

Hello brethren! Well here we are, the 3rd Sabbath since the Feast of Tabernacles and what an *awesomely inspiring time*. We were *so blessed* to spend eight days being spiritually fed. We were given *4 new spiritually deep truths* from the Great God; coupled with eight days of fellowship, getting to know one another, getting a taste of a time when God's ways prevail. If you look back at those eight days you just might see that we, as individuals and as the Church of God, had an opportunity to grow in the way of peace.

I received an email since coming back from the Feast and I thought I'd read a part of it. It says...

It is hard to come back into the world and rub shoulders again, but this year was such a spiritual high being that we received multiple truths as well. I am finding it was even more of a sobering jolt to come back home away from the beauty of God's people for an extended time.

It is hard. It was such a spiritual high for all of us; and having that opportunity to practice living God's way of life with other members of God's Church, a time that we could practice living the way of peace in an environment that's conducive to do so. And now as we are back in our homes, back to work, back 'rubbing shoulders', we are witness to the difference in God's way, or the way of peace, and man's way. We see it, it sticks out. After spending that time at the Feast of Tabernacles with one another and having that time to practice this way of life with others that are doing the same, in that environment, and then coming back into the world, coming back into our homes, into our jobs, into our neighbourhoods, into relationships that we have to have to live in this world, we can see the stark difference between God's way and man's way, the difference between seeing individuals who are striving to live a way that we've been taught, striving to live the way of peace and getting along and cooperating and those that are out for selfish gain, using one another, abusing one another. We really do see the difference.

But when you come back from the Feast, especially a Feast like we just had, and we see that difference, you know it's by design. It's by design and it should be a sobering jolt. And that's the title of today's sermon; *A Sobering Jolt*.

Today we will look at that difference between God's way, the way of peace, and man's way; and what we need to do to grow in the way of peace. Let's start by turning to the book of Deuteronomy and we'll be starting in chapter 8.

Deuteronomy 8:6 - Therefore you shall keep the commandments of the Eternal your God, to walk in His ways, and to fear Him. God makes it clear when we're called out of this world, when He begins opening our minds, He let us know what we're to do, and we know, we've been given this calling, our minds have been unlocked, we were drawn out of this world and the ways of this world to the ways of peace, although not totally in understanding it, still having to grow into it. But that's our calling; and our God tells us, **Therefore you shall keep the commandments of the Eternal your God, to walk in His ways, and to fear Him.**

And He goes on to say in **verse 7 – For the Eternal your God brings you into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and deeps that spring out of the valleys and hills; A land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig trees, and pomegranates; and a land of olive oil and honey; A land therein you shall eat bread without scarceness, you should not lack anything in it; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills you may dig brass.** Yes, saluting God’s way of life, responding to God through obedience to His way and walking in His ways and fearing Him will bring you blessings. And brethren, what spiritual blessings we’ve been given, things that are important, things that last, things that impact our mind and our behaviour and our actions.

It says in **verse 10 - When you have eaten and are full**, and you can swing right on back to the Feast of Tabernacles because we were fed, and we ate and we were full, and we were *really full*. And if you go back and listen to those sermons again you’ll see how full you were, more than you know, *more than you know*, because it’s all about that calling and God opening up your mind. And when you’re baptized and had the laying on of hands, after you’ve repented and you receive the holy spirit, you receive God’s mind in your mind working with you; and then He can teach you His ways and reveal truths to you. How inspiring! And how much do we eat? And how full? And we’re warned here by God; **when you have eaten and you are full**, it says, **then you shall bless the Eternal your God for the land which He has given you**. You thank God for what blessings He’s given us, thank Him for the Feast of Tabernacles and those sermons that fed us, that fed you; looking to God with thanksgiving.

It says, again, **When you have eaten and are full, then you shall bless the Eternal your God for the good land which He has given you**. For the blessings that He’s given you.

Verse 11 – Beware! Beware that you forget not the Eternal your God, in not keeping His commandments, and His judgments, and His statutes, which I command you this day: this is after we’ve been blessed. After we’ve been fed we’re given a warning; ‘Keep My commandments’. Again, it says in **verse 6 - Therefore you shall keep the commandments of the Eternal your God, to walk in His ways**, in the way of peace and how we live towards one another, especially in the Church as we’ve been told; we’ve had five sermons about the way of peace and how we’re to get along with one another in the Body and not have any schisms but have outgoing care, concern, cooperation, having love for one another – starting in the Body, beginning to live that way of life, truly the way we’ve been called to live it as we prepare for this year and a half that’s in front of us, to be living the way that we’ve been called to live, especially with one another because we should be responsive toward one another. Just like the environment we had at the Feast of Tabernacles when we were together in small groups throughout the world learning how to live the way of peace, living with one another in an environment that was conducive to God’s way, other members being with each other for eight straight days and then that jolt when we come back and we see the difference between this way of life that we’ve been given in an environment that we can do it, and even being thrown back into the world, rubbing shoulders with the world again and seeing that difference between God’s way and man’s way. Think about that. Think about that when you’re with your brethren and when you’re getting along, or when you’re not getting along. Think about what we’ve been taught.

As it says in **verse 6 – Therefore walk in His ways and fear Him** because that’s who teaches us how to live; it’s the Great God of the universe. And it says **Beware lest you forget the Eternal...** because to come back, to go back to work, you start rubbing shoulders again, we see the attitudes and the things that rub us the wrong way and if we’re not careful we’ll let them get to us. We need to stay close to God and ask Him to help us, to help us first get along with one another in the Body; and then to take that same spirit, that same mind of God mixing with our mind and giving us the strength to go out into

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this world and continue to live the way that we would live with one another and we spend time with one another. We need to allow God's spirit and God's mind to lead us and He'll bless us and there'll be increase, there'll be spiritual blessings that there's no value you can put on. So we need to be asking God to fill us with His mind, to fill us with His spirit. Ask Him for peace in our minds that we may *live* the way of peace in our lives.

Deuteronomy 11:13 - And it shall come to pass, if you shall hearken diligently unto My commandments which I command you this day, to love the Eternal your God, and to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul, and you can just think about that for a few minutes. Some scriptures you read say what they say, clear as can be. **And it shall come to pass, if you shall hearken diligently unto My commandments which I command you this day, to love,** to love Me, God's saying 'to love Me, if you will love Me'. How do we love God? Through obedience. "If you love Me you keep My commandments, My ways, you'll live the way of life that I've called you into. You'll live opposite of the way I've called you out of. You *know* the difference, you *see* the difference, you've been *taught* the difference, you've *witnessed* the difference between God's way and man's way." Says...**and to serve Him with all your heart, with all your soul...**

Verse 14 - That I will give you the rain in your land in his due season, bottom line – God will bless you, and there'll be spiritual blessings, blessings from the Almighty God. "If you obey Me, if you live the way of life that I've called you to, if you'll exercise the spirit that dwells within you, if you'll allow the mind of God to work with your mind to help you in the way that you should live towards one another," He says, "I will bless you." He says, I'll bless you. It's a Great God that we serve.

Verse 15 - it says at the end... **that you may eat and be full.** Just like we were able to eat and be full at the Feast; and then every Sabbath as God teaches us, that we would eat spiritual food and be full and be able to take that back home with us and strive to implement and apply the things that we're taught and the things that we learn, to implement them, to put them into practice in the way we live. That's what God's telling us.

It *was* an awesome Feast of Tabernacles and we were fed *tremendously*; we've got to hang on to that and use that as motivation, as we heard about last week, the time period between the Feast of Tabernacles and the spring Holy Days and the garbage that's in between. Week by week we can eat and be full and be blessed by God, given understanding and knowledge.

Verse 16 – Again, as God warns us - **Take heed to yourselves that your heart be not deceived, and you turn aside, and serve other gods, and worship them;** to worship other God's, to put anything before the Great God of this Universe, your Creator, your Sustainer. It says, **be not deceived in your heart,** in your mind, **and turn aside to serve other gods and worship them; And then the Eternal's wrath will be kindled against you, and** He shall take the blessings away. And it goes on to say, **lest you perish quickly,** God continually gives us instruction and the consequences of not obeying is very clear in His word. In a way He warns us, there's choices to make, there's good and evil, there's God's way, there's man's way, it's choices that we have to make, choices that as we're lead by God's spirit that we make the right choices. But they're before us every day, day by day by day.

Verse 18 - Therefore shall you lay up these My words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them for a sign on your hand, that they may be the frontlets between your eyes. So what's He telling us? He's saying, "Hey, I've instructed you, I'm teaching you how to live – live this way of life in the things that you

do, when you're at work it's in your mind, it's the way you treat people, it's the way you strive to live." God's way of life – obviously with His help and His spirit, with His mind working with your mind.

Verse 19 - And you shall teach them your children, speaking of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. It's a way of life. How you live should be an example to your children and an example to those around you, of those you work with, your neighbours; they should see you living, striving to live God's way of life and see the difference.

Verse 20 - And you shall write them upon the door posts of your house, and upon your gates: again, a witness to the world that you're living the way of life that you've been called to day by day; **That your days may be multiplied, and the days of your children, in the land which the Eternal swore unto your fathers to give them, as the days of heaven upon the earth.** Again, He will bless us. He will bless us! And the most important blessing that we can have is the change in our mind from not living God's way to living God's way, the change that takes place, the character that's built in us, the trials that we go through, the spiritual blessings, to be given more knowledge and understanding and wisdom that comes from God by responding.

Verse 22 - For if you shall diligently keep all these commandments which I command you, to do them, to love the Eternal your God, to walk in His ways, and to cleave unto Him; then you'll be blessed. Again, this is a spiritual battle, it's a battle for our mind; and what God's telling us here – we are to cleave unto Him, to pursue His way of life, to follow close to Him, to cling to the truths that we've been given, to hang onto this way of life.

Yeah, brethren, we have been so blessed! We have been so blessed and we've been fed spiritually, and if we continue in His way, growing and striving to live this way of peace He'll continue to bless us; it's choices that we have to make.

Let's turn to Nehemiah 8. Here we'll look at an example of responding, the example of responding to God. The setting of the timeframe here is shortly after ancient Israel came out of captivity. Again, an example for us especially here after the Feast of Tabernacles, after a time when we were blessed so spiritually, where we were fed, and we were given *so much*! An example here that we can look to... **Nehemiah 8:11 - So the Levites stilled all the people, saying, Hold your peace, for this day is holy; neither be you grieved. And all the people went their way to eat, and to drink, and to send portions, and to make great mirth, because they had understood words that were declared unto them.** So again, a time when they were in captivity and forgot the ways of God; and here they're at the Feast of Tabernacles and they're being taught.

Verse 13 - And on the second day were gathered together the chiefs of the fathers of all the people, and the priests, and the Levites, unto Ezra the scribe, even to understand the words of the law. And they found written in the law which the Eternal had commanded by Moses, that the children of Israel should dwell in booths in the Feast of the seventh month: so they were given understanding in the times they were living in, during the Feast of Tabernacles. And let's look how they responded...

Verse 15 - And that they should publish and proclaim in all their cities, and in Jerusalem, saying, Go forth unto the mount, and fetch olive branches, and pine branches, and myrtle branches, and palm branches, and branches of thick trees, to make booths, as it is written. So the people went forth, and brought them, and made themselves booths, every one upon the roof of his house, and in their courts, and in the courts of the house of God, and in the streets of the water gate, and in the streets of
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the gate of Ephraim. And all the congregation of them that were come out again of captivity made booths, and sat under the booths: for since the days of Joshua the son of Nun unto that day had not the children of Israel done so. And there was very great gladness. An example of responding to God, being taught, saying, “God, this is what I want to do,” and then the people responding to doing as God tells them to do – even in a physical manner here.

Verse 18 - Also day by day, from the first day unto the last, he read in the book of the law of God. And they kept the Feast seven days; and on the eighth day was a solemn assembly, according to the manner.

Nehemiah 9:1 - Now in the twenty and fourth day of this month, which is a couple days after the Feast of Tabernacles and the Last Great Day. Says, **Now in the twenty and fourth day of this month the children of Israel were assembled with fasting, and with sack clothes, and earth upon them. And the seed of Israel separated themselves from all strangers, and stood and confessed their sins, and their iniquities of their fathers. And they stood up in their place, and they read in the book of the law of the Eternal their God one fourth part of the day; and another fourth part they confessed, and worshipped the Eternal their God.** So they were motivated after the Feast of Tabernacles that they were able to keep in a very physical way; but they saw where they were falling short, where they fell short of God’s way of life as they read in the law through those eight days of keeping the Feast of Tabernacles and the Last Great Day. They were motivated, they were inspired, they were seeking God. An example for us. Yes, we were so blessed at the Feast of Tabernacles and now, how do we respond? With thanksgiving? With gladness? Thanking God? Being motivated to live this way of life? Being inspired to seek God and to stay close to Him? They studied, they prayed, they fasted for God’s help – which is what we need to do, draw close to God, ask Him to help us to see the changes that we need to make in our lives. Again, a great example for us - responding to God, especially after being blessed so mightily during the Feast of Tabernacles.

As we heard last week, we’re in a time here of about six months or so of a long stretch between Holy Days and there’s a lot that’s going to be happening and there’s a lot of things that’ll come along to distract you, there’s a lot of things that’ll come along to mess with your mind. We need to be close to God, we need to be looking to God for the help that we need to live this way of life, to stay strong, to continue to respond, to be motivated, to be inspired, to continue making changes in our lives.

Deuteronomy 4:1 - Now therefore hearken, to take to heart, to listen; **Now therefore listen O Israel, unto the statutes,** or the appointments or commandments, **and unto the judgments/the law, which I teach you, for to do them, that you may live, and go into the land which the Eternal your God gives to you....**

Now therefore listen – take to heart, **I will teach you... that you may live.** How inspiring is that? Knowing that if we hearken, if we listen, if we respond to what we’re being taught, to the way of life that we’ve been called to – God tells us... “I will teach you.” He’ll continue to teach us, we’ll continue to have spiritual blessings, “that you may live.” You can have life; you can have the mind of God the Father dwelling within your mind helping you to live this way of life. That’s His desire. He desires to fill our mind with His mind and He wants us to live. He wants us to live spiritually in a way that’s pleasing to Him. And He says, “I will teach you.” To be taught we have to be in the mindset *to be* taught, to be teachable. It’s a matter of humility, understanding that when we’re taught we’re going to be corrected, that we’re going to be having changes that we need to make in our life as a result, as we see things, as we respond. Is your mind teachable?

Verse 2 - You shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall you diminish ought of it, that you may keep the commandments of the Eternal your God which I command you. When we move forward as He instructs at the pace that He wants to take us. **Your eyes have seen what the Eternal did because of Baalpeor: for all the men that followed Baalpeor, the Eternal your God has destroyed from among you.** Again, the results of moving away from God, a warning one more time, “Don’t move away from God, stay close to God, stay close to Him, be inspired, motivated to seek God, to have a relationship with Him, a relationship that’s ongoing and daily, asking your God to help you in making the changes that you need to make as we are taught, as we are imparted more wisdom and understanding, striving to implement corrective actions into our lives, striving to live the way of peace, looking amongst your brethren, seeing where we need to make changes in how we treat one another. We need to grow in this area.

When you think about it, what’s in the Body, you think about who’s in your household... we’re going to make mistakes; it’s how we respond from them and how we forgive others because both sides of the parties have to be responsive. We need to know when we’ve done something against our brother, even if it was innocent, the intention, but if we’ve hurt someone, to go to them and truly apologize and strive to make things right. And if you’re on the other end of it, take that the way that it is and forgive and move on and just continue working and striving to live this way of life having love for one another in the Body...responding to God.

Verse 4 - But you that did cleave unto the Eternal your God are alive every one of you this day: so if you have God’s spirit, if you do cleave to God, you stick close, you stay with His way of life, if you continue to repent and seek forgiveness and seek reconciliation with the Father and have a relationship with Him, that He can have His mind in your mind, that you can have His spirit dwelling within you, that you are *alive*... that you are alive... that you’re *alive* and you have that piece of God in you helping you, leading you, guiding you, directing you. **But you that did cleave unto the Eternal your God are alive every one of you this day:** It’s a position that we all want to be in.

Verse 5 - Behold, I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as the Eternal my God commanded me, that you should do so in His land where you go to possess. Keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people. For what nation is there so great, who has God so close unto them, as the Eternal our God is in all things that we call upon Him for? And what nation is there so great, that has statutes and judgments so righteous as all His law, which I have set before you this day? Again, some powerful verses about being that example. When you *live* God’s way of life, when you stick out, when you’re cut off from the world and different from the world, different than your neighbours, different than the people you work with, when you’re cut off from the world and you have God dwelling within you and you’re responding to this way of life and they see it?! They see it! The things that we’re taught, and God teaches us, and if we respond to it, we’re led by His spirit, it’ll be obvious.

Verse 9 –again, a warning - Only take heed to yourself, and keep your soul diligently, lest you forget the things which your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart for all the days of your life: but teach them to your sons, and your sons' sons; especially the day that you stood before the Eternal your God in Horeb, when the Eternal said unto me, Gather Me the people together, and I will make them hear My words, that they may learn to fear Me in all the days that they shall live upon the earth, and that they shall teach their children. And also we’re to keep God’s way diligently, striving to

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live the way of life we've been called to as God continues to work with us and teach us, to build character within us, to allow trials in our lives to see how we'll respond.

Deuteronomy 6:1 - Now these are the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments, which the Eternal your God commanded to teach you, that you might do them, apply what you're taught ...to teach you, that you might do them in the land where you go to possess: That you may fear the Eternal your God and to keep all His statutes and commandments, which I command you, you, and your son, and your son's son, all the days of your life; and that your days may be prolonged. Hear therefore, O Israel, observe to do it; make your mind up to do it, to live God's way of life, that it may be well with you, and that you may increase mightily, as the Eternal God of your fathers has promised you, in the land that flows with milk and honey. Yes, if we respond to God as it says here, He will bless us. He will bless us; bless us with spiritual blessings, with growth, with developing God like character, overcoming this world, man's way, overcoming our self and our human nature. **Hear O Israel and observe to do it that you may increase mightily.**

Verse 4 - Hear, O Israel: The Eternal your God is one GOD: And you shall love the Eternal your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might. And these words, which I command you this day, shall be in your heart: And you shall teach them diligently unto your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise up. And you shall bind them for a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. And shall write them upon the posts of your house, and on your gates. Striving, again, to live the way of life that we've been called to, responding to correction, responding to God, living the way of peace, being an example to those around us, especially within our homes, with one another, with those that we work with, those we come into contact with, striving to live this way of life in all things, to be an example...practicing living the way of God, being examples of the right way to live, living the way of peace, applying what we're taught and being blessed mightily, spiritually being blessed for obedience to God's way.

It's a beautiful picture! It's a beautiful picture responding to God. Brethren, it's so easy to let down, it's easy to let down in your home, it's easy to let down at work, and unfortunately at times it's easy to let down with your brethren.

And God warns us in **verse 12 - Then beware**, after we've been blessed, after we've had so much spiritual blessing, **beware lest you forget the Eternal, which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.** Even for those moments when you let down, when you forget about, "Wow, God called me out of this world! I was dwelling in spiritual Egypt, living and dwelling in sin and He called me out of this bondage of sin and He brought us forth and blessed us." The importance of having a close personal relationship with your God so you don't let down, so the cares and the trials and the day to day living doesn't get you down and rubbing shoulders in this world like we have to doesn't rub off on you; but striving to make changes and striving to stay close to God, striving to live the way of life, the way of peace.

Verse 13 – You shall fear the Eternal your God, or to respect Him, or to have fear going against His way, and serve Him, and shall swear by His name. Again, as a result of responding, applying the things that we're taught, living the way of life that we've been called to. We *have* to have the proper fear and respect of God in everything, in what we think, in what we say, the things that we do, in *all things*; and if we do, if we put God first He will satisfy us, He'll give us the peace of mind and the way of peace that's so elusive, that's so easy to trip up and mess up. So we're to serve this Great God who has called us,
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that we can have the peace of mind that only comes from Him, true peace of mind from our Great God, the Great God that leads us.

Our Great God does lead us and He'll continue to lead us as we submit to Him and His ways and we respond. We go to Him in humility and seek forgiveness when we fall short so that we can have reconciliation - He'll continue to bless us, spiritual blessings that are priceless; you can't put a value on them. You've got such a Great God that you serve and He's working in your mind and building character in you; and all for a purpose, a part of His plan, His plan for mankind. And you're blessed now to be a part of that plan now, to be called now, to be given this opportunity now to live this way of life, to learn the way of peace and how to get along with one another and how to live in this world.

Nehemiah 9:9 - And did see the affliction of the fathers in Egypt, and heard their cry by the Red Sea; And showed signs and wonders upon Pharaoh, and on all his servants, and on all the people of his land: for You knew that they dealt proudly against them. So did You get You a name, as it is this day. And You did divide the sea before them, so that they went through in the midst of the sea on the dry land; and their persecutors You threw into the depths, as a stone into the mighty water. Moreover You led them in the day by a cloudy pillar; and in the night by a pillar of fire, to give them light in the way therein they should go. So here's God leading His people just like He leads us. He led ancient Israel out of Egypt, out of sin, through the Red Sea, and continued to lead them in the wilderness with the pillar of cloud and the pillar of fire, leading them, out in front of them to give them light in the way that they should go; just like He teaches us, the way that we should go.

Verse 13 - You came down also upon Mount Sinai, and spoke with them from heaven, and gave them right judgements, and the true laws, good statutes and commandments: And made known unto them the holy Sabbath, and command them precepts and statutes and laws, by the hand of Moses Your servant: And gave them bread from heaven for their hunger, and brought forth water for them out of the rock for their thirst, and promised them that they should go in to possess the land which You had sworn to give them. So, blessed; here we are a people that's so blessed from God and given His laws and His statutes and commandments, giving a promise of the land.

Verse 16 - But they and our fathers dealt proudly, and hardened their necks and hearkened not to Your commandments, and refused to obey; neither were they mindful of your wonders that you did amongst them, but hardened their necks in their rebellion, appointed a captain to return their bondage. Brethren, it's just like when we fall short and not responding, we're hardening our necks being full of pride, not hearkening to God's word and His instruction and His teaching; and in a way *refusing* to obey... and returning back to bondage, the bondage of sin. But we need to come to *understand* that that's the nature of man. God's way versus man's way. God's way is the way of peace, man's way is the opposite. We grow in coming to see that difference, to know that difference – that sobering jolt, the different between God's way of life and the environment that's conducive to God's way of life and living that way to man's way.... to man's way, the total opposite. And there's reasons for it, it is a part of God's plan.

Let's turn to Jeremiah 17 because we need to come to see ourselves truly as we are, without God's spirit when we are cut off, when we sin, when we're full of ourselves. **Jeremiah 17:9 - The heart/our mind is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked: who can know it?** Coming to the realization that apart from God, that's us, every one of us; that our mind is fraudulent, it's crooked, it's polluted, it's deceitful. And it says: **who can know it?** Our minds are in need of healing. Apart from God we're frail, we're feeble, we're sick, we're woeful – that's why we need God, that's why we need God's mind in our

mind to heal our mind. Like was pointed out, again, last week, the battle is for your mind. That's the spiritual battle; and how your mind responds as God works with you. Are you responding to His way of life, to His teaching, instruction, His guidance? because without God this is us: **The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: and who can know it?** Apart from God we can't recognize it or discern it, we can't understand it.

Verse 10 - I the Eternal search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doing. He searches our heart, He penetrates it, examines it, He looks into our minds to find us out, to know our mind, our will, our understanding. He tries us, He examines us, He proves us through trials. He wants to see how we'll respond, if we're going to be accepting to His way of life, accepting to admitting that we're wrong, to repent, to seek forgiveness, to make changes and to continue pushing forward. But this is the way of man, this is our nature. This is *our* nature, the nature of man without God, without God's mind working with our mind. It's so important to respond to God.

Let's look at Zechariah 7, again, looking at the nature of man, man's way versus God's way. **Zechariah 7:8 - And the word of the Eternal came unto Zechariah, saying, Thus says the Eternal of hosts, saying, Execute true judgment, and show mercy and compassion every man to his brother:** it's only possible with God's spirit and God helping us to execute true judgement, and to show mercy and compassion.

Verse 10 - And oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor; and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart. Some instruction for us.

Verse 11 - But they refused to hearken and pulled away the shoulder and stopped their ears that they should not hear. How often do we refuse to hearken, refuse to listen, refuse to apply, refuse to have some restraint when it comes to a relationship – restraint in how we treat one another, restraint in biting your tongue sometimes and understanding you don't know exactly where people are coming from, restraint from assuming things about others and about their motivations. We don't know their heart! Only God knows their heart; only God knows our hearts, what our true intent is. Give one another the benefit of the doubt; show some mercy, some patience. Don't be afraid to have discussion and work things out with one another. But to assume? ...and to get an attitude? ...and hold a grudge? It's against God's way; not to be done in the Church of God. Not to be done – refusing to hearken, refusing to listen, refusing to apply; pulling away the shoulder.

I think about when children are growing up and they're somewhere between 5-10, somewhere in that age group, you tell them to (ask them sometimes), instruct them to do something that they don't want to do...or if they are doing something that you don't want them to do and you try to correct them and they ... ugh... pull the shoulder and they're not going to listen. It's the same thing we do to God. And a little child will cover up their ears because they don't want to listen to you. That's what we do when we don't respond and we don't have right relationships – that's what we're doing, we're refusing to listen to our Great God, we're pulling away the shoulder, we're stopping the ears. It's like, "Don't! I don't want to hear You! I don't want to listen to You, I don't want to hear You: I want to turn away from You!" We need to come to grips with this. *This is our nature! This is not allowing the spirit of God to work with us and flow through us, the grace of God, God's mind in our mind where we can share life with others in a positive and Godly way to their benefit; not to their detriment! Not throwing stumbling blocks in front of others! But working with others in peace and harmony and cooperation and care and concern, having love for one another, not refusing to listen to our God, or pulling the shoulder, or stopping up our ears.*

This is why we struggle with living the way of peace; we have a nature, we have human nature, just like we've learned during Feast in 2009; that during the 100 years it's not going to be some cake-walk, it's not going to be some easy time where there's not going to be any struggles...because human nature will have to be overcome. Why? Because humans have human nature. Human nature has to be overcome now. Why? Because we have human nature and we need to *understand* our nature. Our carnal human nature has to be overcome and it's really through obedience; it's listening, it's having open ears, it's having the desire to be taught humility, striving to implement in our lives the instruction we've been given from our Great God.

So ask God to help you to listen and to apply the things He's given you to apply, especially in your relationships with one other...but that is our nature, our carnal human nature. The same carnal human nature will have to be overcome during the 100 year period. Ask God to help you overcome that human nature and to be responsive and to have right relationships with one another.

Nehemiah 9:17 – And they refused to obey; neither were they mindful of your wonders that you did amongst them. Are we mindful of the wonders that God does amongst us? The greatest miracle, creating Godly character, the converting of the mind, the changing of the mind, the revealing of truth, that we can understand it, having words in the Bible jump out at us. Prior to being called and receiving God's spirit you could open up that book and all those words are in there, but you couldn't understand them. Are you mindful of the wonders that He did amongst us with our minds, with our calling? Opening our minds...revealing truth? Think about those five sermons and the way of peace... Are we mindful? *Are we mindful?*

Here in Nehemiah it talked about in **verse 17** that they refused to obey because they weren't mindful; **and hardened their necks, and in their rebellion appointed captains to return to sin, return to bondage**, to go back to Egypt because of their carnal human nature; the same thing that we would do without God's help. But the verse goes on to say, **but You are a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful**, that's the Great God. He understands that we have this carnal human nature that we need to overcome and it's our battle and it's the battle over our mind. He knows that we're going to make mistakes and we're going to have flaws in our personalities and our relationships with one another. But if we respond, if we go to a brother alone, if we work things out, if we have care and concern and love towards one another and we seek forgiveness from our Great God – He forgives us. He's **ready to pardon**, He's **gracious**, He's **merciful**, and He's **slow to anger, of great kindness**. He's like that for us. He's there, ready to forgive us. We need to forgive one another and not hold grudges and not make assumptions. Only God can read our minds and our intent – that's why He tries us, so He can see our minds, so He can see how we act and react.

And goes on to say here in verse 18 – talks about when they made the molten calf, went against God and put something before God.

Verse 19 - Yet You in Your many-fold mercies forsook them not in the wilderness: again, another lesson for us – even when we fall short, we go to God and seek forgiveness and He's still there; many-fold mercies, because He started a work in us and He intends to complete a work in us. Says, even when they were disobedient, **the pillar of cloud departed not from them by day, to lead them in the way; neither the pillar of fire by night, to show them light, and the way therein they should go.** He continues to work with us; He continues to teach us – looking for us to respond, expecting us to respond. *Expect yourself* to respond because God will lead us, He'll teach us, He'll lead us by day and by

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night – day by day He'll lead us and He'll teach us. He'll teach us on the Sabbath. Every Sabbath He'll teach us, give us nuggets of understanding and ways to make corrections in our lives, help us to understand who we are, what our nature is; to come to grips with it, to know, hey, that's human nature without God.

Verse 20 - You gave also Your good spirit to instruct them, and withheld not manna from their mouth, and gave them water for thirst. Brethren, we have been fed, we have been taught. Be mindful! Be mindful of how God opened your mind and how He's revealed truth to us and how He continues to reveal truth to us and He teaches us how to live; and He'll continue to do so. He continues to lead us in *His* ways and allows us to see the difference between His way and man's way, between *His* mind and man's mind. It's a Great God that we serve! A Great God called us out of this world and has blessed us mightily. Again, we need to respond, we need to make changes in our lives and respond to God and the calling He's given us.

Deuteronomy 11:13 - And it shall come to pass, if you shall hearken unto My commandments which I command you this day, which I (God) teach you every week, **to love the Eternal your God, and to serve Him with all your heart and all your soul, That I will give you...blessings.** "I'll give you blessings. I'll fill you with blessings, spiritual blessings."

Verse 16 - Take heed to yourselves, that your heart be not deceived, and you turn aside, and serve other gods, and worship them; Do you stop your ears, do you pull the shoulder, you refuse to listen; full of pride, put things before God, before God's way of life?

Verse 17 - And then the Eternal's wrath will be kindled against you, and He shut up the heavens and there be no rain, taking the blessings away; and going on ... **lest you perish quickly from off the land** or be cut off, or be cut off from God.

Verse 18 – Therefore, therefore brethren, **shall you lay up these words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them for a sign on your hand, that they may be the frontlets between your eyes. And you shall teach them to your children, speaking of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. And you shall write them upon the posts of your door/house, upon your gates:** in all you do... *in all we do* apply what we've been taught – because we know the difference between God's way, God's way of peace and man's way; we know the difference between God's mind and man's mind... We know the difference! We know the difference of how to live and how not to live. We know the difference of how to treat one another and how not to treat one another. We know the difference between love and hate; we know the difference. Ask God to help you to choose His way, to choose the way of peace and to be led by Him in all that you do.

Proverbs 23:12 - Apply your heart to instruction, and your ears to the words of knowledge. Apply your heart to instruction; allow your mind to respond to what God gives you, to instruction, or correction, or warning, or discipline. **Apply your heart to instruction, your mind...and your ears to the words of knowledge.**

It also says (verse 26) - **My son, give Me your heart, and let your eyes observe My ways.** Your God wants to occupy your mind. He wants to give you His mind, to put His mind in you, His spirit can dwell within you so we can yield to Him, yield to His way of life, yield to instruction, giving a place for it. He wants to restore our minds so we can respond to Him. He's given us that opportunity; ask Him for help in overcoming.

Ephesians 2:1 - And you has He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins: talking about us; before we were called, when we were spiritually dead, when we were in error, when we didn't know the truth. He has made us alive. He's given us life! He's given us part of His life, His mind, His holy spirit.

Verse 2 – Wherein in times past you walked according to the course of this world, man's way. With carnal human nature, walking man's way; we walked **according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air,** being totally influenced by Satan the devil and the demons, **the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience:** this is what He called us out of, the mind that we know, the mind of man.

Verse 3 - Among whom also we had our conduct in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. Where we were prior to God calling us...and where we go when we sin, when we get puffed up, full of pride, and pull the shoulders and stop the ears, refuse to listen, refuse to hearken, when we're not applying these basic things in our relationships with one another – especially within the Body - the conduct not becoming of the Church of God; what He called us out of.

Verse 4 - But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love where with He loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, He made us alive together with Jesus Christ... And has raised us up together, and made us to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: Looking to the future time.

Verse 7 - That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace you are saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: but it is the gift of God: Given of God, offered by God – it's a choice – choices that we have to make. He calls us out of the world. He called us when we were living totally man's way, totally contrary to God's way, living the way of hate instead of the way of love – called to a way of peace, given the opportunity and given choices and the choices we have are day by day.

Verse 9 - Not of works, lest any man should boast. Because it's a gift. What God offers us is a gift and there's nothing we can do to earn it. We can respond to Him and allow Him to work in us.

Verse 10 - For we are His workmanship, His workmanship, the healing of our minds, the healing of our hearts, the changing of our human carnal nature, helping us to overcome it. **We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them.** To walk in His way, to walk in the way of peace.

Verse 11 - Wherefore remember, that you being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called uncircumcision by that which is called the circumcision in the flesh made by hands; That at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, or from the Church of God. Not being part of the Church of God but **strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope,** not understanding why man was created, what man is, not understanding God's plan, having no hope... **and without God in the world:** when we were cut off, before we were called.

Verse 13 - But now in Christ Jesus you who sometimes were far off/cut off are made nigh/close, forgiven and reconciled, **by the blood of Christ. For He is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of partition between us;** so we can have a place where God could reside, so we could have access to God, no longer an enemy of God, no longer living a life contrary, living man's
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way versus God's way, striving to live the way of peace, knowing the difference, seeing the difference between God's way and man's way.

Ephesians 4:1 - I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech/exhort you that you walk worthy of the calling wherewith you are called; walk worthy of the calling, of the *invitation*; **walk worthy of the calling that you've been called with all lowliness and meekness**, in humility, recognizing you need God to do this, calling upon Him, asking Him for help, asking Him to deliver you and guide you and direct you; **with longsuffering/patience, forbearing one another in love**; Being patient with each other; not making assumptions about why somebody said something, or what their intent was behind it, or assuming that they told somebody something different. We just need to get along and love one another, be patient with one another.

Verse 3 – Endeavouring, be diligent, labour, put effort into it, work at it, **endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit and the bond of peace**. And that's with one another, that's with living God's way of life toward one another. It's effort! Put effort into it! Put work into it! Sometimes it's just not easy to apologize, but hey, put the work into it! Pray about it, ask God to help you! Love one another! Reconcile to one another! Choose to agree with God, your Creator, your Sustainer, agree with His mind, agree with the way of life that He called you to!

Verse 4 - There is one Body, one spirit, even as you are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. ...and in you all... so if God be in you we have unity, there's no division, there's no dissent, there's no disputing – there's outgoing care, outgoing concern, there's cooperation. We're told here to be likeminded. To be *likeminded!* ...of one mind, of one love, of one accord, in humility, allowing the mind of God to dwell within our mind, His spirit, to walk worthy of the calling that we've been called to humbly, and then endeavouring, or working, striving, efforting to love one another and to live peaceably with one another. That should be our description. It should describe me; it should describe you – no division, no dissent, no disputing. Rather, we should be exhibiting care, concern, cooperation, living the way of peace – five sermons... 'The Way of Peace'; hearken to instruction. Don't pull away the shoulder or stop the ears or refuse to listen. Five sermons on 'The Way of Peace'. Live the way of peace. Ask God to help you to live the way of peace toward the brethren within the Body.

So what do we do? What do you do? We respond, we obey God, we strive to do what He tells us to do looking to Him for help in doing so in all things; asking God, help us, give us what it takes, give us Your spirit, help us to want to repent and change and to be reconciled with You, with one another, within the Body... respond!

Ephesians 5:15 - See then that you walk circumspectly, or you walk diligently, or *exactly the way you've been taught to walk*, whether you walk carefully and walking the way God expects us to walk. **So then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be you not unwise**, don't be unwise; **but understanding what the will of the Lord is. And be not drunk with wine, or in excess; but be filled with the spirit; speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; Giving thanks always for all things unto God, and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;**

So what do we do? We do as God's says. Throughout the Bible He tells us the way to live, the way to walk, the way to treat one another, the way to peace. He say's *walk carefully, walk diligently* and thank God that He's called you and given you this opportunity – and asking Him for the help that you need.

Colossians 3:11 – breaking in here, it says, **where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all. Put on therefore, as the elect/called of God, holy and beloved,** God dwells within you... if God's spirit dwells within you, it says, 'put on bowels of mercy' in your being. In your very being, put on bowels of mercy... mercy and **kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;**

Verse 13 - Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, being patient with each other, not making assumptions about what someone's thinking or why they said something, or what they meant by something; give them the benefit of the doubt, being patient with one another, **Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, *forgiving one another*, if any man has a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, you also do. And above all things put on charity/love, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts,** in your minds, in your life; the peace of God, the way of peace; **that it rule in your hearts, to which also you are called in one Body; and be you thankful.** Powerful verses, powerful instruction; living the way of peace.

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God, and the Father by Him. In everything we do. You know sometimes you read through these verses and you think, "Man, they just speak for themselves. How much more elaborating do you need to do on them?" ...teaching us how to live the way of peace.

We know our nature, we know our struggle, we know what we need to do. We know the difference between God's way, the way of peace and man's way. And yes, now that we've been to this Feast of Tabernacles, and we're back rubbing shoulders in this world and we saw, we experienced, we witnessed an environment that was conducive to living the way of peace with one another and coming back and finding the environment is man's way: Yes, it should be a sobering jolt!

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