

So, perhaps we can get this online. Maybe even we'll send it out to everyone so you can have it, but there will be more added to this list as we go along because this is going to be a longer series. Because as we go along, to me everything we're focusing upon here concerning *God's Glory and Greatness*, with this being *Part 3* today, it's so incredible everything that God did in molding and fashioning and telling things in advance, and some things so very specific and how He brought them to pass. It's very inspiring. I find it very inspiring.

Hopefully, we are finding that inspiration and being more in awe of God Almighty to plan and prepare various things, which wasn't at the last minute, either, because some things, even though they might have been prophesied a hundred, a hundred and forty years, or a couple of thousand years in advance, it was still planned long, long before that. I hope we're coming to understand that more and more and how God works, and if we can see those things we should be more in awe, too, of God calling us, giving us the opportunity to have a place. Because everyone fits into a place that He's molding and fashioning if we yield ourselves to that process.

Anyway, we've been focusing on how God, again, has meticulously planned and brought to pass these things, the rise and fall of kingdoms, the people involved in it in many cases, and it just to me it gets more and more exciting as we go along here. But today we're going to back up a little bit here and talk about a couple of things.

Once again, this history has been covering the most important part because it tells how God was working out His plan and purpose for the nation of Judah as we've been going through this. Because Israel, we looked at Israel, and God's purpose was to bring Israel, the kingdom of Israel to an end, to even have ten tribes that would be scattered in Europe for a future purpose, for the end-time.

Because it's about a 7,100-year plan when it's all said and done. And so, various segments of things fit into different times and God orchestrates it all. We've been focusing on this portion here then now of Judah being brought to her end, if you will, its end. Again, so many things took place here.

We looked at how the Babylonians and Medes had formed an alliance through a marriage with Nebuchadnezzar, of the princess of the Medes. It's hard not to get ahead in some of this because the Medes come up again, the Medo-Persian Empire. So, different ones played different roles as we go along here.

Up to the point of time of Nabopolassar, who was Nebuchadnezzar's father, the Babylonian region was under the rule, as a whole, of the Assyrians. They still had a king, they had kings in a dynasty at different times there, but they were still under them. It's like we're coming to this point here now Judah being under Babylon, but they had the kings. So, sometimes nations had conquered various areas, but they

allowed kings to rule, and in many cases here to pay taxation or a tribute year by year, if you will, and they allowed them to continue on.

Nabopolassar was the first king of this new system, if you will, not under Assyria. They were attacking Assyria. We have the history here of how the Medes got together with them then because of this union of a marriage, and they became a force to reckon with. And so, the Chaldeans, or the Babylonians, ever how you want to refer to them, Babylon was the name of the city, the capital city, if you will, and so often they're referred to as the Babylonians, and the region as well, but some historians and so forth refer to them only as Chaldeans. Anyway, can get kind of get confusing sometimes.

Here we go as we're going through this portion here. We come up to the point where, again, Assyria had been attacked. Nineveh was already taken in 612 BC, which your chart shows you. 612 BC Nineveh was conquered by them. Then 609 BC, three years later, the entire nation fell.

Then at the same time we have the Egyptians who had a sway in the southern region there where Judah was, and they had an alliance with the Syrians. So, you have this situation where the Pharaoh, Necho, is coming out of Egypt to join forces with the Assyrians to fight against the Babylonians in the north. As he's coming up there he is met by Josiah and he goes out there, the King of Judah, to fight. There are some things he didn't follow as far as instruction was given to him.

He was an incredible king, if you go through the story there and read more about things that we didn't even cover. But he had an incredible reign, and he did some things there that he shouldn't have done. He disguised himself as he went out against the king there, or the pharaoh, if you will, the army, and he was killed in Megiddo.

So, at this point here we have the story where the people of Judah set up a king. Pharaoh Necho didn't like it, so he took him with him back down into Egypt. He set up his own king and the story just gets more convoluted as you go along. Hard to keep track. That's why we have this cheat-sheet.

So, we've been going through this time period, bringing it up to the point in time we're discussing it here, but before we go on there is one section here I want to delve into one more time here, and that is about Josiah and, again, this thing of Megiddo.

2 Kings 23:30. So, this is a part of the area where we left off. It says, **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 took Jehoahaz, the son of Josiah, anointed him, and made him king in his father's place. Jehoahaz was twenty-three years old when he began to reign, and he reigned three months.** So, it wasn't very long, obviously. **He did that which was evil in the sight of the Eternal, according to all his fathers had done.**

What an incredible thing here. Here you have Josiah who was an incredible king, and the things he did, the kind of Passover they kept when they went to work on the temple, and he gave the funds for those working in that area and gave charge to them to use those funds for that. Then they found the book of the

law and they read the book of the law. He was right down the line. Got rid of so much as far as worshipping false gods.

Then you have his children, and you see what took place with them and how over and over again here they rebelled, and they wanted to go back to that other system. And you think, what an incredible thing of the mind sometimes, and you have things that you see or should have been able to see even on a physical plane that God had done, and they rejected it and did their own thing. Incredible!

So this is the story here that's repeated all the way down through here as we go along.

So, it was only three months but "he did evil in the sight of the Eternal," it says, "according to all that his father's had done," speaking of those who had done that – not Josiah – but those who had been known for evil. Like Manasseh. He was the worst.

Then Pharaoh Necho bound him at Riblah in the land of Hamath, that he might not reign in Jerusalem; and put the land in tribute, so this taxation or tribute, if you will, of a hundred talents of silver and a talent of gold. Then Pharaoh Necho made Eliakim, the son of Josiah, king in place of his father Josiah and changed his name to Jehoiakim, then took Jehoahaz and went to Egypt, and he died there.

So, we're up to this point here of Jehoiakim's reign. I'm picking this portion here to interject something that I'd mentioned in I believe the first sermon in this series, that I'd mentioned that is separate from all of this. But I'm pulling it back in for a reason. We covered this in *Part 1*. I interjected something in the sermon on that particular Sabbath and mentioned some things about Atonement that had come to my attention because it kind of fit into some of the lessons because there are all kinds.

As we go through these stories it is amazing the number of lessons. Every time you go into studying one of the kings and things that happened there are lessons for us. So many of these things though it was physical for them is spiritual for us, and we're to learn from it. That's why those things are written. We're going to see that over and over and over again.

So, every once in a while something is interjected that has to do with us, that has to do with the end-time perhaps, and you'll see a lot more of that as we get deeper into the sermon series.

So, in *Part 2* again, we covered some of the incredible things of Josiah, and that's where I wanted to mention this, was last Sabbath, and I missed it. But it's stated in 2 Kings 22:2 about Josiah, so I'm going to go back to that, and then we'll go forward again.

2 Kings 22:2—He, Josiah, did right in the sight of the Eternal and walked in the ways of his father David.

Now, it wasn't an immediate father, but that's the term that's used in the Hebrew; that's how it's translated. So, we're talking about one that they looked to, one that set the example for the kings of Judah, that they strived to follow, the ones who did try to follow God. And so, this is the format here.

He did not turn aside to the right hand or to the left. How many times have we been told that without reading this? Now, we're to turn right and left when God directs us to, but on our own, we're not to turn away from God's way to the right hand or to the left, which is the tendency of human nature, as we've

covered, because people by nature tend to have something along the entire spectrum there from liberal to conservative. Sometimes ultra-liberal to ultra-conservative or somewhere within a spectrum.

And for us, the only way we can really be right is in God's way. That has to be a matter of being led by God's spirit. But we all have natural human tendencies apart from God's spirit that put us somewhere in a spectrum there that isn't right. We are not right. We are not correct in our life. God has to show us how to live to be right with Him. Those are things we have to go through, change and choices we have to make.

So, "he did not turn aside to the right hand or to the left." This is how we want to be when it comes to God's way of life. So, we're ever learning.

And so, it was interjected in that particular sermon about something that had bothered someone concerning Atonement and it concerned someone who ate a mint or mints, and also offered them to some others. At least that's how the story came across, that's what was told. The reality was that that was done, an individual did partake of a mint on the Sabbath, on that Sabbath, the High Day, an annual day, a Holy Day. But it's a day of not eating anything.

I'm trying to clarify some things and use this as an example to help us to have a better balance of being more on target, being more balanced, being right on in God's way of life. Now, on Atonement, since it's coming up pretty soon, just so everyone understands, we don't eat anything, period. There is nothing you consume. No liquid. No food. No candy. Nothing.

It came out that no minister had done that, no minister had said that that was okay. Anyway, ministers have been seen taking a candy or whatever it might be, or a mint. I take mints. I had a mint before services here. Now, during the service, I might do it as well. There is nothing wrong with that. But on Atonement, there is something wrong with that, okay?

So, I could go a little farther in this and I'm not going to because I want to get through this, because we need to get through this portion here.

Someone asked me after services after I mentioned this, is it okay to have... You have one of these spray things you spray in your mouth because you know when you don't eat anything or drink anything we tend to stand back a little farther from each other. And so, someone was asking, well, what about that? Well, it's a negligible thing that has nothing to do with food that's going to go down your throat. It sticks to the roof of your mouth or whatever, so something like that I don't have a problem with. Gum – I do a little more. That's just me in my mind toward God. A mint? No. Because you're going to consume it; it's going to go in for sure.

So, we have to look at the balance in these things and what is right before God and strive to do the best we can. So, that's why I'm giving some of this, to let individuals know that no, you can't have things like that on a regular basis on that day just because your breath smells and you're going to eat mints all day long because you don't want to offend someone else.

Well, it's more important not to be offensive to God Almighty who gave us the matter of not eating and consuming anything on that particular day. That's our measurement. That's the most important thing of all.

So again, an elder didn't pass this along. It wasn't stated by any particular elder that it was okay. Because you know what? If they had they'd be in trouble. I have no hesitation of correcting them. We all make mistakes. Someone would have made a mistake in that particular area; not going to be bashed over the head, just corrected. So, we have those things. None of us does anything perfect in life.

This is a matter of correction as well to someone who felt that perhaps it was okay to do this and to pass them around to others—no, it's not—if it was passed around.

And see, this brings up another issue. When you hear two sides of a story it's two sides of a story. That's why brethren are told, if there is something that's not clear to you, that you feel someone else has done, you know what you're supposed to do? You're supposed to go to them alone. That's what this is all about, to save all this from happening in the first place.

If that had been done God's way, which is God's way in obeying God, then this wouldn't have gotten to me. It wouldn't have come that far. I wouldn't have to be preaching about it. It could have been resolved.

I have given many sermons on this of recent time, that if the Church had done this, ever since I've been in the Church, since 1969, it would have resolved many, many, many, many, many problems. But it's one of the worst things that hasn't been obeyed in God's Church. God, God's Son, gave that instruction of what we're supposed to do. Then if we can't resolve something and you keep being bothered by it, you know what you're supposed to do? If it doesn't seem like everything, the air was cleared properly with someone else? Go to them again! Make sure that you understand. Make sure that things are clarified. Ask more specific questions if you have to but go to your brother alone.

Now, if there's no reconciling there taking place, if there is no change taking place, if there has been sin, if you know that it's sin... So often we do things and it's not even a matter of sin! So many things can be talked out because it's not a matter of the other person sinning. It may be your standard or someone's standard of what they think is right and wrong, but that doesn't determine sin. It has to be something you know is a matter of sin.

So, if it's a matter of sin then and it needs to be reconciled and taken care of because you have a duty to do, what are you to do then? Go to the ministry. And again, to one in your area, to the one who is closest to you, and ask the question, whatever it is that's bothering you. Don't let it fester. Don't let it go on for months. Go to them and discuss something with them so that you can bounce something off to make sure that you're thinking right, and if something has been done wrong then they will address that and let you know that they're going to address it. End of story and you don't have to worry about it anymore.

They may give you some guidance and direction. They may tell you, "Have you gone to your brother alone?" That's the number one thing most ministers should always ask, "Have you gone to your brother alone yet?" "Well..." "Then do it." Most of the time when people go to the minister they haven't even

gone to their brother yet. You know what you're doing in a case like that? You're sinning. The other person may not be sinning in what you think they're doing, but you have sinned if you don't do it. Because Christ told us to do it.

So, I hope we understand that. We can be guilty of something far more than someone that we think has done something wrong. Does that make sense? Because we're disobeying God because we haven't done it God's way, to go to our brother alone, then to go to a minister. Then if the minister has a question about it he'll get a hold of the one that's over that particular region, whomever it might be, here in this country, as far as the U.S. is concerned, and then it should be totally resolved.

So, be careful; don't send it to me because then you're really sinning – if you haven't followed through and followed the government of God. Because that's another level. You are to follow the government God has established. Enough said. Things to learn from interjected here in the midst of a sermon series.

So now we're going back to where we left off in *Part 2*. So, now when Assyria fell and Josiah was killed in Megiddo by the Egyptians in 609 BC, the timing of events becomes a little more difficult.

So, this to me has been a very inspiring area to go through and to be in awe of God doing it as He reveals and helps to better understand some of the things that took place. There is so many things in contradiction and conflict by historians. Mainly by them because they don't want to acknowledge anything out of the Bible. A lot of scholars, they don't want to have anything to do with the Bible, so they won't accept certain time frames that are in the Bible. Then some on the religious side or the (supposedly) the scholarly side there as far as theologians are concerned, they have other conflicts. So, it becomes a mess sometimes, an absolute mess you've got to wade through.

Anyway, I've been wading through a mess throughout this series. So, as we go forward we don't have all the facts concerning all chronology, but we're pretty close spot on. So, that's the best we can do is strive to be as close to the scriptural accounts, that they agree with one another, and when they agree as far as timing is concerned, that's great. When they don't the way others have done it, it really becomes a mess.

Sometimes you have to be careful if you ever do something like that, to be careful what you're going through because it's very easy to get off course if you're not careful. We have to stick so close to the present truth into what God says in scripture.

So, in 609 BC. The next great events were in 606. I don't know, basically, of anyone that accepts this as a whole. There are maybe one or two out there that touch upon it a little bit. People want to put all their eggs in one or two baskets here when it comes to the captivity of Judah, two major dates. No, they had other events take place at different times and it's very clear in scripture that 606 is another period of time that certain events took place. But they don't want to accept some of those things.

It's just typical of the truth and the world around us that don't really care that much about it. They go along with maybe what a scholar has said, and they don't really research it like they should. Shame on them. Because even on a physical plane you should be able to do something like this. It's not that hard. It's not rocket science. May feel like it.

So again here, the next great events take place in 606, and this is three years after Josiah had been killed in Megiddo and Jehoiakim had been placed as king by Pharaoh Necho.

So, now we go to Daniel 1:1. When you see different ones here and when they were taken captive, to me this is hard to have words even to express how incredible all these things are, of the different prophets and how God used them during this time period. This was an incredibly important period of time. As we're going to see as we go along so much of it has to do with the end-time and God looking forward to the end-time by certain events that took place there that were to set the stage for things that happened much, much later on, orchestrating it all and letting us learn through the course of time.

So, it says here in **Daniel 1:1—In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim, king of Judah.** So, when is that? 606 BC. Pharaoh Necho put him in place in 609 so now we're talking about 606. It's very clear.

...**Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon came unto Jerusalem and besieged it.** So, this is the first time. This is the first event when Nebuchadnezzar, his army anyway – and he wasn't fully king yet at this point here because his father didn't die until 605. But he was co-regent together for this period of time. History has it, in a sense, that Nabopolassar was ill for whatever reasons as well. Sometimes a son would be sent out as a part of an invasion, but this is saying here, making it very clear here from his vantage point.

So, Daniel is writing from where? From Babylon. The king is Nebuchadnezzar so he's referring to Nebuchadnezzar and things that he did. So, he's referring to him as king Nebuchadnezzar, not saying he's king at this moment in time but he'd referring to king Nebuchadnezzar and what he did. So, whether he came in as they so often did, the son went out leading the army, because Nabopolassar wasn't able to, or even if they went together, it doesn't matter. It was told here that this is about Nebuchadnezzar.

...**came unto Jerusalem and besieged it.** So again, verses like this tend to trip people up because they can't fit it together. I've been through this looking at different (so-called) "authorities" out there and it's an absolute mess.

So, if it's taken that Nebuchadnezzar is literally king at that time, again, obviously that creates problems because he couldn't have been in 606. And his father didn't die until 605. And so again here, Daniel is writing from the position that he is king at that time and he's telling a story here about what he did back in 606, explaining the events that took place.

Daniel 1:1—In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim... So, that's the one you go by. It's very clear. We know that's in 606 BC. It says, **king of Judah... Jehoiakim, king of Judah, of his reign, Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, came into Jerusalem and besieged it. Then the LORD gave Jehoiakim, king of Judah, into his hand.** So, it's very clear here that Jehoiakim then was subservient to Nebuchadnezzar, and because it says God gave it to him, gave Jehoiakim to him and the ability to besiege Jerusalem at that moment in time

So, let's just read it again, **Then the LORD gave Jehoiakim, king of Judah, into his hand with part of the vessels of the house of God.** So, they took tribute with them. That's the way they looked upon it. Then they charged them, paying tribute to them, to him, to Babylon, to Nebuchadnezzar, to his father, if you

will, whatever, but to Babylon, and basically told no longer is it going to be Pharaoh Necho. So he listened for three years; he was subservient if you will, he accepted this defeat and paid tribute to Babylon.

So, it says here, **with part of the vessels of the house of God, which he carried into the land of Shinar to the house of his God.** So, it's very specific here what he did. So, he put them in a specific location, the house of his God. It becomes important later on.

...and he brought the vessels into the treasure houses of his god. So, the king spoke unto Ashpenaz, the master of his eunuchs, that he should bring certain of the children of Israel and of the king's seed and of the princes. So, it wasn't just some of the treasure, a small portion of it as a tribute right away, and then they would pay tribute while they're away. They were supposed to. But also different individuals were taken.

Daniel is telling the story of how he ended up in Babylon. He was taken captive in 606 BC. That's what this introduction is about. He's telling what happened to him and why it was that he's writing this there.

...given to the eunuchs that he should bring certain of the children of Israel, and the king's seed and other princes, children in whom was no blemish but well-favored and skillful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge and understanding science, and such as had ability in them to stand in the king's palace. So, one of the very best.

So, how they went through that process, I don't know, but it probably wasn't all that hard to know those who were being educated, those who were being trained, those who were serving in a capacity already that was obvious. **...and understanding.**

They were young. Incredible. To me, this is always inspiring when you read stories like this. Because when you read about some of these they are fifteen, sixteen, seventeen, and eighteen years old. Amazing! God had already chosen them. We're going to see where He chose them, in some cases, a whole lot earlier. It makes it really clear when He did it. That becomes even more inspiring.

That's why if we can see something that God did back then we should be in awe that God has called us and given us the kind of calling He has, truly, because of a place that He has for us in His family. That's why we're called. We have such incredible opportunity if we could just see it. Because the more we see it, the more we'll fight for it, the more we'll hold on to it.

Because my greatest disillusionment in so many of these things since 1969 is seeing all the people who have turned against what God offered them. Reminds me of a family at one time that I'd gotten to know fairly well in the area where I was called, who were called into the Church around the same time period, a little after. They asked one time, made a comment about "How do you know you're going to be in God's Family?" It's like, what a question to ask! I was a little stunned by it. I was very young spiritually, just started. Like, "What else is there?! What's in your mind?" I didn't ask that but that's kind of my thinking.

And it stuck with me, how could you think anything but that? You're called to be in God's Family! What is greater? Don't you have a confidence in that if you know that God has called you, that this is what you're

fighting for? Isn't that what you said at baptism? "I'm yours, God," and from then on if you follow what's given to you that's where you're going to be, in God's Family.

...children in whom is no blemish but well-favored, skillful in all wisdom, cunning in knowledge, understanding in science, and such as had ability in them to stand in the king's palace. So, he wanted the very best to be brought in to train, to work with. **...of whom they might teach the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans.**

Verse 5—So the king appointed for them a daily provision of the king's meat and of the wine which he drank, and so nourishing them three years, that at the end thereof they might stand before the king.

Nineteen, twenty, in through there. Incredible! So that at the end of their training they're going to be able to do the job, fluent in the Chaldean tongue that was Nebuchadnezzar's purpose in the first place here, of what he was striving for.

Now, among those of the children of Judah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, Azariah. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Incredible. All mentioned together; they were taken in 606. **Unto whom the prince of the eunuchs gave names. For they gave unto Daniel the name of Belteshazzar; to Hananiah, of Shadrach; to Mishael, Meshach; and to Azariah, Abed-Nego.**

What an awesome introduction to a book, that here was Daniel's calling to be a prophet. God was going to use him as such. He was going to use the other three; they're mentioned for a purpose obviously as well. There were others that were taken but these are going to be at the forefront of God's purpose and God's plan and what He's going to do while they're in captivity.

2 Kings 24:1—In the days of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, it says, **"came up,"** but the word is **ascended.** Yes, to go up. He went up, in other words, against Jerusalem. So, it's the same story here that's being told. Again, 606 BC, that's what the period of time is.

...and Jehoiakim became his servant three years. So, it's very clear, just like it said, God gave Jehoiakim into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar, and he was his servant for three years.

Then he turned and rebelled against him. At the end of three years. These things become important as you're reading the story. If you don't pay any attention to the time frame of these things then it doesn't mean a whole lot. It's very obvious when you read through various things historians have written it doesn't mean a whole lot to them. They're not really concerned that much with the truth and keeping things accurate.

That's why I'm inspired, moved by the fact that God blesses us with ability to see things, to know things in a fashion that's very unique to God's own Church. Because it's His Church.

So what happened then at the end of three years? He rebelled. He quit paying tribute.

So, we've read about one prophet, Daniel, who had been taken in 606. There's a lot written about this period of time by another prophet. It was Jeremiah. He was never taken captive to Babylon.

Jeremiah 1:1, inspiring story here. So many prophets in this time period. It really is quite amazing because their stories and things they wrote about are about the future. This has puzzled a lot of people through time to the point, in some cases, like Ezekiel, he's rejected because of what he wrote. He's rejected by many because of what he wrote. They say it can't be true.

Jeremiah 1:1—The words of Jeremiah, the son of Hilkiah of the priests that were in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin, to whom the word of the Eternal came in the days of Josiah. Now, again here, Josiah reigned 31 years, and so things get a little more specific here. ...**the son of Amon, king of Judah, in the thirteenth year of his reign...**of Josiah. So, that's in 627 BC. Very simple.

So, here he has a start, he's called first to fulfill a job, a function that is profound by the time it's over with, it truly is. It's so inspiring what Jeremiah lived, what he saw, what he went through, what he experienced, how God used him, what he wrote. It's just to the point of sending chills up and down your spine when you see the story.

It came also in the days of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, king of Judah, unto the end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah. He's the last king of Judah. So, Jeremiah has a long, long time as a prophet, and it's going through and explaining some of this. But he's explaining here, his calling, a prophet, and what he's writing here.

He says, goes on to say, so it's giving this time frame ...**Zedekiah, the son of Josiah, king of Judah, until the carrying away of Jerusalem captive in the fifth month.** So, it's taking it all the way up. So, Jeremiah was a prophet unto Judah for 41 years unto this point. So, that's what it's addressing here. This is what Jeremiah is addressing here. He's giving an overview of things he's going to write about in the book, contained in the book.

Verse 4—Then the word of the Eternal came unto me, saying, Behold, I formed you in the belly; I knew you... Or Before I formed you in the belly I knew you. Awesome! What does that mean? Before anything was ever created God knew Jeremiah.

That's why these things don't just happen at the last minute. God has planned and has a purpose He's been working out about a 7,100-year period that He planned a long, long time ago. He didn't just start when finally Adam and Eve were created: "Well, how long is this going to be now?" It was very clear from the very beginning, the seven-day week, the seven-thousand-year plan.

Then later on He gives us more in understanding when He tells us about the Last Great Day, which He gave to Herbert Armstrong understanding of what it was all about, what it pictured, what it meant. Because that's when it was given. Just because it's been written doesn't mean people understood it as so many things are in scripture, especially for the end-time.

So, "Not only did I know you," He's saying, "I formed you in the belly of your mother." We've been talking about some of that kind of thing. God can do that if God has a specific purpose in some cases in time. Not all cases. That's why I think of the Church over 2,000 years. That hasn't been the case of all people that

have been called into the Church by any measure. But for specific ones, especially in the first 4,000 years, there are different ones that God was determined were going to serve Him in a certain way.

If we can grasp a little bit more about His own Son. But the Father had to be Him. But for others, He could work with human beings, mothers and fathers in bringing them together. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, their wives, starting with Sarah on down. Not by chance. Not by accident that there were different ones that God brought together.

God knows! He made us! He knows our genes. He knows what He wants to make. He knows what He wants to create. All those little things that swim around in the thousands and thousands and thousands, God can direct the ones that are to be together. The one that He wants because it's going to produce a certain person, a certain individual with whom when He begins to work with them and give them of His spirit they're going to respond.

Now, that's an awesome thing to understand because He has something very specific to fulfill. His Son had something very specific to fulfill and had to be His Son, to have that mind in him from the moment of birth, that as a child, as he grew, none other like him. There couldn't be another like him.

But to have others through time with whom God could work? The power and might of Almighty God, we're only beginning to scratch the surface of it. There are things we don't even begin to grasp in how God has worked. People still have choice. But what an awesome thing when He has a specific part to fulfill, a specific thing that someone must fulfill because they live at that moment in time and what has to come to pass. He knows that with His spirit how they will respond to Him. Because He can mold and fashion the environment around them to help them to grow.

Do you think Jeremiah would have wanted something else? I don't want anything else. You think about our calling, why would you want anything else? If you look at the world and what people have left God's Church for, why do you want that? Why don't you want what God can mold and fashion in your mind to transform your thinking and your being, to become something so incredibly great you can't even begin to imagine it? In His Family, in the God Family?

"I'd rather go off and have sex with so-and-so over here than have that." That's the majority of people who have left God's Church; they've done it over that. That's the number one thing within the ministry as a whole that people have had to deal with over time, some of the most unimaginable things that people let their emotions and their feelings get away from them and they're not in control and they're not putting God first, and they become weak, and they do things they shouldn't do.

Others because they get lifted up with pride and begin to think people should listen to them and their ideas. They get these ideas of what is true and what is false, and with Herbert Armstrong, "That's not true."

That's why all those ministers. You think, how dumb can you get to think that he was just a great teacher? I'd like to smack them in the face. When I've been told that had to hold back because inside my carnality really wants to do that. Sorry. "Jar some sense into your mind! You don't know diddly crap except for what

God gave to that apostle and gave to His Church!" They get lifted up with pride thinking they know better, thinking they know more, thinking they know some truth that he never saw and can go over here and start something different.

I hope we've gone through enough in God's Church we are so convicted of that, we know that inside and out.

Anyway, what an incredible story then about Jerimiah. What a thing to be told! "I knew you before I formed you in the belly." We can understand this more deeply today than he was able to. He had to be moved by this, truly, that "The Great God of the universe knew me?"

Before I formed you in the belly, I knew you. And before you came forth out of the womb I sanctified you. He was set apart for holy use and purpose. When? Before anything was ever created. Now, the actual sanctification couldn't take place until he was there, but that was the plan. And so, He formed him in the womb, he came out, and He said, "Before you even came out you were sanctified, you were set apart for holy use and purpose." For what?

...to be a prophet. To be one who would help bring to pass prophecies that would take place through time into the end-time, the very end, that are still going on. Queen Elizabeth's throne exists because of what God did through Jeremiah. Awesome. Awesome. Awesome. God's plan forward looking into time because of His promise to David. Well, it was His plan and what He was going to do as far as the end of an age, and for Manasseh and Ephraim, primarily Ephraim, but Manasseh was going to come out as well.

I sanctified you, and I, the word isn't "**ordained,**" it's the word, **I made you.** It's literally what the word is. **I made you a prophet.** That's his purpose. That was the reason He molded and fashioned him in the womb. **I made you a prophet unto the nations.** It's not just a matter of nations that existed then, it's going to be nations through time all the way up to the end and beyond.

Then I said, Oh, Lord Eternal! Behold, I cannot speak, for I am but a youth. God called these different individuals at a very young age. So often in their upper teens when they began to do what they did, low twenties. **For I am but a youth. But the Eternal said to me, Do not say, 'I am a youth,' For you shall go to all that I shall send you, and whatever I give you charge, you shall speak.** So, God was going to give him what he needed.

I think of Moses when he felt so inadequate. He wasn't a youth. But because of whether it be a kind of a lisp or whatever it was that he might have had, he didn't want to do what God was telling him. God said, "Well, okay..." God would have given it to him, the ability and so forth, but gave it to Aaron to do.

Verse 8—Do not be afraid of their faces, for I am with you to deliver you. Now, he went through a lot. Confined, imprisoned, put in a pit of mud, murk, murky manure, feces; he was treated pretty poorly. In other words, while he was a prophet. It's when you're down there in something like that that if you have a carnal mind, well, "Is this all for real or not?" But he didn't think that way. He had been molded and fashioned to think a very unique way as God's prophet.

Do not be afraid of their faces, for I am with you to deliver you, says the Eternal. In other words, “I am there always. You’ll be delivered, whether it be in your physical life or beyond.” Because in time everybody dies. Doesn’t matter how.

Then the Eternal put forth His hand and touched his mouth, then the Eternal said to me, Behold, I have put My words in your mouth. So, that had to be a very moving thing for Jeremiah to experience because he didn’t have anyone else he knew that this had ever happened to. And here, this is being told to him. How God told him, we don’t know. It doesn’t say, in what form.

So, He made it very clear to him, “My words will be in your mouth. They’re going to be right up here, in the mind, and when you need them I’ll be there and you will speak what I give to you.” That’s what He was telling him.

See, I have this day set you over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, to pull down, to destroy... His prophecies talk about different ones, including Judah, is going to be destroyed, and some others as well. **...to throw down, to build, and to plant.** That was his commission. Awesome!

2 Kings 24. Now, how can we help but think of the glory and the greatness of Almighty God in something like this?

2 Kings 24:1—In his days Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, again, ascended up/went up unto Jehoiakim, so again, 606, became his servant three years. Then he turned and rebelled against him. So, he quit paying tribute. That’s how he knew, “He’s rebelled; no tribute.” **So the Eternal sent against him bands of the Chaldeans, and bands of the Syrians, and bands of the Moabites, and bands of Ammon; and sent them against Judah to destroy it.** So, basically, all sides were coming against it. So, God sent different ones in too, and including out of Babylon then, to take care of this rebellion.

...according to the word of the Eternal which He spoke to His servants the prophets. Surely at the commandment of the Eternal, this came upon Judah, to remove them out of His sight for the sins of Manasseh. So, this is what’s being looked at as the marker of time for God’s judgment then.

And again, all of that a part of a purpose and a plan so that Judah would come to that moment in time, by letting people go their own course and the kings go their own way and what they would do without His intervention. Because it requires God’s intervention to turn to Him.

If God hadn’t been working with Josiah, Josiah couldn’t have done what he did. God was working with him to draw him, to do the various things he did, moving him to do various things – as a child, as a young person. Incredible stories. So it is throughout time.

God was working with David when he was a very young man, and David knew it. David knew that it was God that was giving him the ability to fight a lion, to fight a bear, to do the things he did that other men just couldn’t do. You just don’t do the way David did as a young man. He gave the honor and the credit, he recognized this was of God. He wasn’t lifted up by his own abilities.

It gave him courage to do something later on before God, and that was to go up against Goliath. He wasn't afraid. He couldn't understand why the army wasn't going out to destroy who was making fun of God and God's people. It's like, "What are you doing?" That was in his mind! So, he wanted to go out.

He was so kind of obnoxious about it that Saul let him go out. "Okay, give him the armor." He couldn't even put it on and wear it and walk he was so little in comparison to what they wanted to give to him to go out there. He just got a few rocks and a sling, and he went charging out there, "Stupid ole giant!" What a mind to have!

All for God. All for God! Do we think that way? This is for God's Church. This is for God's people. This is for God! Going to do it! Whatever it requires, going to stand up to whatever it is out there. That's why God told Jeremiah, you know, "Jeremiah," basically, "don't fear them; don't fear anyone. You've got a job to do. Don't be fearful of how they treat you, how they act toward you, what they say to you, about you. None of that matters! Go do it."

So, we're all in that boat. That's what we're to do.

So again **...for the sins of Manasseh, according to all that he did, and also for of the innocent blood that he had shed; for he filled Jerusalem with innocent blood, which the Eternal would not pardon.** So, God gave certain prophecies, certain things He said were going to take place.

The time had come for Judah, so He allowed these things to take place. He could have stopped them earlier, but He let him have the longest reign of all the kings of Judah so that this would come to a peak of such filth and ugliness when they're on their own, to do all that it did, that there is a judgment for that. But it's his own choice. He did it. He didn't listen to those of the past. He didn't try to follow the way of David. He didn't care about God. So, he was judged accordingly.

Now, the rest of the acts of Jehoiakim, and all he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

So again, Nebuchadnezzar went up against Jerusalem and took the first captive to Babylon as well as vessels of the house of God. Some. Because there are going to be some other sackings take place here where more things are taken. It took them a long time to strip it all. This is an incredible story in itself. To take everything with them back to Babylon it took them a long time. Various times of siege to do what they did. It wasn't just two times as so many like to focus upon. So, this was the first one.

Jeremiah 46. Back to Jeremiah because now we're coming to the following year here of 605 BC. A lot took place in this particular year.

Jerimiah 46:1—The word of the Eternal which came to Jeremiah the prophet against the nations.

Against Egypt, concerning the army of Pharaoh Necho, so this is very specific. There are other prophecies about other nations, other prophesies about the future. This is about here, **concerning the army of Pharaoh Necho, king of Egypt, which was by the river Euphrates in Carchemish, and which**

Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon defeated in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, king of Judah.

When was that? 605. So, the fourth year of Jehoiakim. He started in 609. This brings us down to this point in time here of 605. It was in this year of 605 BC that Nabopolassar, the first king of Babylon—not under the Assyrians because they were conquering the Assyrians. So, they were separate. They had determined to go and fight against the Assyrians, to take them from underneath their tribute, if you will, and their role and power over them. And so, something that is recognized in history, incredibly so.

And so, he was the first here because of the, again, this pact with the Medes. So, right after he rose to power he went out to fight the Egyptians who were still occupying some of the conquered region of Assyria, that we've gone through here now and looked at.

As Jeremiah wrote, Nebuchadnezzar had a decisive fight over Egypt in Carchemish in the year 605 BC when he came to power. So, he didn't waste any time. Once he'd come into power he went out and fought against the Egyptians to get them totally out of Judah. That was his purpose and plan, to conquer that entire region, whereas before it was split between the Assyrians to the north and the Egyptians south of the Euphrates. So, this is where the battle took place.

Jeremiah 25:1—The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah (this was the first year of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon). So, it's 605. So, that's what we're talking about again here, just as Jeremiah 46 was all about. Because again, battle is recognized in history, Carchemish and what took place there and how they had the power to defeat the Egyptians in this particular location.

Now, again here, let me read this. I've got to catch us back up. **...all the people of Judah, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, king of Judah (that was the first year of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon.)** So, pretty specific..

Now, again here, timing like this when you go through some of these things, it becomes quite apparent that when something is written like this that it's important to God, important that the message has gotten across, that we grasp and comprehend the flow of events. To be more in awe of what God was orchestrating. Because everything is precise and certain things had to take place at a certain time in order to accomplish what He was doing.

He was getting rid of the Assyrians. Their rule, their influence in the world was being diminished. The Egyptians, theirs was being diminished. It wasn't diminished right away here because there's a little more work to be done, but it's being diminished. There comes a point in time where it says, "The Egyptians no longer came up into the area of Judah," after a certain point in time.

So again, God is orchestrating all these events through time. Babylon is becoming greater, coming to the point in time where Daniel is going to write about it, about Nebuchadnezzar himself and that statue, the head of gold. "You are the head of gold, Nebuchadnezzar."

What an awesome story, a story that spans time to the end of the age when that giant cube comes out of the heavens and smashes the feet, crumbles, and crushes the feet of this statue to where it destroys everything about all the kingdoms. "Babylon, Babylon has fallen." Beautiful.

So, when that all took place, when you think about Nebuchadnezzar and what he saw, it wasn't like God said, "Well, you know what? Right now it'd be a good time for him to have a vision, to see this statue and these four kingdoms. Yeah!" God doesn't work that way.

All these things were planned out long before. Nations that would arise, people who would arise, different ones in the world that God would orchestrate and work with; the rise and fall of kingdoms through time, even different ones He appointed very specifically at times to reign and to rule.

Those things are still going on to this day today. More today now than in times past here, as a whole. Even different ones who are in positions of where they're ruling for great reasons and great lessons that will come out in time more and more, why things are happening in this country the way they are, specific leaders that have brought us to this point in time that God...

People think they're voting people into office. Okay. Think what you will, but God's in control of allowing different ones to come in for a purpose that He's going to accomplish and fulfill by letting certain ones be there. Otherwise, certain things won't come to the surface.

We wouldn't have all that we have right now coming to the surface about how corrupt every facet of government is, to where people get their bellies full of all the lying and the conniving and the evil that exists in governments. God's allowing us to see that in the end-time and He's allowing other peoples in the world to start seeing some of these things in the end-time.

Same thing is true in Europe and what's happening throughout Europe. The same thing is true in what's happening in Russia and who's ruling and the mindset that's there. The same thing in China and what's happening there. The same thing in Japan and what's happening there. God is all-powerful and almighty to work with and blend and bring these things together.

People have a choice through all this, but God is the one who determines which ones will have influence for a greater purpose that has to come out so that we can learn we're measly, measly humans. Because we are, we're pitiful. What would we have if there were no God? Not much more. We'd be about over with because of technology. It's just the handwriting is on the wall, like we're going to see in Daniel a little bit later, "*Mene mene tekel upharsin.*" We're found wanting.

Yeah, we don't have what we need. We need God. We have to have God's mind, God's spirit, God's life. That's the only thing that works. Our ways, the ways of mankind cause nothing but sorrow and pain, and Babylon, massive confusion. Today Babylon is screaming its voice so loud. You talk about confusion, no soundness of mind in so many cases. Like, "How can you even think that way?"

“Yeah, let’s all go out and get electric cars. Yeah.” “What about all those batteries?” “Oh, don’t worry about that.” “What are you going to do with them a few years down the road?” “Don’t worry. We’ll take care of that later on.”

I’m sorry. Absolute stupidity and ignorance and foolishness, unsound minds, unbalanced minds of people that have no idea. They can’t think right. God’s allowing that to happen for a purpose and a reason – to bring about what must come to pass at the end of this age.

I’ll just read verse 1 again. **Jeremiah 25:1—The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah, in the fourth year, so again, what he spoke, what he said, of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah (that was the first year of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon), in which Jeremiah the prophet spoke unto all the people of Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying, From the thirteenth year of Josiah (627 BC) the son of Amon, king of Judah, even unto this day (605 BC), will be the twenty-third year that the word of the Eternal has come unto me; and I have spoken unto you, rising early and speaking, and you have not listened.**

Not a shock, is it? Powerful lesson. Because that’s the way it’s been through time. Abel, the very first preacher of righteousness. From then on what is the carnal mind, human mind been like? What has been very evident, especially in messages that God has sent out to different ones? They don’t want it. They don’t care. The only thing that makes the difference is if God is drawing individuals to see something, to learn something.

I think of Worldwide during Herbert Armstrong’s time. There were some drawn who weren’t called to be a part of the Church. They were drawn to be co-workers, large numbers, to support something, to be there, to have a point to see something to a certain area that they could grasp hold of and be drawn to and moved by enough that they wanted to support it. God did that. God did all that. Otherwise, they wouldn’t have been there, period. God has to do those kinds of things because “the carnal mind is enmity against God. It’s not subject to the law of God,” the ways of God; it doesn’t want God.

And so, when the truth comes along it’s different than traditional Christianity. It’s different than Judaism. It’s different than Buddhism. It’s different than all these things that people can be drawn to and support by their own choosing and desires, of what they’ve been taught perhaps as children and on up. But it’s different and it’s unique when it has to do with God, when it has to do with the truth.

You find that out very soon in your calling if you try to share this way of life with someone else, the Sabbath, the Holy Days, tithing. When people see it affects that part of their life especially, and you can’t work on the Sabbath whenever you want to, or you can’t work on certain Holy Days and you have to send in a certain amount it’s like, “I need to rethink this,” human nature gets involved to the point where people really hate it deep down inside.

The only ones that are different are the ones being drawn by God’s spirit who have choices to make. Can you receive it? Can you embrace it with God’s help? Do you realize you need God’s help to continue on the course? Do you know that you need God’s help to stay in the battle? Because without God’s help you can’t

stay in the battle even. That's why we learn, we're supposed to learn, better cry out to God every day, "I need Your help. I need Your spirit." Because you can't do it on your own. You can't hold on to this on your own.

And in the midst of all that learning that God had a lot of patience and mercy because sometimes it takes a lot of time to get that deeply ingrained in our being. We're slow learners sometimes. Thank God for His patience and His mercy. But when He has a purpose of calling you He has a purpose of seeing it through if you will receive what He has and the correction along the way that we have to have as human beings.

So again here ...**in which Jeremiah the prophet spoke unto all the people of Judah and to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying, From the thirteenth year ... on up to this day, he said, which has been twenty-three years now the word of the Eternal has come to me.** He lets them know, "This is what I have been speaking to you." ...**I have spoken to you, rising early and speaking, but you have not listened.**

Same thing today. People don't want to hear. They don't want to listen no matter what's out there, as a whole, unless God's drawing them, and that's not happening yet.

The Eternal has sent unto you all His servants the prophets, rising early and sending them, but you have not listened—that's the history of the world—**nor inclined your ear to hear.** That's why I can't help but think of what was stated in one, "If you will listen, God will listen." That's the problem – people won't listen. Sad. What a horrible thing.

So again, God marking the importance of all these periods of time.

We're going to stop there today. Next portion here is too long to get into since we need to leave early, a little early. We can easily vacate by five. I'd like to see us ahead of the scale here.

So, next Sabbath, *Part 4*.