

Then You Shall Know That I Am the LORD

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In just a couple of weeks, all of us in the Church of God will be observing the Feast of Trumpets which pictures the Day of the LORD. This is the time of God's wrath, when He intervenes in human affairs and brings His wrath on rebellious mankind. This brings about some of the most catastrophic events in the history of mankind. If you study through the book of Revelation, the details are so catastrophic it is difficult just to wrap your mind around and fully conceptualize them. It's just absolutely horrific.

Well, as a result of that, I've noticed throughout my lifetime in the Church of God—it's been almost about 60 years now—that oftentimes there is a reluctance to look at the subject of God's wrath. In fact, I have lost count of the number of times throughout my lifetime where the messages on the Feast of Trumpets really treat the day as if really all it is about is just the blowing of the seventh trumpet and Christ returning to earth. And then setting up the millennium and then just focusing on just the happy picture that results in.

While certainly the blowing of the seventh trumpet and Christ's return is certainly a part of the overall picture of the Day of the LORD, to just solely focus on that small part of it really misses the whole big picture of what's being addressed. Because the vast majority of this is really the horrific events of God's wrath. And human nature, oftentimes we like to focus on the positive side and ignore those more painful negative things.

But what we miss when we do that is not only missing the majority of the picture of what the Feast of Trumpet pictures, what we're missing is that God has a purpose in His wrath. Not just in specifically the Day of the LORD and what it pictures, but in bringing about catastrophic, painful events upon mankind for various purposes. God has a stated purpose for doing this. And what we're going to see today in the sermon is there's a consistent theme throughout the Bible showing us that God's purpose in doing this is oftentimes forcing mankind to acknowledge who He is. To see Him. To acknowledge His existence. And to acknowledge Him as the all-powerful God who's always existed, who's bringing all of these events about. And He's doing this to force mankind to acknowledge this. We're going to look at this subject today. So, if you'd like a title for this sermon, it's:

Then You Shall Know That I Am the LORD

Now, to start off with, let me explain how I came about this particular title. If you use a Bible search program, like a software program where you can search exact words and pull up every reference where those particular words appear in the Bible. And you search on the phrase "know that I am the LORD" -- LORD in all caps, which in Hebrew is "Yehovah". It's the personal name of the Father. But if you just search those exact words, what you'll find is this phrase appears 78 times in the Bible.

And it primarily appears in two books of the Bible. The vast majority of these references are all in the book of Ezekiel. There's 63 times that you'll find those words appear together in the book of Ezekiel. The other book that these appear primarily in is the book of Exodus. Now you'll see there's 10 references where this phrase appears in the book of Exodus. And there's 5 other times in other books of the Bible, but the vast majority are in those two books.

Now, if you look at all 78 references -- and just read the context of how this reference appears -- what you'll find is two-thirds of the time, that particular phrase shows up in the context of God's wrath. Again, it doesn't have to be specifically referring to the Day of the LORD. But what I'm referring to is God bringing about catastrophic negative events, painful things that nobody likes to experience. And He brings them about specifically, and it says, "So you may know that I am the LORD" -- that I am Yehovah. He's basically bringing this about by His own statements to force mankind to acknowledge Him. To acknowledge His power and to understand who He is.

So, what we're going to do today is look closer at this subject to fully understand this. Again, to realize we shouldn't shy away from looking at God's wrath, because it's kind of a negative, painful subject, which it is but we should understand that there is a fundamental purpose behind it. And also realize, ultimately, that understanding and acknowledging the true God is a fundamental component to salvation. And that's what all of this leads to. That's the ultimate positive picture in these negative, painful events.

Now, to start off with, as I mentioned there are two main books where you're going to see these references. It's in the book of Exodus, and again the lion's share is in the book of Ezekiel. Now, I want you to also notice that God makes these statements, you might say in two major contexts. And what I mean by those two major contexts is, this will apply to the Egyptians -- who we'll see in the book of Exodus -- where it's a nation that doesn't have a history of knowing the true God. They haven't had any reason to be familiar with Him prior to interacting with the Israelites. They're a very pagan nation steeped in their pagan gods and pagan way of life. And God brings this about to wake up individuals like that.

We'll also see later in the book of Ezekiel, where the specific focus is on the nation of Israel, and bringing about very catastrophic events on them to punish them. But it's not because they have had no history in knowing who He is. It's because they're being hardheaded and rebellious, and they're just ignoring Him. And we'll see these two different contexts. So, to start off with, turn over to Exodus 5. First just notice here where Pharaoh directly states to Moses and Aaron, "I don't know who Yehovah is. I'm not familiar with this God that you're talking about." And we'll see here in Exodus 5:1.

Ex 5:1 *"Afterward Moses and Aaron went in and told Pharaoh, 'Thus says the LORD God of Israel: 'Let My people go, that they may hold a feast to Me in the wilderness.' " 2) And Pharaoh said, "Who is the LORD, that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I do not know the LORD, nor will I let Israel go." (NKJV)*

So, notice here, he doesn't have a history or any reason to know who the true God is. And you might say in Pharaoh's defense, obviously he wouldn't be familiar with this. But as you're probably familiar with the story, Pharaoh is very defiant. In fact, if you read later in this chapter, his response to Moses and Aaron's request to let the Israelites go is, "Well, you guys are idle. You have too much time on your hands. Let's turn up the heat and make your life more difficult and make you work harder, so you don't have so much time on your hands." He's very defiant.

But throughout this whole process, the Bible directly tells us that God hardened Pharaoh's heart basically for the purposes of making sure that this would play out in a very painful manner. That God would have to bring a full 10 plagues upon the Egyptians and even drown Pharaoh's army in the Red Sea. But I want you to notice here, it's to make the Egyptians aware that He is the all-powerful God that can bring this about. He is forcing them to acknowledge who He is.

And to see this, turn over to Exodus 7 and we'll see here, God is basically instructing Moses of how this is going to play out. He specifically mentions He's going to harden Pharaoh's heart. He's going to make this a painful ordeal and purposely orchestrate this so that it's going to take all of these plagues. But notice specifically what He says His purpose is as to why He's doing this. And let's start here in verse 1 of Exodus 7.

Ex 7:1 *"So the LORD said to Moses: "See, I have made you as God to Pharaoh, and Aaron your brother shall be your prophet. 2) You shall speak all that I command you. And Aaron your brother shall tell Pharaoh to send the children of Israel out of his land. 3) And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and multiply My signs and My wonders in the land of Egypt." (NKJV)*

In other words, the 10 plagues that He's going to bring about.

"4) But Pharaoh will not heed you, so that I may lay My hand on Egypt and bring My armies and My people, the children of Israel, out of the land of Egypt by great judgments. 5) And the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I stretch out My hand on Egypt and bring out the children of Israel from among them." (NKJV)

Now, if you'll skip over to verse 14, this is when the very first plague comes about on the Egyptians. It was basically turning the water into blood. Now, again, we're not going to go through every reference as all of these plagues play out. But as you're probably familiar with the story, there's 10 plagues. And then even after the 10 plagues take place, there's the drowning of Pharaoh's army. And what I want you to notice here is we're going to look at this first plague and then the drowning of Pharaoh's army. And notice how it's mentioned specifically here that God's bringing this about, "That they may know that I am Yehovah" -- that I am the LORD. He is forcing not only the Egyptians, but even the Israelites seeing all of this -- He's forcing everyone involved to acknowledge Him. To be fully aware of His power and who He is, and that He is bringing all of this about. And pick up here in chapter 7 in verse 14.

Ex 7:14 *"So the LORD said to Moses: "Pharaoh's heart is hard; he refuses to let the people go. 15) Go to Pharaoh in the morning, when he goes out to the water, and you shall stand by the river's bank to meet him; and the rod which was turned to a serpent you shall take in your hand. 16) And you shall say to him, "The LORD God of the Hebrews has sent me to you, saying, 'Let My people go, that they may serve Me in the wilderness"; but indeed, until now you would not hear! 17) Thus says the LORD: "By this you shall know that I am the LORD...." (NKJV)*

In other words, "Why am I doing this? I'm forcing you to acknowledge who I am."

"...Behold, I will strike the waters which are in the river with the rod that is in my hand, and they shall be turned to blood. 18) And the fish that are in the river shall die, the river shall stink, and the Egyptians will loathe to drink the water of the river." ' ' 19) Then the LORD spoke to Moses, "Say to Aaron, 'Take your rod and stretch out your hand over the waters of Egypt, over their streams, over their rivers, over their ponds, and over all their pools of water, that they may become blood. And there shall be blood throughout all the land of Egypt, both in buckets of wood and pitchers of stone.' " 20) And Moses and Aaron did so, just as the LORD commanded. So he lifted up the rod and struck the waters that were in the river, in the sight of Pharaoh and in the sight of his servants. And all the waters that were in the river were turned to blood. 21) The fish that were in the river died, the river stank, and the Egyptians could not drink the water of the river. So there was blood throughout all the land of Egypt. 22) Then the magicians of Egypt did so with their enchantments; and Pharaoh's heart grew hard, and he did not heed them, as the LORD had said. 23) And Pharaoh turned and went into his house. Neither was his heart moved by this. 24) So all the Egyptians dug all around the river for water to drink, because they could not drink the water of the river. 25) And seven days passed after the LORD had struck the river." (NKJV)

Now, as I mentioned, we're not going to go through all of the plagues and all of the similar references here but turn over to Exodus 14. We'll jump to the end of the story here with the Egyptians. And we're going to pick up here where Pharaoh's heart is hardened. And even after he has let the Israelites go, he then sends his army out after them to try to capture and kill the Israelites before they get away. And of course, as you know, God drowns them all in the Red Sea. But notice again how God specifically states that He orchestrates this to force all those involved to acknowledge who He is. Pick up now in verse 1.

Ex 14:1 *"Now the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 2) "Speak to the children of Israel, that they turn and camp before Pi Hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, opposite Baal Zephon; you shall camp before it by the sea. 3) For Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel, "They are bewildered by the land; the wilderness has closed them in.' 4) Then I will harden Pharaoh's heart, so that he will pursue them; and I will gain honor over Pharaoh and over all his army, that the Egyptians may know that I am the LORD." And they did so. 5) Now it was told the*

king of Egypt that the people had fled, and the heart of Pharaoh and his servants was turned against the people; and they said, "Why have we done this, that we have let Israel go from serving us?" 6) So he made ready his chariot and took his people with him. 7) Also, he took six hundred choice chariots, and all the chariots of Egypt with captains over every one of them. 8) And the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he pursued the children of Israel; and the children of Israel went out with boldness. 9) So the Egyptians pursued them, all the horses and chariots of Pharaoh, his horsemen and his army, and overtook them camping by the sea beside Pi Hahiroth, before Baal Zephon. 10) And when Pharaoh drew near, the children of Israel lifted their eyes, and behold, the Egyptians marched after them. So they were very afraid, and the children of Israel cried out to the LORD. 11) Then they said to Moses, "Because there were no graves in Egypt, have you taken us away to die in the wilderness? Why have you so dealt with us, to bring us up out of Egypt? 12) Is this not the word that we told you in Egypt, saying, "Let us alone that we may serve the Egyptians"? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than that we should die in the wilderness." 13) And Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid. Stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which He will accomplish for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall see again no more forever. 14) The LORD will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace." 15) And the LORD said to Moses, "Why do you cry to Me? Tell the children of Israel to go forward. 16) But lift up your rod, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it. And the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea. 17) And I indeed will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they shall follow them. So I will gain honor over Pharaoh and over all his army, his chariots, and his horsemen. 18) Then the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I have gained honor for Myself over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his horsemen." (NKJV)

And notice He has purposely orchestrated this -- hardening Pharaoh's heart so that he would send his troops after the Israelites -- specifically for the purposes of drowning them in the Red Sea. But again, what is He doing? He's forcing not only the Egyptians to acknowledge His power -- that He is the true all-powerful God, bringing all this about - - He's also demonstrating this to the Israelites. So, He's bringing about these wrathful events, again, for the purposes of forcing everyone to acknowledge who He is and to acknowledge His power.

Now, as I mentioned before, the majority of the references -- the references of "know that I am the LORD", know that I am Yehovah -- can be found in the book of Ezekiel. So, turn over to the book of Ezekiel, and we'll take a look at these. We'll start here in Ezekiel 2. Because what I want you to notice first of all is the context of, you might say the mission that God gave Ezekiel to accomplish.

As I mentioned earlier, I broke this down into two major categories. What I meant by that is using the Egyptians as an example of a pagan people who are defiant to God's way. But they don't have a history or a reason to know who the true God is or to be familiar with Him or what He commands mankind to do. Because again, they don't have

any history or reason to know. He's still forcing them to acknowledge that. But again, they have that pagan background where you might say that they could kind of plead ignorance, to put it that way.

Well, the Israelites after the Exodus are certainly in a very different situation. They've had a powerful experience with the true God. They have been given His word. They have been taught His way. So, they're in a different category. But what we're going to see here is when God gives Ezekiel his mission of what he's supposed to do, He's sending him to the house of Israel. But He specifically tells him that they're stubborn, they're rebellious. They know about the true God, but they're just ignoring Him out of their rebellion. So, let's notice that here. It's in Ezekiel 2, and let's start in verse 1.

Ezek 2:1 *"And He said to me, 'Son of man, stand on your feet, and I will speak to you.' 2) Then the Spirit entered me when He spoke to me, and set me on my feet; and I heard Him who spoke to me. 3) And He said to me: 'Son of man, I am sending you to the children of Israel, to a rebellious nation that has rebelled against Me; they and their fathers have transgressed against Me to this very day. 4) For they are impudent and stubborn children. I am sending you to them, and you shall say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD.' 5) As for them, whether they hear or whether they refuse—for they are a rebellious house—yet they will know that a prophet has been among them. 6) 'And you, son of man, do not be afraid of them nor be afraid of their words, though briars and thorns are with you and you dwell among scorpions; do not be afraid of their words or dismayed by their looks, though they are a rebellious house. 7) You shall speak My words to them, whether they hear or whether they refuse, for they are rebellious.' (NKJV)*

So, you can see here, the Israelites clearly have a history and a reason to know about the true God. They're just rebellious and ignoring Him. But let's notice now if we turn over to Ezekiel 6, how God basically prophesies through Ezekiel warning the house of Israel the calamities that He's going to bring upon them, of destruction and captivity that they're going to have to deal with.

And notice as we read through this, how many times He states this phrase "know that I am the LORD" -- know that I am Yehovah. He just keeps repeating this again and again throughout this book, making it clear that there's a fundamental purpose. But when God brings about His wrath, when He brings about ugly catastrophic events to punish mankind -- oftentimes, again, we don't like to look at those things because they're painful and they're ugly. But we have to keep in mind He has a fundamental purpose for this. And one of those fundamental purposes is again, forcing mankind to acknowledge and to understand who He is. So, let's start reading here in Ezekiel 6, in verse 1.

Ezek 6:1 *"Now the word of the LORD came to me, saying: 2) 'Son of man, set your face toward the mountains of Israel, and prophesy against them, 3) and say, 'O mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord GOD! Thus says the Lord GOD to the mountains, to the hills, to the ravines, and to the valleys: 'Indeed I, even I, will bring a sword against you, and I will destroy your high places. 4) Then your*

altars shall be desolate, your incense altars shall be broken, and I will cast down your slain men before your idols. 5) And I will lay the corpses of the children of Israel before their idols, and I will scatter your bones all around your altars. 6) In all your dwelling places the cities shall be laid waste, and the high places shall be desolate, so that your altars may be laid waste and made desolate, your idols may be broken and made to cease, your incense altars may be cut down, and your works may be abolished. 7) The slain shall fall in your midst, and you shall know that I am the LORD.” (NKJV)

Notice He's bringing about some painful, ugly circumstances upon them. But then He says, "Why am I doing this? I'm forcing you to acknowledge who I am. I'm forcing you to pay attention."

8) “Yet I will leave a remnant, so that you may have some who escape the sword among the nations, when you are scattered through the countries. 9) Then those of you who escape will remember Me among the nations where they are carried captive, because I was crushed by their adulterous heart which has departed from Me, and by their eyes which play the harlot after their idols; they will loathe themselves for the evils which they committed in all their abominations. 10) And they shall know that I am the LORD; I have not said in vain that I would bring this calamity upon them.” (NKJV)

See, He warns them in advance so that later when it happens, they'll pay attention. That this was the true God that you were ignoring and He's bringing all this about.

11) “Thus says the Lord GOD: “Pound your fists and stamp your feet, and say, ‘Alas, for all the evil abominations of the house of Israel! For they shall fall by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence. 12) He who is far off shall die by the pestilence, he who is near shall fall by the sword, and he who remains and is besieged shall die by the famine. Thus will I spend My fury upon them. 13) Then you shall know that I am the LORD, when their slain are among their idols all around their altars, on every high hill, on all the mountaintops, under every green tree, and under every thick oak, wherever they offered sweet incense to all their idols. 14) So I will stretch out My hand against them and make the land desolate, yes, more desolate than the wilderness toward Diblah, in all their dwelling places. Then they shall know that I am the LORD.’ ” ” (NKJV)

And notice we see that same phrase a handful of times in just one chapter. And as I mentioned previously, if you do a word search with this, you'll see in the book of Ezekiel that same phrase "know that I am the LORD" shows up 63 times. And again, the vast majority of them are in the context of God bringing about painful, ugly events like this. And again, He has a purpose in this. It's forcing rebellious mankind to acknowledge who He is and to acknowledge His power. But let's just continue on in the first half of chapter 7 here and notice this trend just keeps continuing.

Ezek 7:1 *"Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 2) 'And you, son of man, thus says the Lord GOD to the land of Israel: 'An end! The end has come upon the four corners of the land. 3) Now the end has come upon you, And I will send My anger against you; I will judge you according to your ways, And I will repay you for all your abominations. 4) My eye will not spare you, Nor will I have pity; But I will repay your ways, And your abominations will be in your midst; Then you shall know that I am the LORD!'" (NKJV)*

Notice He just keeps pounding that point. "I'm bringing these horrible events upon you. Why? I'm forcing you to acknowledge who I am."

5) "Thus says the Lord GOD: 'A disaster, a singular disaster; Behold, it has come! 6) An end has come, The end has come; It has dawned for you; Behold, it has come! 7) Doom has come to you, you who dwell in the land; The time has come, A day of trouble is near, And not of rejoicing in the mountains. 8) Now upon you I will soon pour out My fury, And spend My anger upon you; I will judge you according to your ways, And I will repay you for all your abominations. 9) "My eye will not spare, Nor will I have pity; I will repay you according to your ways, And your abominations will be in your midst. Then you shall know that I am the LORD who strikes." (NKJV)

Notice He just keeps emphasizing, "Why am I doing this? I'm forcing you to acknowledge who I am."

Now, as I mentioned before, we're not going to go through all 63 references in the book of Ezekiel, but what I want you to see here is the trend. We can see this started off in the book of Exodus. We start noticing these references in the context of the Egyptians and all that God brought upon them. And we see God also saying this in terms of ancient Israel and how He was going to lead them into captivity.

But let's also notice this same trend and this same phrase is going to play out again in multiple future events that are yet to be fulfilled. And again, specifically the Day of the LORD. Because as I mentioned, that is the day of God's wrath. That is when God's going to orchestrate events so horrific, so horrible that it is really hard for us to just even wrap our minds around. But turn over to the book of Joel.

We'll see here in Joel 3, where we specifically see this same phrase mentioned and explaining to us why God is bringing about these horrific events that you will see if you go through the book of Revelation and all the trumpet plagues and all that plays out there. Again, it's just hard to wrap your mind around and even conceive just how catastrophic this is going to be. But let's notice here in Joel 3. Start reading in verse 9. And we'll notice here he's specifically referring to the events of the Day of the LORD.

Joel 3:9 *"Proclaim this among the nations: 'Prepare for war! Wake up the mighty men, Let all the men of war draw near, Let them come up. 10) Beat your plowshares into swords And your pruning hooks into spears; Let the weak say, 'I*

am strong.' ” 11) Assemble and come, all you nations, And gather together all around. Cause Your mighty ones to go down there, O LORD. 12) “Let the nations be wakened, and come up to the Valley of Jehoshaphat; For there I will sit to judge all the surrounding nations. 13) Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. Come, go down; For the winepress is full, The vats overflow— For their wickedness is great.” 14) Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision.” (NKJV)

Notice here, we don't have to speculate. We're specifically talking about the context of the Day of the LORD here. And continue in verse 15.

“15) The sun and moon will grow dark, And the stars will diminish their brightness. 16) The LORD also will roar from Zion, And utter His voice from Jerusalem; The heavens and earth will shake; But the LORD will be a shelter for His people, And the strength of the children of Israel. 17) “So you shall know that I am the LORD your God, Dwelling in Zion My holy mountain. Then Jerusalem shall be holy, And no aliens shall ever pass through her again.” (NKJV)

Notice again, He directly tells us why He is bringing all of this about. He's forcing mankind to acknowledge who He is. And again, as we've pointed out here previously in this sermon, this is a trend all throughout the plan of God. We see this not only all throughout the history of ancient Israel, going back to the very story of the Exodus. We see this through Israel's rebellion against God, and they're going into captivity. We see it in the Day of the LORD. But we also see this after Christ's return as well.

If you follow many of my sermons over the years, one of the things I'd like to point out is, throughout my lifetime in the Church of God, oftentimes I see the events of the Eighth Day kind of misrepresented as to what that really pictures. Because oftentimes, what we focus on is, we like to look at the millennium, the thousand year period where we know Satan's out of the picture. And it's a wonderful utopia, where everything is positive -- a very uplifting picture to look at. And we tend to kind of just assume that the Eighth Day falls into the same picture.

What that's doing is ignoring what Revelation 20 just directly tells us. Now, we won't take the time to turn to that today. But if you read through Revelation 20, what does it tell us? After the thousand years have ended, when the millennial period is over, what immediately happens next? Well, Satan is released again. He's given his old job back. And he goes out and he basically goes tempting mankind again to sin, and he stirs up a war later.

Well, again, that directly correlates, if you just look at the layout of the Holy Days -- when you get to sundown on the seventh day of the Feast of Tabernacles, where do you immediately find yourself? In the Eighth Day. There's not a gap in between. You immediately go into the Eighth Day. Well, that tells you that Satan's release and the Eighth Day are concurrent periods.

If you read through Revelation there, it directly tells us in Revelation 20 that one of the things that Satan does when he is released again is he stirs up the Gog and Magog battle. Well, that battle is described in a lot more detail in the book of Ezekiel. So, if you'll turn back over to Ezekiel -- this time to chapter 38 -- what I want you to notice here is, again, we're going to see this same phrase again.

And we're going to see God specifically explaining that He's orchestrating the events of this battle, bringing about some catastrophic events. And why does He say He's doing it? That they will know that He is Yehovah. He's forcing everyone to acknowledge Him and to acknowledge His power. To acknowledge He's the all-powerful God who controls everything, and He's orchestrating these events. And to see that, let's start reading in Ezekiel 38 in verse 14.

Ezek 38:14 *"Therefore, son of man, prophesy and say to Gog, "Thus says the Lord GOD: 'On that day when My people Israel dwell safely, will you not know it? 15) Then you will come from your place out of the far north, you and many peoples with you, all of them riding on horses, a great company and a mighty army. 16) You will come up against My people Israel like a cloud, to cover the land. It will be in the latter days that I will bring you against My land, so that the nations may know Me, when I am hallowed in you, O Gog, before their eyes.'" (NKJV)*

In other words, "I'm orchestrating the details of this." Why? To force everyone to acknowledge the true God.

"17) Thus says the Lord GOD: "Are you he of whom I have spoken in former days by My servants the prophets of Israel, who prophesied for years in those days that I would bring you against them? 18) "And it will come to pass at the same time, when Gog comes against the land of Israel," says the Lord GOD, "that My fury will show in My face. 19) For in My jealousy and in the fire of My wrath I have spoken: "Surely in that day there shall be a great earthquake in the land of Israel, 20) so that the fish of the sea, the birds of the heavens, the beasts of the field, all creeping things that creep on the earth, and all men who are on the face of the earth shall shake at My presence. The mountains shall be thrown down, the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground.' 21) I will call for a sword against Gog throughout all My mountains," says the Lord GOD. "Every man's sword will be against his brother. 22) And I will bring him to judgment with pestilence and bloodshed; I will rain down on him, on his troops, and on the many peoples who are with him, flooding rain, great hailstones, fire, and brimstone. 23) Thus I will magnify Myself and sanctify Myself, and I will be known in the eyes of many nations...." (NKJV)

And then notice that last sentence.

"...Then they shall know that I am the LORD." " (NKJV)

Notice again He's saying, "I'm orchestrating all of this and telling you beforehand." Why? So that everyone will be forced to acknowledge the true God. That He is the all-powerful true God who can control everything.

Well, now let's cover another detail in all of this. As I said previously, what kind of inspired the title of this sermon is the fact that if you can look at the phrase "know that I am the LORD" -- know that I am Yehovah -- that phrase appears 78 times throughout the Bible. Now, what that is, LORD in all caps in Hebrew is "Yehovah". That is the personal name of God the Father.

But why is He constantly just stating His name? Well, we have to realize -- to appreciate the fullness of this and what He's really getting at here -- we have to understand the fact that in Biblical times, particularly when the Old Testament was written, a name carried a lot more meaning than what we typically attribute to a name today. I'll just use myself as an example just to illustrate this.

My name is James. Now, there are lots and lots of men in America and throughout the world who have that name as well. It's just a label that our parents happened to give us. In my particular case, the only reason I have that name is because that was my grandfather's name, my mother's father. He typically went by his middle name. But when I was born, my mother wanted to name me after her father. So, she named me James. And that's really the only significance there.

When I tell someone my name, it's really just a label or an identifier that I go by. The name in and of itself doesn't tell you anything about me or describe my character or anything about me as an individual. Again, there's lots and lots of people who carry that name, and it's just a label. However, when we look at the name Yehovah, when we look at the name of the Father, it carries a great deal of meaning with it. And it expresses a great deal of who He is. So, when He says "know that I am the LORD" -- know that I am Yehovah -- He's saying a whole lot more than if I were to say "know that I am James". Because again, that's just a label I go by. It doesn't carry any inherent meaning.

But to appreciate the meaning that He's expressing here, turn over to Exodus 3. We're going to look here at the burning bush account where God is speaking to Moses and basically giving him his marching orders to go and to lead the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt. I want to dig into some details here in the account. We'll start reading here in Exodus 3, in verse 13.

Ex 3:13 *"Then Moses said to God, 'Indeed, when I come to the children of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they say to me, 'What is His name?' what shall I say to them?'"* (NKJV)

He's asking God what His name is. Now, we have to read the next several verses in detail and not just callously look at this, not being careful with the details to fully understand what's being said here. Now, continue on in verse 14.

14) *"And God said to Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM.' And He said, 'Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.' " (NKJV)*

Now, notice He hasn't said that "I am" is His name. We're going to see here in a minute. He's giving him the meaning of His name. Now, let's continue in verse 15.

"15) Moreover God said to Moses, 'Thus you shall say to the children of Israel: 'The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This is My name forever, and this is My memorial to all generations.' " (NKJV)

Notice it's when He mentioned "Yehovah" that He said, "This is My name."

"16) Go and gather the elders of Israel together, and say to them, 'The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, appeared to me, saying, 'I have surely visited you and seen what is done to you in Egypt,' " (NKJV)

So, notice here, again, He didn't say that "I am" is His name. What He's really expressing is the meaning of His name. And to further clarify this, I'd like to read to you a section from a book entitled Shattering the Conspiracy of Silence. It's by a Hebrew scholar, Nehemia Gordon. And the section I'm going to read to you is from page 66. And he's specifically referring to the verses that we just read here.

"When God said at the burning bush, 'I am that I am', He was explaining the significance of His own name. The Hebrew word for 'I am' is Ehyeh, derived from the Hebrew root meaning, 'to be'. In Biblical Hebrew, 'I am' really means something like 'I exist'. By saying 'I am that I am', God is declaring He is the one who is, the one who really exists. He is different from the other gods who only exist in the imagination of men. God's name YHVH derives from the exact same Hebrew root as 'I am'. Strictly speaking, this name is a combination of three forms of this Hebrew root: Hayah, Hoveh, Yihyeh. These three words mean, respectively: 'He was,' 'He is,' and 'He will be.' When we call Him by His name we are essentially saying, 'He has always existed, He exists now, and He will always continue to exist.' God says 'I am' about Himself but we are to call Him YHVH meaning, 'He was, He is, and He will be.' What all this means is that 'I am' is not God's name; it is the explanation of His name."

See, what He is saying in conveying this is He is the all-powerful God who has eternally existed. He is responsible for all that exists. He is all-powerful. He controls all things. He created all things, and He can declare the end from the beginning. This is the meaning He is attaching to His name. So, when He says "know that I am Yehovah" -- know that I am the LORD -- He is not just throwing out a label. This is the meaning He's trying to express and to get mankind to grasp. Let's notice a couple of verses here where He attaches all this meaning to His name. Turn over to Isaiah 44 and we'll start reading in verse 24.

Is 44:24 *"Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, And He who formed you from the womb: "I am the LORD, who makes all things, Who stretches out the heavens all alone, Who spreads abroad the earth by Myself; 25) Who frustrates the signs of the babblers, And drives diviners mad; Who turns wise men backward, And makes their knowledge foolishness; 26) Who confirms the word of His servant, And performs the counsel of His messengers; Who says to Jerusalem, "You shall be inhabited,' To the cities of Judah, 'You shall be built,' And I will raise up her waste places; 27) Who says to the deep, "Be dry! And I will dry up your rivers'; 28) Who says of Cyrus, "He is My shepherd, And he shall perform all My pleasure, Saying to Jerusalem, 'You shall be built," And to the temple, "Your foundation shall be laid."'" (NKJV)*

So, see, when you understand this meaning He attaches to His name, you can understand why He's saying this to Pharaoh and to the Egyptians, "know that I am Yehovah." In other words, "I created everything, I control everything, and I can drive people mad. I can harden Pharaoh's heart. I can orchestrate him to do what I want. I can make him my puppet." That's the meaning that He's conveying. He's not just putting out a label. He's basically saying, "Acknowledge I am the all-powerful God who made everything and controls everything."

And He prophesied it all in advance, showing that He is the God who declares the end from the beginning. And to see that, turn over to chapter 48 of Isaiah. Isaiah 48, and we'll start reading in verse 1.

Is 48:1 *"Hear this, O house of Jacob, Who are called by the name of Israel, And have come forth from the wellsprings of Judah; Who swear by the name of the LORD, And make mention of the God of Israel, But not in truth or in righteousness; 2) For they call themselves after the holy city, And lean on the God of Israel; The LORD of hosts is His name: 3) "I have declared the former things from the beginning; They went forth from My mouth, and I caused them to hear it. Suddenly I did them, and they came to pass. 4) Because I knew that you were obstinate, And your neck was an iron sinew, And your brow bronze, 5) Even from the beginning I have declared it to you; Before it came to pass I proclaimed it to you, Lest you should say, "My idol has done them, And my carved image and my molded image Have commanded them."'" (NKJV)*

So, notice, He's making it very clear and attaching to His name, "I am the God who declares the end from the beginning. I can tell you what's going to happen, and then I can bring it to pass." See, this is what He's saying when He repeatedly says -- again, in the context of His wrath, of bringing about horrific events that we oftentimes don't like to look at or focus on -- "I'm bringing this about to show that I'm all-powerful, and I'm telling you beforehand so that you realize, I declare the end from the beginning."

And see, this is why He tells us that we should glory in the knowledge of Him, in understanding who He is. And to see this, turn over to Jeremiah 9 and we're going to read verse 23.

Jer 9:23 *"Thus says the LORD: "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, Let not the mighty man glory in his might, Nor let the rich man glory in his riches; 24) But let him who glories glory in this, That he understands and knows Me, That I am the LORD, exercising lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth. For in these I delight," says the LORD."* (NKJV)

And see, that's what He wants us to delight in. And that's why He brings about catastrophic events when He chooses. Again, painful, horrible things that we don't like to think about because they're ugly. But again, He does it for a purpose. And again, we shouldn't shy away from understanding this because He wants us to understand He is all-powerful. That He will force mankind to acknowledge His existence. To acknowledge who He is and how all-powerful He is.

And this isn't just an issue of, "Look at me and look how powerful I am." We need to understand that understanding who He is and appreciating and acknowledging that and acting accordingly, this is fundamental to salvation. See, that's the ultimate purpose of why He hammers this, of why He orchestrates world events like with the Day of the LORD. He orchestrates these horrific events to get the whole world's attention not because He just wants to be mean to mankind and to torture them. His ultimate purpose is to call everyone to salvation. And knowing Him is the fundamental element to obtaining salvation. Christ told us this in John 17. So, turn over to John 17. I'm going to read here a section of scripture that tells us what was on Christ's mind towards the end of His life.

John 17:1 *"Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, 2) as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. 3) And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent."* (NKJV)

See, Christ is telling us here, fundamental to salvation and receiving eternal life is fully appreciating who the true God is. Well, that's the Father. That's Yehovah. So, when He's saying, "I'm orchestrating all of these events that you may know that I am Yehovah," this is His purpose. He's bringing all of this about, because again, it's not that He wants to be mean and cruel to mankind. He's ultimately trying to force them to acknowledge who He is, because that's a fundamental step to salvation.

But we also need to appreciate, it's not just an intellectual acknowledgement. It's not enough for us to just say, "Well, yes, I believe the Bible is true, and I believe that that's the true God." No, we need to act accordingly. You see, we have to follow through on that knowledge. And to see this, turn over to 1 John 2, and we'll start reading here in verse 3.

1 John 2:3 *"Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. 4) He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His*

commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. 5) But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. 6) He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.” (NKJV)

In other words, it's not enough for us just to say that, "Well, yes, we intellectually believe in the true God and acknowledge Him." No, we have to act accordingly.

But see, if we understand this whole picture, it can help us have a clear perspective in looking at the fall Holy Days. Because as I mentioned at the beginning of this sermon, throughout my lifetime in the Church of God -- I've been in the Church of God since birth, so it's been about 60 years now. I have lost count of the number of times where I've seen sermons on the Feast of Trumpets really treating the day as if all it really pictures is the blowing of the seventh trumpet and Christ coming down to earth to set up the millennium. And we really just kind of completely skip the whole picture of God's wrath and not realizing that that's really skipping like 90% of what the day pictures.

I mean, yes, that's a part of the overall picture, but it's just taking a short little sliver of it out and it's not appreciating the whole picture. Because the Feast of Trumpets is literally the turning point in the plan of God. I've addressed this in other sermons, and there's a series of study papers on my website addressing all of the Holy Days. But as I've explained in those, if you look at the layout of the Holy Days, what you'll see is basically the same process repeated in the fall Holy Days that you see in the spring Holy Days.

With Passover and Unleavened Bread and Pentecost, the exact same basic meanings that are pictured in those Holy Days are directly mirrored in Atonement and the Feast of Tabernacles and the Eighth Day. But the pivotal turning point in all of this is the Feast of Trumpets. This is when God intervenes and brings about catastrophic events to set the stage for the fulfillment of the rest of the Holy Days.

But notice, these are the horrific events of God's wrath. But why is He doing this? So that the world will appreciate that He is Yehovah, and they will appreciate truly who He is. And again, that's not to be mean to mankind. That's to force mankind to pay attention and to acknowledge Him. Because again, that is a fundamental understanding that everyone has to come to, to ultimately to receive salvation and to make it into the Kingdom of God.

So, as we go forward here in the next few weeks to keep the Feast of Trumpets, let's do so with a full picture of what the Holy Day pictures and an appreciation for the full picture of the Day of the LORD, the day of God's wrath.