldeans, the Chaldeans referred to as the Babylonians, the Babylonian Empire, had formed a close alliance because of a marriage. Nebuchadnezzar married a princess of the Medes. That's how that kingdom rose in the kind of power that it did because it united two great kingdoms at that time, the Medes and the Chaldeans.

So, they were married, and his father, Nabopolassar, was ruling Babylon at that particular time. He was the first ruler of Babylon, so this was a fairly quick rise of power of a new kingdom. God was giving it to them, made possible the marriage. Do you think God wasn't involved in that, that this is how it was to work out to unite two kingdoms? A lot of things have been done in times past because of marriages. God made certain that there were two who were able to come together to form a new kingdom, to make

Nebuchadnezzar exceedingly strong and powerful, to do the job that needed to be done to take Judah captive finally, because the time had come in God's plan to do it.

It just wasn't a matter of time and God saying, "Well, I think this is a pretty good time now." Even the timing of these things, we sometimes just have to be in awe of seeing the timing of events, of things that work out through time.

So, this period of time, again, Nabopolassar along with the Medes went to war against Assyria, and Nineveh, which was the capital of Assyria, a huge region, the capital of that particular part of that world, Nineveh fell in 612 BC. So, 612 BC was the beginning of it all for an incredible change that was going to take place on the earth.

Then the kingdom of Assyria completely collapsed in 609 BC, in the sense of where they were reigning. Their power was taken, the Babylonians conquered, and conquered, and conquered. They had incredible power with these two great kingdoms that had merged together. There is more that happened in that year that is of real importance.

I'm going to go through and read part of the history of some of this stuff and then we'll come to 2 Kings 22. So, if you want to go ahead and go ahead there.

This period of time also brings up, again, the beginning of the fall of Judah and its collapse that took place over a period of several years, as I mentioned at the beginning of the sermon, as captives were taken into Babylon, and they were taken at several different times. I'm kind of dumbfounded when I go back and read some of the things, but it's easy to see historians and scholars and different ones, the things they write. They get so confused as to things and events that took place. Anyway, so much of it has to do with because, well, God has to give it.

So, we're going to look at the beginning of this entire process. So, we're going to have a little bit of an overview before we begin.

Assyria had fallen in 609 BC to Babylon. Egypt also had been playing a large part in all this because they had basically conquered the lands all the way up to the Euphrates. So, that means through Judah and all the way up through the Euphrates. Then you have the area to the east and to the west and to the north that Assyria had. So, you have these two great kingdoms, and basically, they were really fine. They weren't going to try to conquer one another at this point in time because they both had all that they cared to have. It was a lot to control in that period of time.

But now a threat was coming out of the east, Babylon, and so you find then Egypt is going to go to war against Babylon as well. So, we come up to the time of where Assyria has to be totally conquered and then Egypt is still messing around in there and they have to be conquered too, and God's going to see to it that Nebuchadnezzar becomes very powerful and is able to conquer so that these changes can take place.

Because it's about Judah and it's about individuals He was going to work with. I find it immensely interesting to see the number of prophets that came out of this captivity in scripture. It's really quite

incredible. We already know Daniel. There are several others involved in all this. Ezekiel, Jeremiah, and some of the minor prophets. So much happened in this time period that's really quite astounding, and they were to live through all this. Why? A molding and fashioning in their minds that was unique to them, that's going to be unique to God's Kingdom and God's Family, to His government that's going to reign with Christ.

They all were to be worked with in very unique ways, and what their jobs were, what their functions were is quite incredible in the midst of all this. So, it becomes an astounding story. So, this period of time is immensely important that God was working out.

So, there is an individual, a pharaoh, Necho, in Egypt, that was coming up into that area to fight with the Assyrians in this period of time, and he met some problems. Part of it was Judah. All a part of God's plan to get rid of both. Well, to get rid of all three, Assyria, Egypt, and Judah, their influence was going to be diminished.

So again, Assyria had fallen in 609 BC to Babylon, with the aid of the Medes. Egypt also had been playing a large part in all this, and again, they had sided with Assyria against Babylon. So, the Egyptians were going to pass up through Judah in order to meet up with them, but Josiah, the King of Judah, went out against him. Now, he was an awesome king, he really was, but there was a part here he should have listened to, and he didn't do it, and because of it he was killed. Anyway, this is a part of the story of what happened at this time.

So, we're going to first look at the story of what is written about Josiah and as he went out against the Egyptians. Before Josiah had become king another king had preceded him, actually, a couple of them, that one here was the longest serving king of Judah for fifty-five years. His name was Manasseh. Evil, evil, evil king of Judah. And some of this involves his story.

God left Judah alone for a long time at different times and they'd begin to go so far off base. The one thing that Judah primarily always had, still was a part of, they held on to certain things as far as the Old Testament was concerned, as far as the Holy Days and the Sabbath. That was very much a part of their culture, if you will, unlike Israel. But they did some evil things within the midst of all that, or some of the kings did, and this is one of them, one of the worst.

We come to **2 Kings 22:1—Josiah was eight years old when he became king.** Now, you know that a child, he isn't reigning in the sense of what he tells everyone to do. Because what does an eight-year-old know? Not a whole lot. So parts of his family. A lot of times it's parts of a family or different ones who were already up in rank as far as the kingdom was concerned or in some cases here, different priests that had influence, that were able to enter into a kind of rule and persuasion. So, this is a part of the process here.

It said, **He reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jedidah the daughter of Adaiah of Bozkath.** Don't you love these names? **He did right in the sight of the Eternal and walked in all the ways of his father David; he did not turn aside to the right hand or to the left.**

What an incredible thing here, a lesson through time that when we are taught God's way of life, the truth we're given, we're not to turn to the right from it, to turn to the left. We're not to go too far to the left, too far to the right, which some, it just happens because of the inclination of individuals. Some people become more conservative, more critical to the right, more judgmental, not balanced. Some go too far to the left, too loose, too compromising. There is a process when it comes to God, just doing it God's way, striving to learn soundness of mind and balance. For us, for the Church, to have it done right, and any time that someone is being worked with by God, requires God's help and God's spirit.

Everyone has, as a whole, a tendency somewhere within that vast realm. That's why we fasted recently to see ourselves. We need to know how we think.

Now it came to pass in the eighteenth year of Josiah... Now he's twenty-six. In this story here it's incredible. Even the ones with whom God worked as prophets, so many of them started out as teenagers. God starts working with them very young to influence them, to help them. Yes, they have choices. But when God has a purpose for different ones, to call them, He works with them in very special ways even more so.

It's not like the Church that's had thousands, and thousands, and thousands and opportunities given. It's been unique in the first 4,000 years, in the sense when God had someone to work with He worked with them more closely. That's why it wasn't a large group of people. Individuals worked with by God, and He worked with their environment powerfully so, and with them individually to bring them to the point of creation, if you will. Because it's a creation. It's what He is creating in them, Elohim, bringing them to that point.

So, here is king Josiah, God worked with him. There were those priests, Levites, different ones that worked with him. They had a strong influence around him, and he latched on to that. God more so, God was working with him to draw him to that, to bring him to that to receive that.

It says here, **in the eighteenth year of king Josiah that the king sent Shaphan the scribe, the son of Azaliah, the son of Meshullam, to the house of the Eternal, saying, Go up to Hilkiyah the high priest, that he may count the money which has been brought into the house of the Eternal, which the doorkeepers had gathered from the people.** So, now this is the first account where it shows he's starting to act upon what he's been taught to this point in time. Now he's rising to the occasion, and he is becoming the king, because now it's coming more from him.

Verse 5—Then let them deliver it into the hand of those doing the work, who are the overseers of the house of the Eternal. So, he was moved by God's spirit to do this. God had brought him to this point and now he was moved to do this. Little did he know all that was going to happen in all this, but he was moved to start this process. What follows, it becomes so incredible.

Let them give it to those who are in the house of the Eternal doing the work, to repair the damage of the house—to carpenters, builders, and masons—to buy timber and hewn stone to repair the house. So, his heart, his desire that God worked with was to take care of these things. All the damage, all the things

that had taken place during the time of Manasseh. Now he had this desire to make things right because he saw that history, he had been taught to this point in time, to age twenty-six, and now he was rising to the occasion.

It's a beautiful thing when God's people rise to the occasion for what God has given them! When they take a stand for what is right. There is much to learn then after that. Once a person does that at different times, of different times of trial or whatever it might be in your life, to then give you the opportunity to go on to a higher plateau, if you will.

Verse 7—However, there need be no accounting made of them of the money delivered into their hand, because they deal faithfully. What an awesome thing to say. Give it to them. He had a relationship with them. He knew about them. He had been learning from them, those who were working in the temple. Because they had a desire to make things right. Things had been so badly done for so long.

And so, they had enough knowledge to know that certain things need to be corrected. This influence had come over on to Josiah and now he's giving them the means to do more because he has the power to do so. It came from the king. So, now the focus is getting these things repaired and taken care of.

Then Hilkiah the high priest said to Shaphan the scribe, I have found the Book of the Law... Can you imagine? They didn't have it all this time, whatever. **I have found the Book of the Law in the house of the Eternal. So, Hilkiah gave the book...** They were just going by the past, by what they'd been passed down in knowledge. Now they had the writing.

Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan and he read it. Then Shaphan the scribe went to the king, bringing the king word, saying, Your servants have gathered the money that was found in the house, and have delivered it into the hand of those who do the work, who oversee the house of the Eternal.

So, Shaphan the scribe showed the king, saying, Hilkiah the priest has given me a book. And Shaphan read it before the king. Now it happened, when the king heard the words of the Book of the Law, he tore his clothes. He was so moved by this moment, by what he was hearing, that his instinct was to repent, to rip his clothing. It's part of the process of what he was going to go through in fasting before God.

Then the king commanded Hilkiah the priest, Ahikam the son of Shaphan, Achbor the son of Michaiah... So, it goes on to say here that **Shaphan the scribe and Asaiah, the servant of the king, saying, Go, inquire of the Eternal for me.** So, he had enough knowledge to know there is an order of things. He is the king but they're the ones who go before God. They're God's servants. And so asking them then, "Now, you go before God and inquire of Him for me."

Go and inquire of the Eternal for me, for the people, and for Judah, concerning the words of this book that has been found. Because he knew by this time, "We have done so badly; we have done so poorly for so long." Now, he already knew that there were things that needed to be done but not to the degree once he heard the law.

...concerning the words of this book that has been found, for great is the wrath of the Eternal. Because it shows judgment, it shows what happens when you disobey and what God said in the book. **...for great is the wrath of the Eternal that is aroused against us, because our fathers have not obeyed the words of this book, to do according to all that is written concerning us.** So, he saw a nation and he saw a nation that didn't have God's favor and he desired that. He desired to make things right.

What a beautiful thing about repentance. A desire to make things right. When we come to see ourselves, certain things that we need to repent of, and then go before God. We have the ability because of Joshua to go before God right then and there to ask to be forgiven, to be cleansed, and then for God to have mercy upon us and to work with us, to teach, lead, guide, and direct us.

Verse 14—So Hilkiah the priest, Ahikam, Achbor, Shaphan, and Asaiah went to Huldah the prophetess. So, they went to a prophetess. She was known for this, okay? **... And they spoke with her.** So, it wasn't to come from them. So, there was even more that was known at this particular time and so this is what they did. Incredible story here.

Then she said to them, Thus says the Eternal God of Israel, Tell the man who sent you to me, thus says the Eternal... So, she was given this by God. God gave in her mind exactly what was to be said. Awesome. I mean, what else can you say?

Behold, I will bring calamity on this place and on its inhabitants—of all the words of the book which the king of Judah has read—because they have forsaken Me and burned incense to other gods. Now, they hadn't specifically, Josiah hadn't, but their history before this, they had done it a lot, horrifying things. **... that they might provoke Me to anger with all the works of their hands. Therefore My wrath shall be aroused against this place and shall not be quenched.** So, a matter of God's judgment, His word, what He says; because of deeds that have been done there are consequences.

Verse 18—But as for the king of Judah... She knew! Why? How? God gave it to her. **But as for the king of Judah who sent you to inquire of the Eternal, in this manner you shall speak to him, Thus says the Eternal God of Israel of the words which you have heard—because your heart was tender, and you humbled yourself before the Eternal when you read what I spoke against this place and against its inhabitants, that they would become a desolation and a curse, and you tore your clothes and wept before Me...** Beautiful. Repentance. God's mercy and God's grace and what He does when you're blessed to be able to come to a moment and a time like that. How can you give words to describe that?

...I also have heard you, says the Eternal. What a beautiful thing for Josiah to hear. Not directly to him, but through the means that it should have been, the proper government, of how God works in our lives, things we need to grasp and comprehend. We're ever learning within the Church, ever learning.

Surely, therefore, I will gather you to your fathers, and you shall be gathered to your grave in peace. Now, this was what was told him that would happen. **...and your eyes shall not see the calamity which I will bring to this place.** So, it was going to happen afterwards, the things that were going to happen to

Judah. God brought him to this. God brought him to this moment in time to experience this because of what God was creating in him. Incredible.

So they brought back word to the king. So, they came back and told him all that taken place there and what God had said through a prophetess to give to him.

2 Kings 23:1—Now the king sent them to gather all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem to him. The king went up to the house of the Eternal with all the men of Judah, and with all the inhabitants of Jerusalem —of the priests, the prophets, and of the people, both small and great. Then he read in their hearing all the words of the Book of the Covenant which had been found in the house of the Eternal. Then the king stood by a pillar and made a covenant before the Eternal, to follow the Eternal and to keep His commandments and His testimonies and His statutes, with all his heart and with all his soul, to perform the words of the covenant that were written in this book.

So, closest thing I can relate to this, in this respect, is when you're called to a point of baptism and your mind is opened up and you're learning things so quickly. Then you finally come to this moment in time that you commit, that you make a commitment. He made a commitment here. That's what this is about. All these that happened to bring him to this moment.

Everyone whom God calls; we have to come to that moment where we are able to make such a choice if that's offered to us. And basically, baptism is that for the Church because of what you're offered, because of what you tell God, "I'm yours. I'm not going to do things my own way." Yet the majority of people who have come into this body and into the Church over the last 2,000 years have done exactly that, they've gone against that. They've turned against that commitment. They've lied to God.

... His commandments and His testimonies and His statutes, with all his heart and all of his soul, to perform the words of this covenant that were written in this book. So, all the people took a stand for the covenant. So, they weren't being worked with in the same way that he was, but they were moved by this occasion because God's spirit helped to move them. For them it was very much on a physical plane. But again, there are differences within this whole process at different times with whom God is working.

Verse 4—Then the king commanded Hilkiah the high priest, and the priests of the second order, and the doorkeepers, to bring out of the temple of the Eternal all the articles that were made for Baal and Asherah. Now, these things were in the temple! He's just coming to a point where he's coming to a deeper conviction. It's like what we do, we begin to change everything in our life when we start seeing certain things. We see, you know, certain customs and things. "This tree is not going to go up there anymore in the corner over there with the lights on it this year." Various other things that people have to do in their life to change from one to another. This is happening very much on a very physical plane because these things had been in the temple and so forth.

Asherah, the Canaanite goddess where that's associated with Ishtar, Easter. **...and for all the host of heaven; and he burned them outside Jerusalem in the fields of Kidron and carried their ashes to Bethel. Then he removed the idolatrous priests whom the kings of Judah had ordained to burn incense on the**

high places of the cities of Judah and in the places around Jerusalem, and those who burned incense to Baal, to the sun, to the moon, to the constellations, and to all the host of heaven.

So, all this garbage was going on even up to this point in time, even though he had a different mind and those who were working with him had a different mind because of what had been passed down. But when you have fifty-five years of a king that went as far as he did, from away from the truth, it takes time to get back on track! God was going to bring them back on track in that sense as far as the physical carnal nation, but one that was looking to Him.

Then he brought out... But there are so many analogies to these things, of what we've gone through even on a spiritual plane within the Church. There really are, over and over again.

Then he brought out the wooden image from the house of the Eternal to the Brook Kidron outside Jerusalem, burned it in the Brook Kidron and ground it to ashes, and threw all the ashes on the graves of the children of the people. Now, what this is about from everything that has been revealed to this point in time, there were those things that had been done by Manasseh, King Manasseh, to where they'd even offered up their own children in fire to Moloch, serving false gods. So, this is descriptive of some of this then, of what had happened to them in the same area, the same place.

Verse 21, jumping on down here, **Then the king commanded all the people, saying, Keep the Passover.**

So, he came to this now. Isn't that an awesome thing? We all come to this. This is akin to baptism because it's the beginning of something. It leads us to Passover, as far as we're concerned, in our lives year after year. So, they have that which is a set time and so this is what they're going to do. They're going to go back now and begin observing the things that were written in the law. One of them is the beginning of Passover here, as it talks about.

...Keep the Passover to the Eternal your God, as it is written in the Book of the Covenant. Surely there has never been such a Passover held since the days of the judges who judged Israel, nor in all the days of the kings of Israel and the kings of Judah. So, what he did was big, and you can read about some of those things in other scriptures. We're not going to go through the entire story, but this was massive, this observance.

But in the eighteenth year, again, he was age twenty-six of king Josiah **this Passover was held before the Eternal in Jerusalem. Moreover Josiah put away those who consulted mediums and spirits,** and "put away" probably means more than just sent away. **...the consulted mediums and spirits, the household gods and idols, and all the abominations that were seen in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, that he might perform the words of the law which were written in the book that Hilkiyah the priest found in the house of the Eternal.**

Now, before him there was no king like him, who turned to the Eternal with all of his heart, with all of his soul, and with all of his might, according to all the Law of Moses; nor after him did any arise like him. So, this is unique because it's a matter of turning from that which he didn't know. David was different. He was a man after God's own heart, but he didn't have this event like this take place where he had to turn

from things they were ignorant of and didn't know. This is what this is referring to, in that respect, in a very powerful way, akin to king David because he did it with all of his being, he truly did. But it's making it clear here there was none like Josiah who had done anything like this before, nor after.

Nevertheless, the Eternal did not turn from the fierceness of His great wrath, which was a matter of judgment. Because it was time. He allowed Manasseh to do what he did. There were various things that happened from time to time. And again, God knows what human beings will do unless God is working with them to maintain, to keep something at a certain level.

Just like in the judges, he let human nature be a part of people's lives. So what happened in the whole history of the judges? They would start doing things they weren't supposed to do, they turned from God, and then God allowed others, because He gave them protection. So, now when He takes the protection away these other nations start coming up or different ones coming in and start killing or so forth. So, now, like human nature, God help us! We'll do 'this,' we'll do 'that,'" someone comes close to death and different ones are being destroyed it's like, "I'm going to have this moment," but it's not genuine, it's not true. It's not going to be very long lasting, "but we want your help." Anyway, human nature. So, God knows this about us.

So, this is part of what's entering in here over and over again through history, the time of the judges, and so God has to intervene to stop this. He raises up someone because He's working with them to give them deliverance. And so, when God intervenes to give someone deliverance... He raised up Josiah to give deliverance; He was working with Josiah.

We have the power of choices. Unless God intervenes we don't have a chance because we're selfish human beings. "Lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life" rules.

Nevertheless, the Eternal did not turn from the fierceness of His wrath. I think I skipped past something too, here, concerning Josiah, because I had mentioned "God said you would go to..." "There were certain things you would see and not see as you came to your point of your death." But it didn't totally work out that way because he did something he wasn't supposed to. But he was still very blessed in all that he did, but when it came to that point, because of not listening, he died in a way that he didn't have to if he'd listened.

Nevertheless, the Eternal did not turn from the fierceness of His wrath with which His anger was aroused against Judah, because of all the provocations with which Manasseh had provoked Him. So, the Eternal said, I will also remove Judah from My sight, as I have removed Israel. It was already prophesied over—I didn't give the exact numbers here—but has to be around 100 years plus, that this was going to happen. Very specific we're going to find out as we go along in the story.

So, it's a matter of how God is working with, molding and fashioning to bring to this moment in time. He's still reminding them. To look at it on a physical plane as well, it's because of Manasseh that the strength of the judgment has been made. Because God allowed him to go, because He allowed him to have fifty-five

years. The longer you're given when you're doing wrong, it just gets worse and worse, and that's what happened. The longer the kingdom was away...

It's like where would the Church have been. We had an apostasy, yes, but if it'd been allowed to go on there wouldn't have been anything left. There wasn't anything left anyway! It came to a point that if we were just allowed to be as we were without an apostasy even, where would the Church have been? What could have been saved later on? It doesn't mean God can't, but surely, you have to work with them in a different way and it wouldn't be a group that was able to come out of an apostasy. I hope you understand what I'm saying. There's timing of events and when God intervenes and what He does.

When it came to this it was a matter, "Remember Manasseh. Look how far you can go away from the truth. Look how bad it can get when left to yourself without My intervention, without My guidance, without My help in your life." Manasseh is a perfect example of that, so God had to raise up someone to deliver. But the judgment was still there because of what had happened before.

I can't help but—we are going to receive this in different ways here—but to marvel at what God did and what God said, all by design and purpose. Because this was all designed to let them go as far as they wanted, knowing how bad they would become during that fifty-five years. God knew it. He knew exactly what an individual would do of that nature, of that mindset after going through his history and his upbringing and what had happened before and leading to this point. Unless He intervenes to stop it and turn it around that's the way it's going to stay.

Just like the kings of Israel, "Every one of them followed in the sins of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat." Says it again and again and again. Why? God didn't raise anyone up to deliver them, to bring them to Him. It wasn't His purpose. The purpose was to let them go into captivity, all ten tribes. Incredible.

All we can do is marvel at things like this, truly. We should marvel, be in awe of how God worked with individuals, nations, and people at different times. There is much to be learned from this. The more you look at it and the more God's spirit works with you in those things the more you will see, truly.

Verse 28—Now the rest of the acts of Josiah, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? In his days pharaoh Necho King of Egypt went to the aid of the King of Assyria, to the river Euphrates. This is the extent of his kingdom, and this is what he's talking about there. So, he sends up this army. **...and king Josiah went against him.** So, we're talking about 609 BC now. So, this is when this all took place.

So, he's coming up there, pharaoh Necho, the Egyptian army is coming up through there, coming up through Judah, and Josiah goes out to go to battle with him. **...and Josiah went against him. And he,** speaking of the pharaoh, Necho, **killed him at Megiddo.** That was 609 BC.

So, this was a point in time, again, of the Babylonians coming in and conquering the northern regions. Egypt has stumbled, they have to stumble up here because of what Josiah did, and anyway, the story goes on.

Then his servants moved his body in a chariot from Megiddo, brought him to Jerusalem, and buried him in his own tomb. Then the people of the land took Jehoahaz the son of Josiah, anointed him, and made him king in his father's place. Now, again here, this entire history is most important because of how God was working out His plan and purpose for the nation of Judah. That's why everything took place in a very timely fashion, coordinating it with what was happening with the Medes and the Babylonians, what was happening then with Assyria to the north, what was happening with Egypt, what was happening with Judah and what Josiah would do.

So, before proceeding here and going into 2nd Kings, the timing of some of these events I'm going to go through here again. The Babylonians and Medes formed, again, this close alliance through this marriage. This is when Nabopolassar was ruling Babylon, who was, again, that first king of Babylon. With the Medes they went up against the Assyrians. They were first defeated in Nineveh, because it fell three years earlier, Nineveh did. But the kingdom was still in power in different areas there and still had a great army. This is what was taking place now in Assyria. So, took time here for it's total collapse, the government, Nineveh, and now the rest that was resisting.

Now, in some of these things we're coming up to a point in time—it doesn't happen for four more years—when Nabopolassar dies. So, as to what his health was, history in some of these things is basically nonexistent. Most everything is in the Bible, actually, and historians don't like to use that as a source of authority so that's why there's a lot of conflict. Because then those who are scholars they try to use what historians say and they try to piece things together and the reality is it can't because they're not working from the same plane anyway. So, there's a lot of contradiction and so forth that takes place here. It's exceedingly confusing when you read various sources.

So again here, it isn't clear here whether or not he was actually leading them. It's very possible, and certainly he was involved, Nebuchadnezzar was involved in the wars and the fighting. And often times this would happen, a king would go out with the forces when they're invading and oftentimes a son, like in this particular case here, or even the son is sent ahead to do it if the father is not able to. At some point this is what had to have happened. At what point, we don't know. But Nebuchadnezzar was always at the forefront of these things. He was being worked with to become the next king. Nabopolassar was ill at some point here, obviously, before he died at 605.

So again here, Nineveh fell in 612, Assyria, 609, we have the Egyptians coming up, Josiah goes out against them in 609. He's killed in Megiddo and a new king is placed in power there by Pharaoh Necho. Well, we're coming to that. We haven't hit that yet. The people of the land made the other one king. Pharaoh comes along and removes him and places someone else in power.

So, this is a part we come to then and let's go ahead and pick it up here in **2 Kings 23:30—Then his servants moved his body, speaking of Josiah, in a chariot from Megiddo, brought him to Jerusalem, and buried him in his own tomb. Then the people of the land... Again, this is where they took Jehoahaz the son of Josiah, anointed him, and made him king in his father's place.**

But again, the story isn't over with because it goes on then here in **verse 31—Jehoahaz was twenty and three years old when he began to reign, and he reigned three months.** So, he didn't last too long.

Then it jumps down to **verse 32—He did that which was evil in the sight of the Eternal, according to all that his fathers had done.** So, incredible things that can happen in the minds of people and what they choose. Ones being worked with; another isn't being worked with in the same manner, and if an individual isn't being worked with by God you know what happens? We tend to go to our own thinking, our own ways, our own plans. That's happened even through time. If God's working with you you're very blessed. It's for a purpose. If others aren't, there's a purpose in that too.

God has a different timing for people. A different way to work with individuals. Some is going to be in the Millennium here. There's going to be some incredible things that happen with some of our past as we go into the Millennium because so many know, and then when it comes to pass and when Joshua is here, and the 144,000, pretty tough to ignore that one. So, there is going to be a lot of repenting for those who are blessed to live on into that period of time. There are going to be a lot who are blessed who are a part of our history. Then for others it's going to be the Great White Throne.

So, it says here, "He did that which was evil in the sight of the Eternal." Kind of hard to imagine but human nature is human nature, and we've seen all kinds of things happen in the Church. Something like this shouldn't surprise us.

Then Pharaoh Necho put him bound or in prison at Riblah. And so, basically here, he was confined there. Whether he was in chains, whether he was in a prison, whatever, but he was confined there by the military in whatever state it was, we don't really know. But he was held there **in the land of Hamath, that he might not reign in Jerusalem.** So, a little distance away.

...and put the land to a tribute of a hundred talents of silver and a talent of gold. So, huge amounts here that were to be paid in tribute year by year to Pharaoh Necho of Egypt because he was still reigning in that part of the world. The Babylonians hadn't come down yet. He was still reigning in that particular area. So, before he returned to Egypt he put upon them this tribute, taxation, if you will.

Then Pharaoh Necho made Eliakim the son of Josiah king in the place of his father Josiah and changed his name to Jehoiakim. Jehoiakim is the one being worked with now in the sense of who is over the area here. We're going to come to that next Sabbath, but I believe he reigns then for eleven years. He doesn't do a real good job, as we're going to find out as we continue on in the story here, but it's a part of the story. But anyway, this is a beginning. In 609 he's established.

So, a lot of things happen at this period of time that God makes very clear all these things are happening. God's very much over this process, allowing certain things to take place in people's lives but making certain that certain things take place in order to fulfill a greater purpose that He has that's coming, that has to happen as far as Judah is even concerned and as far as Egypt. Because Egypt is going to be dealt with in all this as well before this is over with because they can't be allowed to continue on to be a great

power because of what God is going to do. They have to be removed from the area of Judah. God's going to do all this; He's going to see to it that it's taken care of. Incredible.

So again here, **Pharaoh Necho made Eliakim the son of Josiah king ... changed his name to Jehoiakim and took Jehoahaz and went on down to Egypt with him.** So, he'd been kept in this place in Riblah, from being able to do anything as far as sway over Judah. He removed him then to this area until he was ready to go on down into Egypt. When he was ready to go down and establish the new king over Judah, his forces, he went, took him with him, the one that the people had set up as the king and took him on down into Egypt and there is **where he died.**

So, that's the part of the story here. I'm not going to continue on with the rest because it takes some time here now to go into the next section here. But we're going to go through some of the story then of Jehoiakim. What even becomes a little confusing later on is Jehoiachin, but it's pronounced "kin." That's why some of these things are a little hard sometimes to follow through with because they sound like you're talking about the same one. I even found myself typing the wrong one at times because the names of the kings are so close in what they mean.

But to be in awe, again, of what God has done through time and through this period of time, as we go deeper into this, to me the deeper we go into some of this and the actual captivity then of Judah, it becomes more incredible because it's about this sermon. It's about the glory and the greatness of God. We're to be in awe of that. God is giving us an ability to be more in awe of things He's done through time.

Again, I go back to the stories that we've gone through recently, of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and you see the minute things with which God worked to bring them along, to work with them, to mold and fashion them, to bring about twelve sons and all that he had to go through until He was able to come back down. Anyway, some of the travels that took place and what took place around Bethel. All the things of history and God working with them, it's so incredible. To see that power and that might, that God is molding and fashioning.

It's not just the nations and the kingdoms. What is it about? The individuals. Because over 4,000 years of time God worked individually with people. Joshua wasn't here yet. The Church hadn't become established. There was great purpose in those who would be called out over a long span of time, molded and fashioned by things that they would experience in the world and the world around them, and they had to be of a certain state and condition for them to learn what they needed to learn.

Just like as we're going to go through in the story, Ezekiel, Jeremiah, Daniel especially, the things they went through and what they experienced in the span of time in which they experienced it, are phenomenal. There is a lot that happened in this period of time and it's so important as a part of God's plan and purpose.

And so you think of all of this that had taken place, of God working with the brothers, Judah then, the captivity, Egypt, everything to this moment in time, and it's so incredible. Hopefully we can't help but be in awe of God Almighty and how He molds and fashions our lives if we will yield to Him.