

Welcome, brethren, to another seventh-day Sabbath. The title of today's sermon is *Man's Last Days*, and this will be *Part 2*.

The truth is, the end of man's self-rule over 6,000 years is now drawing to an end. It's drawing closer. And as we understand, we are living in this last period of time, which is the last year of the measuring of the temple, and then we will enter into this period of the last time of 3½ years of man's self-rule.

What will it be like on this earth during the final days of man's self-rule? We know that the book *2008—God's Final Witness* has outlined what is going to take place. Now, the exact detail of every aspect of the last 3½ years will be revealed as we live it, but the book *2008—God's Final Witness* is an outline of what God is going to do to humble mankind, to bring mankind to repentance.

In the last sermon we looked at one aspect of *our* role that will be of being an example during these last 3½ years, these end-days. It is one of being a witness by the way we live. Our attitude that we reveal to others by the way we live, by not being prejudice (or not showing prejudice), by having a calm spirit, one that is "wise as a serpent and harmless as a dove." In other words, living wisdom. It is one of *faith*. We are going to live our faith. We're going to live what we believe. We're going to live it in boldness and we're going to live it with wisdom, using the very mind, the thinking of God. We are going to allow God to do the works in us out to the benefit of others.

So those 3½ years that we face is a time of fear and a time of distress for the world. What will these last days under Satan's system lead to? The title of today's sermon outlines it is part of man's last days. And as we understand, there are two parts to that. Firstly, the end of 6,000 years of man's self-rule, and the second part is the last days of man, which is at the end of 7,100 years. And that will come in a future sermon. The purpose of this sermon series is to review what we know of man's last days under Satan's influence, and then (God willing) we will look at man's last days at the end of that 7,100 years.

So we'll pick up the sermon where we left off in Amos 5:14. And it might be wise to put a marker in Amos 5 because we will be going backwards and forwards in Amos 5 for much of this sermon and the next sermon.

Amos 5:14—Seek good and not evil. Now, this is exactly what mankind must do during this last 3½ years, which is to "seek good and *not* evil." And because we understand who man is, man has lived evil. That's the way man's natural carnal mind is. Well there has to be this change that takes place. We have seen before that God says, "Seek God and live." We have to "seek God and live." We understand on a physical level that mankind needs to stop and turn around and head towards God. Mankind has never been with God or walking on the same path as God or walking towards God in any shape or form. It's

only those that have been called, and called for a purpose, to be given the opportunity to live a spirit life in the future by living spiritually (through motive and intent) now as a human.

So mankind is to seek God now and live. We looked at this particular aspect in the last sermon, which was "to seek God." Well, mankind has never sought God, and therefore, only the Church of God—PKG, God's people can "seek God," because they have been called into a relationship with God, they have been called *to* seek God, and by seeking God we can live, we can have life living *in* us, which is this aspect of God's holy spirit living and dwelling in us.

Well, on a physical level mankind now needs to stop and turn and begin to seek God on a physical level (by the way that they live), but then, of course, it will change to seeking God spiritually. And they will live both physically and with God's spirit living and dwelling in them, those that have that opportunity during this last period, will live. They will have God living and dwelling in them. "Seek good and *not* evil." So this "seeking good," means there's going to have to be a change in the thinking of mankind. "And not evil," not to continue with the natural carnal mind of selfishness.

When you look at Amos 5:14 it's saying, "Seek good and not evil." It's talking about *repent!* Because the only way to "seek God" or to "seek good," because we understand what is "good," if we understand and look back at what God has said, when the rich person came up and said to Christ, "Good Master," Good Teacher, Christ turned around and said, "There is none good but *God*." So we are to "seek good" by seeking God, by seeking God's character. Only God is good. So only God's righteousness or God's character *is* good, therefore, we have to change the way we think. And the way we change is through repentance. We have to turn from the way we think to another way of thinking, which has to be powered by God's holy spirit. So this, really, is all about an attitude or our intent. This "seeking good" has to be driven by a motive and intent, "and not evil."

Well, God's Church has been now given this opportunity, for this last year that we are now living in to "seek good" to "seek God diligently." And it has been outlined what we should do in an effort to dedicate ourselves in this last year to God. Because it is about this "seeking good," this "seeking God," and if we do, if we reject evil, reject evil within our thinking and we don't seek it in any way and we "seek good." We "seek God." We will be repenting. So the process of repenting requires what? Requires humility. Humility. God is giving us the opportunity within the Body of Christ, the Church of God, to seek God in humility. And we do that by repentance. We lower ourselves. We humble ourselves.

Now, we understand from the posts that God has given us that we are to do this once a month in seeking God. Because if we seek God, we're seeking something that is good (because "only God is good") and we won't be seeking evil. We won't be living by the natural carnal mind. We will be bringing our self into subjection to God, and we do that through ongoing repentance.

So mankind is going to be given this opportunity, which is "to seek God," which is to seek righteousness, which is to change, "not to seek evil," but to *seek to yield the self to God*, which is yielding our

selfishness to God. We're going to sacrifice our selfishness. This is what mankind must now turn to. They have to do it now. It has to start now.

So there are going to be some that God is going to give the opportunity to actually "seek good and not evil," to "seek God and live."

Continuing on in **Amos 5:14**—Why should they do this? **That you may live... that you may live.** Brethren, if we seek God during this next year, with diligence, according to the way that God has outlined that we should, though fasting, through repentance, and we actually reject the evil that is in us by denying the self (by getting rid of the selfishness), God says that we will live.

So here it is in Amos, looking at it spiritually and also physically. **So the LORD God of hosts will be with you.** Well, that is exactly what is happening during this Year of Dedication, that "the LORD your God will be *with you*." With us, brethren, because we are doing what God asked, which is "seeking good," seeking God, "and not evil." We're rejecting evil. **As you have spoken.** So we are to use God's word as our guide in life.

Now, during this next one year that we live, we are to use God's word as our guide in the disciplining of self, of this seeking God, "seeking good," and rejecting evil, getting rid of the selfishness that's in us. Well, mankind, during the 3½ years will have this same opportunity, which is, "to seek good and not evil," that they may live, that God will be *with* them. And they have the opportunity to turn to God and to seek God by repentance. And by this they will be "speaking justice in the gate," because they'll be using God's word as their guide.

Verse 15—so this is saying now, **So as the LORD of Hosts will be with you, as you have spoken; Hate evil and love good.** "Hate evil, love good." Well, we understand, because we are *called* to understand, that this "hating of evil" is this rejecting of selfishness within ourselves, this rejecting of selfishness *within ourselves*. Now, we, by nature, can turn out and look out and we can hate evil, what others do to others. We can see the suffering of mankind. We see the suffering of children. We see the suffering of animals. The whole world is *oppressed* by Satan's system, and therefore, we can look out and by the power of God's holy spirit we can learn to hate evil that is taking place within society, within mankind, the way mankind thinks, what mankind does to others. We, brethren, have to come to the point where we hate those things within ourselves, because we'll be using God's word as our guide and we'll be able to compare the two. We'll be able to see the difference between one, which is selfishness, and God's way, which is one of love.

So we're to learn to hate evil within ourselves and to love good. So what is "loving good?" Well, it's actually dedicating ourselves to God's word, which is "loving good," for "only God is good." So we love the way that God thinks. We love righteousness. So we will learn this as we go on in God's Church, and during this period of 3½ years this is what we will live. We will live "hating evil" within ourselves and what is going on in society. And we will "love the good." We will love God's way of life.

Well, mankind is going to be called during this 3½ years (a percentage of them), that will be called for the purpose of learning to begin to "hate evil," because God's spirit will power it and they will learn to "love good." And "only God is good," so they will learn to love God's way of life. They will learn to love the Commandments.

If you'd like to hold your place there we're going to go through a particular Psalm and compare this with where we are in time, but also, looking at this last 3½ years, about the way that *we should behave* (in the sense of yielding our spirit to God's holy spirit), and what man has to do because of the suffering that *he* will face. Now, God says in His word that if we humble ourselves, we will not have to be humbled. Hence, when you look at this Year of Dedication that God has outlined to His Church, it really is reinforcing the way that God thinks, because God clearly says, "If a man will judge himself," if a man will humble himself and look at *himself*, "he will not have to be humbled." So during this year, brethren, we have this opportunity, this great blessing from God that God is giving us the warning that we need to humble ourselves now so that we will *not be humbled* because we're willing to do it ourselves. We're willing to bring ourselves into judgment now, to judge the self now. We will do it! We will judge ourselves now so that we don't have to be judged. And that's what God says in scripture. So what a great opportunity, what a great blessing that God is giving His Church this opportunity to humble itself during this one Year of Dedication so that it will not have to be humbled during the 3½ years.

Well, mankind is not going to humble themselves during this one year. God is going to allow things to begin to happen, that mankind will enter this last 3½ year period where they *will be humbled*, all for the purpose of bringing them to humility, to *force* them to look at themselves. Because when you take everything away from mankind, then, and only then, will mankind begin to look out from himself, from his own self-reliance to look to something greater. And when that is happening within mankind's thinking God will pour out His spirit on a percentage that will begin to turn, to seek God, to seek good, and not to seek evil. Isn't that an incredible plan that God has for this period of man's last days!

If you'd like to turn to Psalm 34:1, we're going to read from Psalm 34:1. This is David, a Psalm that David wrote. Now, we're going to look at this in relation to a period of time which is the time we're going to enter in, which is that last 3½ years of man's self-rule.

Psalm 34:1—I will bless (praise) the LORD at all times. "I will bless (praise) Yahweh at all times." Well, we have this opportunity, brethren, to live this, that we can look to God at *all times*. We can give Him credit and praise for His greatness, for the God that He is, for the God that He demonstrates to us, for the way that He lives towards us, His thinking towards us, which is one of love. So we can bless and praise God at any time, all times, for who He really is, because of His revealing of His plan to us and because of the calling that He has given us. **His praise shall be continually in my mouth.** Well, "His praise shall continually be in my mouth," this is referring to all credit will be given to God at all times. So this is about an attitude, the way of thinking or a way of thinking. It's the way we should think, which is we should give God praise at all times, and it should be continually in our mouth *because* we have been called and given access to God at this time and we understand what God is doing. So we can praise Him continually. We can give Him credit for all things.

Now, one of the problems within mankind is that he will not, and does not, give credit (true credit) either physically or spiritually, to God. Mankind takes credit to himself. It's always about the self and what the self has achieved. So it's very important that we, brethren, don't do this. We take no credit to self for anything. We do not lift ourselves up in anything. So when a position of service is given there's no lifting up of self. It's not because one person is better than another. In actual fact, it can be the fact that it's a real test within the person's mind. So a person that God has given, in the sense of giving them a role of responsibility or given them a position of authority, it is a great responsibility and it carries a great burden *because* they are now held accountable in a stronger way for what they do, for what they say.

Well, brethren, how much more for us? That we as members of the Body of Christ, we carry God's name. We are begotten sons of God, therefore, during this 3½ year period that we are facing it is so important that we carry God's name with the honor and the privilege and the *accountability* and the responsibility that it does actually carry. This is not going to be an easy time. So we need to ensure that we are continually giving God the credit for all things. It has *nothing* to do with us as individuals, about how "good" we are or what we have achieved, or what we have come to see, or what we have come to understand. Because we only see and understand spiritual matters because of God's great mercy to us! It's *God* that does the works. It's *God* that calls. It's *God* that pours out His spirit. It's *God* that gives the eyes to "see," therefore, we can "praise God continually with our mouth," by what we say, by taking *no credit to self for ANYTHING*, nothing whatsoever!

So if we do "see" an aspect of the truth, if we read a post and we "see" what it's intent is, if we "see" what it is saying and we come to know and understand what is happening within God's plan, we should not take credit to self by saying, "I see," and thinking that we're better than somebody else. We *only* "see" because God is allowing us to "see," and it's *all* for the purpose of God and His great plan and His glory.

So this period of 3½ years, it is so important that we give all credit to God for any knowledge that we have on a spiritual level. Now, *this* is really about an attitude or a way of thinking. So to praise God at all times and to continually give God the credit for all things that are done physically *and* spiritually within our life is a key to us having a successful spiritual interaction with God and God's people, and having an interaction with those that God is going to draw out of this 3½ years of physical distress.

Verse 2—My soul shall make its boast in the LORD; the humble shall hear of it and be glad. So we go back over that. "My life shall make its boast in the LORD," well, that's right, because we're going to give God the credit for *all* things because we know that God is the one that does all things on a spiritual level. God provides *truth* to us. *Truth* comes from God, therefore, if we do "see" truth and understand truth all the credit goes to God for what *He* has done. He is the one who has placed truth in the Church. He is the one that is revealing truth progressively (the present truth) to God's people (to the Church), all for a purpose. It's *not* about taking credit to self, that, "Well, I see, therefore, I take some credit to it." No, it's about what we do, brethren, when we "see." We "see" because God granted it to us.

"The humble shall hear of it and be glad." Well, that's true, because it's only the humble, those that don't take credit to themselves, those that lower themselves, *will* be glad. They will rejoice because they'll *know* it comes from God. They accept it comes from God, and they don't take any credit to self. They give all the glory, all the credit, all the praise continually to God. Now, *this is* humility. This is actually humility. This giving credit to God for all things *is* actually *humility*, because we take no credit to self. We see ourselves because God allows us to "see" ourselves as we truly are, carnal and selfish by nature. That's what we are.

Well, when God calls us to "see," when God grants us humility (which is this "seeing" of self) and then we compare ourselves *to God*, well, then we can come into this deeper state of humility. We're willing to humble ourselves. We're willing to look at ourselves and compare ourselves to God. And that will give us *more* humility, a deeper humility because we don't take *any* credit for *anything* to self. Nothing! We give *all* credit, *all* glory to God, Yahweh Elohim, where it all comes from. *All* spiritual truth, *all* understanding comes from God. Isn't this incredible to come to understand? That we, brethren, have the opportunity during this last year to humble ourselves and *rejoice* to know what God is doing.

Now, this is going to be a personal choice. This is about being responsible and being held accountable for what we do. And as it was outlined in a post, we have this opportunity. It's a personal choice. *Nobody* can make us fast. *Nobody* can make us humble ourselves. It's a *personal* choice...it's a personal choice.

Well, here David is saying that he gives all credit to God and he rejoices and he boasts *in* God. He gives all credit to God for what God is doing in his life, and he is willing to humble himself because he understands that to be able to "hear," which is to be able to "see" the truth, one must be humble. Because the moment we're proud, we're going to lift ourselves up and we *cannot* "hear" or "see" the truth. We might deceive ourselves in thinking we can, but it's impossible because it is by the power of God's holy spirit, which motivates and gives humility, that we can "see" and "hear."

Verse 3—Oh, magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt His name together. Let's lift up God's ways together. Now, this 3½ year period, this is what is going to take place. This is so exciting! We, brethren, as members of the Body of Christ, the Church of God, are going to be able to magnify and exalt God's name along with the two witnesses. The two witnesses have a work to do, but the underpinning part of it is we are there as support. We are there to support and back up. And when this person supports, guess what they do? They draw alongside. They're there *with* them. So no matter what happens we are in unity of spirit with them. This is so exciting! To let us, brethren, members of the Body of Christ exalt God's name together with the two witnesses. And how are we going to do it? We're going to do it *by living it*...by living it, by what we have decided to do, by humbling ourselves and by allowing God to live and dwell in us. That's how we are going to exalt God's name together, because of the way we live. It's not about what we just say. It's actually how we live and the *intent* behind what we say. It's the *intent* of what we say.

Because we are going to exalt *God's* name during this 3½ year period because it's all about what *God* is doing. It's about God humbling mankind for the purpose of "bringing many sons to glory," in a time order. He is going to humble mankind because mankind is going to turn on himself and the natural carnal mind and selfishness will dominate man's thinking. Well, during that period of being *humbled*, mankind (some) are going to be given that opportunity. Well, we, brethren are going to be there to exalt God's name with the two witnesses by the way we live, by being in unity of spirit. And that is the key to being members of the Body of Christ – unity of spirit. We are in *full agreement* with what is said by them. We are in *full agreement* with God. We are humble. We don't take any credit to self. We exalt *God* as being all powerful and all mighty because this is *God's* Church. This is *God's* Church! It's not one man's. It's not one woman's. It's nobody's individual Church. It's the Church of God, headed by Jesus Christ. Isn't this exciting? We understand this. We understand so much, brethren, that sometimes we just take it for granted.

The world knows *nothing!* The world knows *nothing* about God, absolutely nothing about God. So they're going to have to be humbled and then called to come to begin to "see" God, a small aspect of God. And where will they "see" God? In the main, by the power of God's holy spirit, they'll see it in the mind, but they could also (some will have the opportunity to) "see" God through the way we live. So we, brethren, will be exalting God's name together in unity of spirit. We will be at-one with the two witnesses. We'll be at-one with Jesus Christ. We'll be at-one with God the Father. We will be at-one in spirit and truth. It is so exciting!

So we can see this 3½ year period is going to be a time where we can exalt God's name together by the way we live. We can lift God up by the way we live, by showing no prejudice, by living love to all. It's a very exciting time we're heading into.

Verse 4—I sought the LORD, and He heard me, and delivered me from all my fears. Well, this, brethren, is our potential now through this period and during the 3½ years, that we can seek God and He will hear us. He will hear us, brethren, because of who we are, because of who God has made us. And He will deliver us from *all our fears* because we have nothing to fear. The only thing we have to fear, brethren, is our choices to sin. *That's* what we should fear. We should fear God. We should fear to sin. And how do we do that? By hating evil. We are to hate evil within ourselves.

Well, we can look at this spiritually. This is about prayer. We can seek God in prayer and He *will* hear us because of our humility and repentance. Because you can't separate the two, it's impossible. Repentance and humility "are joined at the hip," as the saying says. They're just joined. It's *one*. They're joined together. Because without humility a person doesn't repent. Because if they haven't got humility, what have they got? They've got pride! So the same for us, brethren. If we have *pride* we will not be repenting in a sincere, genuine way. It's absolutely impossible. But with humility, powered by God's holy spirit, where we "see" the self, we "see" who we really are, *this* can trigger repentance, a gift of God, that we can repent. God says He will deliver us from *all our fears*. If there *are* any fears that we have, well, God says that He will stand for us. God will be our strength, our high tower, our fortress, our Petra. It is *God* that is our strength. *God* is our place of safety because we trust in Him, we rely on Him.

Well, the world is going to be the same. "I sought the LORD, and He heard me." Well, those that are called to seek God, as we've seen before, what man has to do, they have to "seek good." They have to "seek God." Well, they're going to have to do that in prayer. And this is going to happen once they are brought into a state of humility. Now, when they seek God, they are going to be given this gift of repentance. They're going to begin to change. And God will deliver them from their fears. God is going to work miracles within people's lives that have not been seen by many people because of what is going to take place. Because God *is* all mighty, God *is* all powerful, and He can deliver *anybody* that He chooses. And God is going to deliver those that seek Him, that seek good, and He will deliver them from their fears.

Now, brethren, *fear* is coming to mankind, a *fear* that we have not understood. That this generation, mankind in the western world (in the tribes of Israel), has *not understood fear, real fear*. *Fear*, that they don't know what to think. *Fear*, of they don't know what to do. *Fear* for their own families because that's natural. People fear about what's going to happen to them firstly, and then what's going to happen to their extended family. Now, brethren, mankind is going to be brought to this fear all for the sake of being brought to repentance.

Now, you might have seen many a movie, and I know from some experience that this is the way that man thinks. Because, generally, when a person gets into a very difficult situation, the first thing, they are brought into this level of humility. And let's just say it's on a boat in the middle of the ocean, and generally after so many days when there is lack of food and lack of water, there is this level of humility sinks in and a person becomes very small in their own eyes. Now, they think about themselves, then they start to think, "I'm not going to survive this," therefore, they begin to think about family and their concerns for *others* begins to take place. And then they think about all the things that they should have done. They had desired to do these things. And they have all these thoughts, and sometimes they have opportunity to write on a bit of paper, and *if* they could live it again they would do "this," and *if* they could do "this" they would do "that." And then, at some point, they then seek *God* (because of this humility) and they realize their own natural state, one of being pretty pathetic and they can't save themselves. They are no longer able to rely on themselves because of their environment. They now seek God and what do they say, normally? They make a promise. "Well, God, if you deliver me from this situation, I will *never* do 'this,'" or, "I'll *never* do 'that,'" or, "I'll promise I'll do 'this,'" or, "I'll promise I'll do 'that.'" So mankind has this ability to then turn to God when he is humbled and then to make promises. Now, these promises are based on human reasoning and human understanding, so if the person is saved from the life raft or the boat and after one year they may set out with some diligence to honor their commitment, but given time and the prosperity that often comes back to them rarely does mankind *honor* the commitment. Now, some do, I'm sure, but the majority don't. They go back to what they were and they go back to living life selfishly, only thinking of self.

Well, here God is saying that if anybody does seek Him at this particular time, if they are *called* to seek God, that He will deliver them from their fears.

Verse 5—They looked to Him and were radiant, and their faces were not ashamed. Now, this is talking about pride. So this pride that is in mankind is going to have to be taken from them. "And their faces were *not* ashamed," they're not repentant. They're not ashamed of who they are and their sin *because* of this attitude within mankind, this spirit in man, this natural carnal mind of selfishness.

So here it is that David then says in **verse 6—This poor man cried out, referring to himself, and the LORD heard and saved him out of all his troubles. The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear Him.** Now, this is an incredible scripture when we understand it, brethren. Mankind, as they're going to be humbled, are going to turn to God (some). Some are going to be *called* to turn to God. Others will turn to God on a natural level. This is the way that man is. The religions of the world, as they are brought down, and the Churches that are scattered are brought down, will turn to *their* god, what they see as God. Some in the world will be called to turn to seek the *true* God, because of a calling... because of a calling. Now, the Churches that are scattered, the same thing will apply. *Some* will turn to God (and we understand that 63,000 are going to be given this opportunity), to be awakened, to turn to God, to seek God, *and* God says that He will deliver them *if* they continue to seek Him with humility and repentance. Because that's the key! Humility *and* repentance.

God says here that He "encamps," He puts protection around, those who fear Him. Now, this is not about a natural fear that man will have. There are going to be millions of people that are going to be *in fear*. Now, the Buddhists are going to fear *their* gods. And the Muslims will fear *their* god. And all the other different religions, the Catholics, will fear their *gods*, the trinity, *because* that's what man does. That's *natural*! Because, if you remember, there was an earthquake in New Zealand and it destroyed part of a town. There's been different earthquakes, there's been floods, there's been tsunami's in different places. Well, generally what happens after a disaster, after a tornado or a cyclone, or some major event, or a tragedy or an earthquake, generally what happens is man turns to fear God on a *natural* level. And there's a big difference between that. One is *called* to fear God. One is called to seek God, to repent and fear Him spiritually - requires a calling from God the Father. There's another group that will turn to fear their god (which they think is fearing God), but they turn to *their* god and they humble themselves on a physical level believing they're looking for protection for self. So this humbling is selfish. This humbling of self is selfish. They're doing it for selfishness. They're looking for protection selfishly.

So, brethren, in the last sermon we looked at mankind humbling themselves and being selfish still. Because a person can humble themselves and seek God on a physical level and it's all done for selfishness. Now, it's about how we live; we're not to live selfishly. We're to humble ourselves and seek God in spirit and truth. So here it is that God says that He will "encamp around those that fear Him," so we understand this now that God will *not* encamp around those that fear *their* gods, not called to fear the true God, Yahweh Elohim. But people are going to do all sorts of things and they're going to humble themselves for different reasons and stick to their integrity. They're going to "hold to their integrity" in pride. It's not true humility; it's physical. It's not *spiritual* humility...it's not spiritual humility.

So a person has to be *called* to spiritual humility. But God says here that those that are called to fear Him, they are going to do what? So we understand, brethren, what is the fear of the Lord? Well, it's to keep the Commandments. We're to keep the Commandments. Those who hate *evil* will keep the Commandments. So those that are called, God's says that He's going to place protection around them, to those who fear Him. They *believe* and respect God. They hate evil *in themselves*; they begin to "see" it. Because it's about a spiritual matter. And they begin to keep the 10 Commandments in spirit and truth.

Now, the first thing they're going to do is start to "see" God, to *know* God on a spiritual level, and they're going to want to obey Him in spirit and truth. They're going to start becoming Sabbath keepers.

Now, not all may have that opportunity as we go through that 3½ year period. There's going to be some that may be called early, and as we get further on, more may be called and more will begin to turn to the Sabbath. It doesn't mean to say that everybody at the end of the 3½ years, at the return of Jesus Christ, that all those that are alive are keeping the Sabbath. There may be some that are actually given that opportunity to live two or three days before the return of Jesus Christ and come to the knowledge of the Sabbath then. But within Israel, many will hear what the two witnesses are saying. Many will know about this call to humble the self on a spiritual level and repent. And "repent" means "to turn to God and keep the Sabbath," is the beginning, to keep the spirit of the law.

So we can see great things ahead of us, brethren, times that are very exciting, yet humbling, because we're going to have to remain in a state of humility for the next 4½ years. This is not about just one year of humbling ourselves every month. This is about being *humble* for a whole period of time, *not* lifting the self up, giving the credit and glory *all* to God the Father, Yahweh Elohim, for everything that He does.

Now, we understand that God is going to protect those that He has called into a relationship with Him. That's what verse 7 is covering, "and delivers them," because God will deliver them for a purpose. Now, the way that we have been delivered and the way that we have protection is by the power of God's holy spirit. So, firstly, we have been called into a relationship with Him and God is protecting us physically (at this point in time), but also, more importantly, spiritually. And He will deliver us, brethren! And we have been delivered already by Passover. We understand that. We've been delivered from our sins by Passover. And we're delivered from all sin that we commit as we go along in life because that's the way we are, selfish by nature, and we stumble and fall. Well, we are delivered because of Passover, because of this ongoing gift that we have been given, which is one of repentance. But repentance is based on humility, and therefore, we have to continue to humble ourselves in our minds, to give all the credit and all the glory to God so that we *can* be delivered.

Well, mankind is now facing this period also, that God will now provide protection for some, those that He calls, and He *will* deliver them physically into a Millennium. But more importantly than that, He's going to deliver them *spiritually* for a *spirit life*, because that's what it's about! "*Seek Me* and live!" And that's what we're about, brethren. We're to seek God so that we can live spiritually on a spiritual level

through the power of God's holy spirit living and dwelling in us. Now, we understand, brethren, that we have protection around us, *but* it doesn't mean to say that we will *not die physically*. It *doesn't* mean that at all! Some of us may have to die for God's sake, for the name of God, which we have covered in the last sermon. Death may come upon us. Well, that's just the way that it is, and what a privilege and what an honor that would be, to die for God, to die in the faith, as thousands have gone before us lived and died in the faith. Now, we know there are almost 144,000 that have lived and died in the faith. That's an incredible thing! And we know there are some still alive that make up that 144,000 that are alive today. We don't know exactly how many will be alive at the very return of Jesus Christ to be resurrected to make up that Government.

Verse 8—Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good; Blessed is the man who trusts in Him! "Blessed is the man who believes in Him." So we are to "taste and see that the LORD is good." Well, how do we do that? Through God's word, through God's spirit. Because when we taste something, we have to actually handle it. We put it in our mouth and we *taste* the word of God. So God's mind, God's spirit enters into our mind and we can taste it, we can "*see*" *God's way*. We can see God's word. We can see its intent. And we can see that God *is* good...God is good. Only God is good! And the reason for this is that everything good comes from God the Father. *Everything* good comes from God the Father. God's spirit comes from God the Father. Now, that is good, because only God is good. God's character is good, therefore, we can taste and see that God is good. We can experience God living and dwelling in us. We can experience the mind of God and Jesus Christ living and dwelling in us. So we can taste and handle it. We can live it if we yield to God. "And blessed (happy) is the man who trusts in God." Now, to "trust in God" is to believe in God. Now, going forward we're going to look at this very topic in more detail, and it's in a future sermon, where we're going to look at *how* it is that we're going to trust in God, we're going to trust *in* Yahweh Elohim, because it's not as simple as simply just looking and saying, "I trust God." It's not that simple. It's actually about the way we live, whether or not we live that we trust in God.

Verse 9—Oh, fear the LORD, you His saints! That's talking to us, brethren. We are to fear God. To fear God is to hate evil, to hate evil within ourselves. "To fear God is the beginning of wisdom." It's the beginning of developing the very mind, the very thinking of God. "You His saints," so it's very personal. So we, brethren, *are* to learn to love God. We are to learn to love the saints, which is to love one another. We're to respect one another. So we, brethren, are to learn to fear God. ***There is no want to those who fear Him.*** So there's no lack on a spiritual level to those who fear God. Now, during that 3½ year period that we're soon approaching, this same principle will apply, that those that fear God, which are going to be those that are called into a relationship with God, "there is no lack to those who fear Him." God will look after them spiritually as long as they yield to God, and He will look after them physically. There is nothing to fear other than the fact that we have to learn to fear God, which is to learn to keep the Commandments, to learn to hate evil within ourselves.

Verse 10—The young lion lacks and suffers hunger. So it's talking about something physical here, about "a young lion" during this period, "lacks and it suffers hunger." In other words, it's there, there is

nothing to eat. It goes out all day, can hunt looking for some food, comes back and there's nothing. It's actually empty; there is nothing good there to eat. So it's going to *suffer* because of it. **But**, so now it's taking something physical and applying it now to something that is spiritual. **But those who seek the LORD shall not lack anything**, or "not lack any *good*." Now, this can be saying something if we want to look at it on a physical level. So the lion is hungry and it's suffering hunger because it lacks food. There is nothing physically to eat. Well, physically, those who seek the Lord, those that are turning by repentance, who seek... now, "seeking" is taking effort. It's us, brethren. It's going to take effort. We have to put in the effort *now* and during the 3½ years. To see God we're going to have to have this relationship with God.

"But those who seek the LORD," through effort, by repentance, "shall not lack any good." So there's not going to be anything that is going to be lacking. Now, it doesn't mean to say that we're going to have plenty of food by any means, but God will provide. God will provide what is necessary because He's going to do a work through His Church. God works through the Church and God is going to work through the two witnesses and *that structure* that God has set up, those that are in the Body of Christ. God will use that. And we won't lack. We may go hungry a few days, but God says He will do what He has to do with us and through us. We may lack some food for a period of time, but that's not a problem. But this is actually talking about something that is spiritual.

So "the lion," something physical, "will lack," but someone that is of God and seeking God in repentance, they won't lack on a physical level. Here it is it's talking about something on a spiritual level. "But those who seek God," on a spiritual level, by this repentance, who are turning to God, those in the Body of Christ and those that are called into this "seeking the LORD," "shall not lack any good." What is good? Spiritual food. They will not lack spiritually. So we have this potential, brethren, during this period now of this last year and then the 3½ years that we have to live through, and then that last period of time of those 50 days that we will not lack anything spiritually as long as we've humbled ourselves and that we are in a state of repentance. Those who are seeking God by repentance shall not lack anything spiritually with regards to spiritual food, because it's going to be *God* living and dwelling *in* us. It's going to be *God* doing the works. So God is saying He is going to provide for us.

Verse 11—Come, you children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the LORD. So it's saying here, it's David, of course, speaking, but we, brethren, we could say it's like God talking to us, "Come, you children," "Come, My children," members of the Body of Christ, begotten sons of God, children of God, "listen to Me!" So David's saying, "Listen to me," what he was going to say. Well, God says the same thing, "Listen to Me." Listen to what God has to say. We're to listen to what God is telling us during this period of time. And, "God will teach us the fear of the Lord." He is going to show us *how* to fear God. Now, we understand the fear of God is obeying God. In its broad principle, we're to obey God, we're to hate evil, but we are to *learn* to manage the self, to hate what goes on within our mind, the selfishness that's in us.

In the world, that's exactly the same for the 3½ years, "Come, you children, listen to me," listen to what the two witnesses are saying. Listen to what God's Church is saying. "And I will teach you the fear

of the LORD." The two witnesses will be teaching the fear of the Lord. They're going to teach people to fear God. Now, people are going to have a choice. God is going to awaken, God is going to call some to this fearing of the LORD, and God's Church will be the same. "I," the Church of God, "will teach you the fear of the LORD," which is obedience to God. Because, really, fearing God is learning to respect God, to come to "see" God's word in its spirit (the spirit of the matter) and from that we learn to respect (or fear) God. And what does God say? Well, God reveals who we are, what we are, and the way we are. We're proud-filled and selfish. Well, God says what we have to do is learn to humble ourselves, to pull ourselves down by the power of God's holy spirit and God will teach us His word. We'll take on the mind of God, the transformation.

So this last 3½ years that we are entering soon, it is about humbling and repentance. And it's all about learning to fear the Lord. And mankind has to be brought low for the purpose of being able to be taught, to come to see they need to fear God, they need to respect God, and not lift up their idols, not lift up self. They can't protect themselves. There is no protection in mankind. Mankind will destroy itself. But God says, "Turn to Me. Seek Me and live," physically and spiritually.

Verse 12—Who is the man *who* desires life, and loves *many* days, that he may see good? So it's a good question. "Who is the man who desires life?" Physically. "And loves many days." Physically. "That he may see good?" On a physical level. Well, who is it? What do they have to do to do these things?

Let's look at this spiritually. "Who is the man/woman who desires spirit life?" Well, that's what we desire. We desire spirit live now in the sense of having God's holy spirit living and dwelling in us, which *is* truly life, but we also desire a spirit life in Elohim. "And loves days," or "loves many days?" Well, we do, brethren. We want to live. We don't want to die. We would like to live. But we want to live in Elohim, which is about having life-everlasting or age-lasting life. We love many days. That's what we desire. That's our purpose in life, which is to *enter life*, true life. "That he may see good?" Well, when will we see good? What is good? God is good. Jesus Christ has the mind of God. The mind of God *is* good. Because God is good, God's mind is good. Well, we would desire to "see" the mind of God. We desire to enter Elohim. We desire to think like God. We desire to "see" God's word, have it revealed to us by the power of God's holy spirit. So we desire to "see" the good in God's word.

So all of these things, physically and spiritually, how is it achieved? What do we have to do? **Verse 13—Keep your tongue from evil, and your lips from speaking guile** (deceit, falsehood). So it's about two things here. We're going to go on to more of it but this is the beginning of it. So during this 3½ years, what do people have to do? What do we have to do, brethren? What do people in the Millennium have to do? What do people in the Hundred-years have to do? "Keep our tongue from evil." Now, "to keep our tongue from evil," what is that really saying? Well, it's saying it's all about the mind. It all starts in the mind. Because what comes out of the tongue (the mouth) good or evil, either God's way or selfishness, we have to guard (keep) our tongue from it, which is our thoughts. We have to guard our mind. Now, we've been through a sermon series about personal responsibility, and it's all about this. It's all about the guarding of the tongue from evil, or guarding the mind from evil. Because if it's going on in the

mind it's going to come out across the tongue. So that's the first point. We are to guard our minds, as we have outlined in some sermons just back. This is the point.

So if we desire to have physical life during those 3½ years, people are going to have to learn to guard their tongue, they have to watch their thinking. And for us, brethren, members of the Body of Christ, we also desire this spirit life in the future, but also this life now, which is having God's living and dwelling in us. We have to guard our minds so that we can guard our tongues from evil. And that evil is ill will. To have evil towards somebody else is to have no love or lack of love, to not respond to God's spirit but to respond to selfishness. So we are to guard our minds.

And, point two, "Your lips from speaking guile," which is this deception...this deception. So "guile" is "falsehood," which is deceit, which is a lack of sincerity. Now, often people would say they are not deceitful, but the natural carnal mind *is* deceitful. Now, one way that we are deceitful and often we don't even see it within ourselves, is that when we tell a story or we paint a picture we only paint it the color that we see it and we don't give the whole picture. Somebody may say something about a situation or an environment and they'll only tell you an aspect of it. They don't tell you the whole truth. They may say, "Oh, woe is me," and all this side of the story, and the hearer is only hearing the one side, and therefore, they're making judgments or discernments based on what they are hearing from this one colored or one side of the picture. Because the person is not being open and honest. They're not being true in the sense of their being deceitful. They're not telling the whole story. They're not really putting what *they* have done into the picture, for example, they're just telling the other side of the story, the one color. This *not* giving the whole picture is actually "lips from speaking guile," which is deceit. It's *not* sincere, it's *not* open and honest. We're not seeing the *whole* picture, we're just seeing part of it.

So, brethren, this is the guarding that we need to do in our minds. If we're going to relay something we're best to make sure that we have put where we hold some guilt in a story or where we really sit in it. Are we living a double life? Are we just saying, "Oh, woe is me and this is my side of the story." But what about the other side of the story? What was *our* involvement in the story? So there's lots to this that we have to be on guard about, that if we *are* going to transfer information we need to make sure that our tongue is not pulling someone else down and painting the picture of somebody else that is wrong, we're imputing the motive on somebody else, but that our lips are only giving part of the story. We are *not* speaking honestly, we're not being really sincere, *open* and honest. That during this one year that we're now in, and during the last 3½ years, we, as members of the Body of Christ, need to keep our tongue from evil and we need to guard our lips from speaking deceit. We'd best not be speaking guile, which is not being sincere.

In the world, mankind, during this 3½ years, some are going to be called into this aspect of coming to "see" God, of learning to keep their tongue from evil, *not* desiring ill will on others, and to ensure that they are sincere, to speak the truth. Now, when we're sincere and speak the truth, guess what we are really doing, brethren? We are in a state of humility and we're in a state of repentance. We don't look out and just blame everybody else for things, we look at self and realize *we are the problem*.

I think I've mentioned before one time when somebody rang me up (and I'm sure they won't mind me mentioning it; I'm not going to mention names), but somebody rang me up and they were upset. Which I understood, they were upset about a particular situation, and they asked for some guidance or direction. And in the end, as a member of the Body of Christ, the only advice that I could give about a matter is a person needs to look at themselves because *they are the problem*. *We* are the problem, brethren, individually. It's *not* the other person.

Now, often when things happen in life, people will say, "Yeah, but this person said... and they did this.... and they did that!" Well, that's the wrong spirit, that's the wrong attitude, because the only thing that we can manage, the only thing that we can control is our attitude, is our self, the way we respond. So no matter what happens in life to us, it's not about what happens to us, it's *the way we respond*. It's *what* we do. It's what attitudes we take on, how we think out to others. And this is about "keeping our tongue from evil and your lips from speaking guile." We need to be on guard about *the way we think*.

So this is what people are going to be called to, brethren. They're going to have to *come* to this understanding. It's no use painting half the picture; they're going to have to come to see they need to paint it *all*...they need to paint it all. And the most important thing, when somebody is painting a picture, is when you want to look back and stand back and make a discernment about a matter, how much of *them* is *in* the picture being told? And *that's* a fair indication whether a person is having guile or deceit or falsehood. How much of *them*? How much of the guilt are *they* pointing to themselves, that *they* were responsible, *they* were the ones that added to the situation, because of either the way they behaved or the way they spoke *or* what they should have done and maybe what they shouldn't have done. So *that's* how a picture is painted.

Well, all too often in life, because of our own selfishness, we paint a picture that paints us looking good and the other person as looking bad. Where the reality is, if we're open and honest and sincere, we can look back and say, "Yes, *I* am the problem." *We* are the problem *individually*! Let's take personal responsibility for what we are, our selfishness, for the way we speak, what we think. Let's take responsibility for that.

Well, brethren, that's exactly what's going to take place in the 3½ years. People are going to be humbled to the point where they're going to take responsibility for *who they are*. Selfish. Trusting in self. And when they come to see that they're going to turn and seek God and they *will* live.

Now, how do we continue on with this, "Who desires to have this life?" **Verse 14**, point three: **Depart from evil and do good; Seek peace and pursue it**. So this is an incredible aspect during this period of time. Man's last days, they are to "depart from evil." Now, they're going to have this opportunity because of their humility because they're going to be *made* humble. Mankind is going to be humbled *all* for this point - departing from evil. Now, not everyone is going to do it. It's those that are *called* to "depart from evil and do good." Now, this is the complete opposite. This is very similar to the scripture that talks about you're not just to stop stealing; that's not enough. So a thief, "Stop stealing!" Well,

that's one aspect. But have they really changed? Because what's the opposite? To give! To give! Stop stealing; the opposite is now, learn to give. Stop taking, learn to give, to sacrifice self to give out to others. *That's* change. *That's* repentance. The same thing applies here, brethren. "Depart from evil," stop sinning, "*but* do good." What is "good?" The law is good. Remember David says in Psalm 119, "The Law is good. It's *perfect*. It's *upright*. God's ways are good." So, "Depart from selfishness and learn to live the thinking of God," is another way to do it.

"Seek peace!" Now, by nature we're not at peace. By nature we are competitive. We are *all* competitive! In many ways, we don't even understand, we *all* compete. Now, by nature, within God's Church, competition exists! Isn't that a shock or a horror? But guess what, within our minds competition exists! Now, when somebody is honored by God to a role of service, when we have negative thoughts about it, what is it? What's the *cause* of that? What's the cause of that spiritual problem within a person? The spirit of competition... the spirit of competition. It's *not* one of peace. It's one of competition because we're making these judgments, "Well, I don't think this person should be given this role of service. I don't believe this person should be an associate elder." Well, that's not seeking peace. That's not humility. That's *pride* and *competition*! Because we're lifting ourselves up *believing* that we know better than God. That's the first point. That we know better than God's apostle or God's prophets. So we're lifting ourselves up in pride and we're not seeking peace because peace is one of seeking unity, a unity of spirit.

So, brethren, *if* we are to desire long life, we're to seek peace on a spiritual level. How do we seek peace? To become at-one with God, to be in unity with God, God's Church, and God's thinking. To have the very mind of God is to have peace. I'll repeat that. To have the very mind of God is to have peace. Well, we're to seek it. So how do we seek peace? We seek peace by effort because it's the way we think. Peace comes from our thinking; it's the way we think towards others that provides peace.

The future for us, brethren, is peace when we enter Elohim. The thinking of God on a spiritual level, when we're changed at some point in time, that is peace. Well, at the moment we have to seek it, we have to work at it, and it's all going to be given by the power of God's holy spirit. Because without God's holy spirit, we cannot have peace. Absolutely impossible!

I know there's a saying that says whether a person is a peacekeeper or a *peacemaker*. So we are to "seek peace and pursue it!" We're to fight for it! It's a spiritual matter. So what is a "peacekeeper," and a "peacemaker?" A "peacekeeper" is somebody that keeps the peace. They will compromise. They will generally compromise to keep the peace. So if there's a disagreement of some type, the best way through it for the natural carnal mind is to be a peacekeeper, which means you keep the peace, which means we will compromise to not make a discernment. We will just try to work things out that keeps everybody happy. And it's not necessarily right or wrong, let's just keep everybody happy because we are now being a peacekeeper. Now, an example of that would be the United Nations where you have two particular tribes, maybe, or two nations arguing, or two groups arguing within a nation, the United Nations will send in *peacekeepers*. And the way they keep the peace is they put a dividing line often down the middle. Say, "Well, you go over that way, and you live your life the way you want to and you

don't change anything at all. You just stay as you are. And the other group, you go over that way (that part of the village or that part of the nation), you stay over there. We'll draw a line in the middle and we'll have some troops here wearing particular uniform to show that we are peacekeepers, and we'll try to keep the peace. And now and again you can shoot each other but we'll sort of make a ruling and another edict that you shouldn't be shooting each other and that you should be coming to a peaceful agreement," agreement to disagree, in other words. In other words, no change. Both hold their own integrity. Both kill each other. Well, that's not peace. So the peacekeepers try to keep the peace. They try to stop the fight. They try to stop the argument, but they don't go in and *make peace*.

Now, the way that a person makes peace is they're very decisive. They use God's word as their guide and they make peace. They make a decision. "You're right! You're wrong! These are the consequences." Or, "You're both wrong. These are the consequences!" So, or, "You're of the wrong spirit. This is what you need to do." That is making peace. They make it. Now, often peace has been made through death. If you want to have peace in particular environments the only solution is death for one person.

Well, brethren, we have to be very careful that we don't fall into the trap of becoming a peacekeeper by *not* making discernments or judgments based on God's word. But we are to *seek peace through* God's word, powered by God's holy spirit, and we're to pursue it. We are to *fight* for it! And we do this through? Becoming at one with God, being in unity with God and God's thinking, because God *is* peace. That's the way God is.

Well, coming up during this period of tribulation, we are, brethren, going to have to "seek peace," by *living* God's way of life. We're not going to be *peacekeepers*, we're going to be *peacemakers*. And we're going to make peace by living God's way of life, by allowing God's spirit to flow out from us to the benefit of others.

Verse 15—The eyes of the LORD *are* on the righteous, and His ears *are open* to their cry. Isn't this incredible encouragement, brethren. God is aware of us because God living in us makes us righteous. So God's eyes, God's attention, is drawn to us. God loves us. He won't abandon us. God is for us and God is willing to listen to us. "His ears," His attention is open to what we say, whether we cry out to God seeking more of His nature, His holy spirit, well, God says He's paying attention to us. *God* says that we are the apple of His eye. His attention is focused on us because we are His family. We are His sons. We are *begotten* sons of God. We are God's *Church*. God is focused on *us*, and we're only righteous because God lives and dwells in us, so God is working with us. God is patient. God is merciful. God has an outcome for us. He desires that we do a work. God desires that we do a work, *His work in us* and that we are part of the future through this 3½ years and on into the Millennium, whether we are part of God's Family or we are alive physically during the 3½ years and then physically into the Millennium. So God is paying attention to us now.

God is measuring the temple. His eyes are on us, the temple, and His ears are open to our cries. God wants to know what we are thinking, what decisions are we going to make. *Are* we going to yield to God's spirit by yielding to God? By fasting? By humbling ourselves as it has been outlined? Are we going

to do that? Or are we going to lift ourselves up in pride? Well, if we lift ourselves up in pride we're going to be cut off, we're going to cut ourselves off from God. So it is important that God stays with us by us yielding and desiring and crying out to God for support.

Well, this is exactly the same for those that are going to be awakened and called into a relationship with God before the end of man's last days. God is going to pay attention to them. He will open His ears; in other words, He'll listen to their cries. God knows what is best for us physically and spiritually. Well, God's attention's going to be on His people, those that He is working with as a witness (through the two witnesses and His Church), but also all of those that God is going to call into this relationship with Him during this period of man's last days, the end of 6,000 years of man's self-rule. It's an exciting time!

It is going to be very fearful for mankind, but we, brethren, should not have a fear. We should have no fear because God is concerned for us. He is aware of every aspect of our life, physically and spiritually.

Verse 16—The face of the LORD is against those who do evil. This is one of the keys of life. God will implement the blessings and cursing's in a person's life physically and spiritually. "The wages of sin is death." "The face," God's attention, what God considers and looks at, "He is *against* those who *do* (who practice) evil." They practice sin. The important part here is this doing of evil, which is this *practicing* of evil. Now, we, brethren, do not practice evil. Well, if we do, we'd best stop; we'd best repent. But God's Church doesn't practice evil. We do sin. We admit that. But it's because of our weakness, because of our desires, "the lust of the flesh, the pride of life," these things that are in us, our selfishness. We sin.

Well, God says that He's against sin, but He's not saying He's against *us*! He's actually *for* us, because in verse 15 God says He's purely focused on His people, those where He is dwelling, the temple of God, and He listens to what they say. Well, when we do stumble and fall, it's not that we practice evil or do evil in the sense of *practice* it, so God is not against us. But here it is, God is saying He "is against those who *practice* evil, that enjoy it, that are doing it and there is no repentance," because the key is repentance.

Now, this is exactly the same of what we face in the future. God will be against those that practice evil and are not willing to repent. **Verse 16**, half way through it again—**To cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.** Well, sin cuts us off from God. We can repent. But those that willingly set themselves to do evil, to practice evil, God says He's going to be against them. So what we face going forward is this very principle. "They will be cut off from remembrance from the face of the earth." They are going to die a death. *Anybody* that is not willing to humble themselves in a spiritual way *and* to repent, to cry out to God, will die. They will be cut off from the earth. Now, this has an implication during the last Hundred-years, this same principle will apply. Verse 15 and 16 will apply.

"The eyes of the LORD are on the righteous," those that God is working with, those that are repenting, "and His ears will be open to their cry." God will be there because He'll be pouring out His holy spirit,

"and the face of the LORD is going to be against those who *practice* evil," during the Hundred-years. And there will be people that practice evil during the Hundred-years, and the end result will be, "they will be cut off, the remembrance," or "a remembrance of them from the earth." They will face a second death because of their non-repentance. They're not willing to repent. Because this non-repentance, this non-willing to repent, *is* the unpardonable sin, which we have covered in a previous sermon.

Verse 17—*The righteous cry out, and the LORD hears, and delivers them out of all their trouble.*

Why? Because of forgiveness. So we, brethren, need to continue now during this period to continue to cry out to God, and He will hear us and He will deliver us out of all our troubles. Well, what is the trouble that we could enter? If we cry out in repentance, He will deliver us out of the trouble which is the penalty of sin, which is death. We'll be delivered. We'll be made righteous again. So God says He will deliver us by forgiveness of sin.

God will deliver those who repent by the forgiveness of sin. Now, we can look at this different ways. "The righteous," we know who's righteous, someone that God is dwelling *in*, living in. If they "cry out to God, He will hear." We understand that aspect, "and He will deliver them out of their troubles." Now, there can be physical troubles that God will allow us to live in for a period of time, all to bring us to spiritual repentance, all for the sake of desiring to forgive us, to forgive us of our sin. So the only way that man learns, the only way we learn is that we get ourselves in trouble through our choices.

Well, mankind is no different. In the period leading up to the time of the end, mankind is going to be *in trouble*, physically (and we know he's in spiritual trouble), but he's going to be in physical trouble, *deep physical trouble*. Well, God says that if a person was to cry out to Him that God would hear (and this "crying out" requires a calling, true humility). God says He will deliver them from their troubles. Now, that doesn't mean to say they're not going to suffer *physically*, because this physical suffering is actually *good* for mankind as it is *good* for us. Mankind does not "see" God the way that God's Church see's God because God *can* deliver us from our troubles when it is necessary, when it is best for us spiritually. Now, that takes us back to a very principle which says, "All things work to the good of those who love God and keep His Commandments." So, "*All things work to the good.*" It's the *spiritual good*. So we can stay in physical troubles all for the point of being delivered on a spiritual level. Physical troubles are not the issue, it's *how* we respond. It's *how* we live our life.

So if we learn the lessons, we humble ourselves and repent, God says that we may stay in those physical situations, those physical difficulties, but it's the *best* thing for us *spiritually* because it keeps us, one, in humility, it keeps us seeking God, seeking good, and removing ourselves from evil because of the stress of physical trials. So this is all about being forgiven. If we cry out to God, if those that are called to a relationship with God in this next 4½ years that we are facing, if they are called by God to this relationship and they cry out to God in humility—*genuine* humility—God says that He will deliver them from their *spiritual* troubles, which is forgiveness of sin. Because *that's* the real trouble within mankind, it's unrepented sin. Repenting of sin is being delivered of trouble. So this forgiveness is available to all mankind based on their repentance, based on, first, a calling to have this relationship with God.

Verse 18—The LORD is near to those who have a broken heart, which is this humility, and saves such as have a contrite spirit. This is about an attitude. So for the nations of Israel and those that dwell in them that are called to repentance, God will be near those that are willing to humble themselves if they're called to it. If they are willing to humble themselves and *admit they are wrong, admit* their selfishness, *admit* their self-reliance, *and* God will save them if they have this contrite spirit, this attitude, one of lowering the self, not relying on self but turning, turning to rely on God and not on what they may or may not have (their own family, wealth, whatever it is).

Well, for us, brethren, it's the same spiritual principle. God is near to us who have a humble spirit because we understand having this humble spirit is the *key* to repentance. Having this humble spirit is the *key* to remaining with God and having God and Jesus Christ live and dwell in us. Humility is the key to life. *Humility* is the key to life.

Now, when we understand humility, we understand we come to "see" ourselves as we really are. Well a problem within mankind's thinking, his own selfishness, that mankind can think he's really humble, but he's not. And even within the Body of Christ, the Church of God, we may think at times we're quite humble, but compared to God, we're not. We still have pride. Every human within the Body of Christ, the Church of God has an element or an aspect or a degree of pride. Pride is our greatest enemy. Pride is mankind's greatest enemy. And mankind will be humbled for the purpose of getting rid of pride.

Well, God's Church needs to *remain* humble, to get rid of pride, which is getting rid of our greatest enemy. God says He will save those who have this contrite spirit, this lowering of self, this attitude of not considering one's self better than others, to know one's own true spiritual condition. Well, God says He will save us.

Well, mankind is going to face this. Those that are given this opportunity to humble themselves with a right attitude, with a contrite spirit, God says He will use them to save them, to live on into the Millennium, but He will also in the future, on a spiritual level, if they have this broken heart, this spiritual humility, God says He will save them, which is to give them life. God living and dwelling in them is the process of being saved, which is what *we* are on, brethren. We are on this path of being saved because we have God the Father and Jesus Christ, God's holy spirit living and dwelling in us—is the process of being saved—and at some point in time we *will* be saved, because that's a promise of God *if* we endure to the end.

Verse 19—Many are the afflictions of the righteous: "Many are the tests and trials of the righteous." Well, we face a time when God is going to be calling and drawing many thousands, millions of people into a relationship with Him, and it's all going to be done through this "many trials," these "afflictions," these "tests and trials." And through these God says that He will live and dwell in them and this is what makes them righteous. As they begin to take on the very mind of God, they have a degree of righteousness. It's God living and dwelling in us that makes us righteous. Of and by ourselves, we're selfish, so God in us is what makes us righteous. Well, we have this potential, brethren, going forward, that we're going to have trials and tests and we're going to have many of them because of God living

and dwelling in us because God is developing holy, righteous character in us. And the *only* way to work with mankind is through tests and trials, which is keeping them humble.

So we have to choose a humble spirit. We have to choose to judge ourselves. And God says He'll be with us and He will, at one point in time, bring us to salvation.

Again, **verse 19—Many the afflictions of the righteous, but the LORD (Yahweh Elohim) delivers him out of them all.** So we'll have these tests and trials, and with this wisdom and understanding that we have of what God is doing in our life, we will be delivered out of them all. Everything physical in the way of a test or a trial is just that. It's physical. It's temporary, and it passes in time. The reality is that all physical tests and trials have a spiritual component, and that is something that we have come to understand within God's Church. Mankind doesn't understand this, but there's going to be many that are going to be called to come to understand this, that it is through these physical tests and trials, that God will deliver us out of them all, because it's all about a *spiritual* outcome. It's a spiritual outcome. God delivers us by giving us the understanding and the wisdom of the trial. We "see" what is really happening. "*All things, all things, work to the good,*" no matter what it is, "to the spiritual good of those that love God." Now, to love God requires God's holy spirit.

So somebody that is called and is converting and has God's holy spirit living and dwelling in them is going to face tests and trials, but God says He will deliver us through those tests and trials all for a spiritual outcome. Now, we're delivered because we *understand* why the trial. We understand what is happening. We have the spiritual understanding of it. "I'm in this trial for this particular reason—*for my good, for my spiritual good, because I'm developing the mind of God.*" So we, brethren, can apply this principle to ourselves now as we go forward. Well, mankind will come to "see" this, that their tests and trials are for *their good* because it's going to deliver them into the Millennium or it's going to deliver them into true life, which is to have God the Father and Jesus Christ *live* and dwell in them by the power of God's holy spirit. So God will deliver all of us out of these trials by giving us spiritual understanding of the trial, the "why" of the trial. And we understand the "why" of *all* trials, all physical trials have a spiritual component, and the element of it is that we come to understand "why" the trial. It's for our good, for our spiritual good.

Verse 20—He guards all the bones; not one of them is broken. What's that saying? Well, that's saying we are delivered by repentance. God will look after us on a spiritual level as long as we continue to repent. And nothing will happen to us on a spiritual level as long as we remain humble and in a state of repentance. It's the same for those that are called to seek God in the future.

Verse 21—Evil shall slay the wicked, so this "unrepented sin will slay the wicked," **and those who hate the righteous shall be condemned.** So anybody that is going to turn against God's Church, they face an outcome. So those that hate us, those that don't love God or love God's way, don't love God's people, shall be judged. Now, there's going to be many that "hate the righteous" during this last period of man's self-rule. Many that are going to hate God's way. They're going to reject it. Well, they're going to be held accountable for it.

Verse 22—The LORD redeems, which is "purchases," the life of His servants, and none of those who trust in Him shall be condemned. Isn't that a wonderful scripture! Yahweh Elohim *has* redeemed us. He has "redeemed the life of His servants." We are His servants if we are yielding to Him. So our life belongs to God, and we have been purchased by the Passover sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and He will save us, His servants, God's servants, because we're yielding, because we're humbling ourselves, and because we're repenting. "And none of those who trust in Him," none of us, brethren, that trust in God to deliver us on a spiritual level will be condemned. We won't be held and found guilty. The guilt of sin has been paid for.

So we, brethren, will not be held as being judged guilty, because of our repentance, because we trust in God, we trust in what God has done for us, that God has promised to forgive us our sins *if* we repent and if we are willing to forgive others. We hold no ill will to others.

So the tribulation that we are now facing is about humility, about mankind being humbled, *all* for the purpose of repentance, so that mankind will, "Seek God and live." They have that potential physically *and* spiritually, which really is a sign of God's great mercy towards mankind.

Psalm 97. I know I've got you holding in Amos, but I don't think today we're going to get back to Amos. So if you've lost your place in Amos it may be alright today. Psalm 97:9. Again, we're looking at this from the point of a period of time we are in, this final 4½ years, and in particular, the last 3½ years, because it is so important that we focus now on *this* time. And what God is having us do is to consider ourselves, to get our own thoughts, words, and actions in order so that we can help others. Because we can only help others, brethren, if we have God's holy spirit living and dwelling in us.

Psalm 97:9—For You, talking about Yahweh Elohim, For You LORD, *are* most high above all the earth; You are exalted far above all gods. So above everything else that is there. God *is* going to be exalted by us, brethren, because of the way we live, by God's holy spirit living and dwelling in us. "God is going to be exalted far above all other gods," all the gods of the false religions, all the gods of the Church that is scattered, because they don't worship the One True God, Yahweh Elohim. The Catholic church and the trinity... Well, God's going to bring all of that down and He is going to be exalted high above all of them because there is only *One True God*, and God is going to *reveal* Himself more to mankind.

As we know, the 7th Thunder, what it's about, it's about "the growing revelation of God," Yahweh Elohim, the One True God. Well, this is going to be magnified during the last 3½ years. It's going to be so exciting to see! Because, "God is going to be exalted *far above* everything else that man trusts in as his god." *Everything else* is going to be *brought down low* because God *is* all mighty. God *is* all powerful.

Verse 10—You who love the LORD, which is us, brethren, hate evil! So we're to hate sin. We're to think no sin. We're to think no evil. We're to have no ill will to others. Now, this is one of the dangers that we face. Because of what's happening and the distress on mankind it is *natural* to show favoritism. It's natural. Well, we're to turn to God and we're to seek God's life in us, and we're to learn to hate this evil. We're to hate sin within ourselves. **He preserves the lives of His saints,** which God has said He

will do. **He delivers them out of the hand of the wicked.** Which God says He will do. Now, this can often be misconstrued, to talk about something on a physical level. It's not necessarily a promise about being delivered on a physical level. Although God offers us a level of protection, it's more about something that is spiritual. God will deliver our spirit life, of His saints, because it's God's spirit living and dwelling in us. He will preserve us for the point of entering Elohim at a point in time. "He will deliver us out of the hand of the wicked," out of *Satan's* grasp because we are yielding in humility and repentance to God. So we will be delivered "out of the hand of the wicked." Well, who's the main wicked? We can know that it's mankind and mankind's thinking, but this also can refer to Satan and his demons. We can be delivered out of the hand, out of the control of Satan and his demons, by humility and repentance.

If we say we love God we'll be keeping His Commandments. We are to hate evil within ourselves. He *will* preserve our life, the called out ones of His saints, and He *will* deliver us out of the hand of the wicked, out of the hand of Satan, out of the control of Satan.

We understand where we are in time now and what God has asked us to do. We are to humble ourselves for the point of repentance because this humility is the key to living Godly during the last 3½ year of man's self-rule. Because without humility, what have we got? We have pride. And what does it say that God is going to do with those that are proud during the last 3½ years? The tribulation is coming *on the proud*. God is going to destroy *the proud*. He's going to humble them.

Well, we, brethren, have this opportunity now, during this last one year of the measuring of the temple, to show to God, to reveal to God *our desire* to humble ourselves, to be repentant *all* for the purpose of living God's way of life during the last 3½ years, to live love, to understand that it is God that is going to do the work in us to the benefit of those that God calls into a relationship with Him. But we can look forward to living, to *doing a work* during the final 3½ years. How exciting is this? How exciting is God's plan!

Well, brethren, I'll stop the sermon here. We didn't get as far as planned, but that's good in one way because it knows there's definitely a *Part 3*, and possibly a *Part 4*, and we'll continue down this path about what we need to do, brethren, with regards to how we should live our life during this next 4½ years.□