

The title of today's sermon is *Man's Last Days*, and this will be *Part 4*.

The purpose of this sermon series is to review what we know about mankind's last days under Satan's influence. We are living in the end of man's self-rule of 6,000 years, and it is now drawing to an end rapidly. This 6,000 years of man's self-rule has been influenced by Satan and His demons.

We have looked at one aspect of our role as members of the Body of Christ, the Church of God during these end days. Our role is based on humility and repentance. If we live humility and repentance we *will live*, and it's something on a *spiritual* level. If we live in pride and selfishness, we will die, and it's something, also, on a spiritual level. This principle applies to mankind as we enter this last period of man's self-rule. If they live in humility, if they humble themselves after being humbled and they repent, they repent of *what* they are, of *what* they are given to "see" (against themselves, about themselves, "O wretched man that I am"), if they begin this process, they will live physically into the Millennium and have that opportunity to live, entering Elohim according to God's will. But if they live in their pride, if they remain unrepentant and they live in their selfishness, they will die.

There are millions of people that are simply just going to die and are not going to have the opportunity to have been called during this time, but there is a percentage that God has said He will call and He will allow them to live into the Millennium, all for the purpose of having life, spiritual life, because they'll have that opportunity to enter into a relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ.

God has kept His word with regards to the statements that we've been reading in Leviticus 26. The statements listed in Leviticus 26 have and will continue in Israel while they continue to disobey God. We are now living these penalties for sin, and we can see that all around us. We are affected because of sin. Because the blessings and cursing's chapter that is listed in Deuteronomy, and also here in Leviticus, has cause and effect. So this same principle of blessings for obedience and cursing's for disobedience will continue to apply to mankind. So we're going to now pick it up straight away in Leviticus 26, and we're going to backtrack a little to verse 18.

Leviticus 26:18—And after all this, if you do not obey Me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins. So this punishment is out of love because it is about bringing the thinking of mankind to submit, to yield to God.

Verse 19—I will break the pride of your power; I will make your heavens like iron and your earth like bronze. So this is a physical matter that is going to affect them, which is disobedience will cause an effect, and that effect is suffering. And the outcome of all this would be there is going to be drought, and because of this rebellion God will not bless them with the weather conditions that would be able to produce food. So this disobedience is going to cause drought and famine.

Now we'll pick it up in **verse 20—And your strength**, and this is "the hard work, the effort in trying to produce food," **shall be spent in vain**. So no matter what they do, they go out and they can work hard and they can put their crops in, they can do all that, but it's all going to be in vain. It's going to be a worthless waste of time because of their rebellion, their disobedience to God. Why? ...**for your land shall not yield its produce, nor shall the trees of the land yield their fruit**. That's because of this disobedience. This is because of this habit of disobedience that now is rampant within mankind.

So we're going to see that crops *are* going to fail more and more (as they have been for many a year), but it's just going to get worse and worse and there's going to be a food shortage for mankind because of his rebellion.

Verse 21—Then, so this is now God saying, **if you walk contrary to Me**, or "if you *still* walk contrary to Me," because man has walked contrary to God and Israel, who had that opportunity to be educated by God, they chose, based on their natural carnal mind, to not obey God. Because if they had of obeyed God, God said, "I will make you My special people, a special nation," and that God would be their God and He would look after them. But, Israel chose not to obey God. Well, the same principle applies here today. If anybody walks contrary to God, **and are not willing to obey Me**, not willing to obey God, **I will bring on you seven times more plagues, according to your sins**. So here it is, God is saying that sickness and disease (or plagues) are going to come upon Israel because of this walking contrary to God.

Well, if they were willing to obey God, God says that He would *not* bring these plagues, the suffering that is connected to plagues on them. Well, it's going to happen, and as we see today in today's society in Israel that we do have various plagues. And they are just not only sickness or illness or disease, there is many other aspects of plagues. And they can be plagues of drought. There can be plagues of various insects. There's many a type of plague that is come upon the modern day nations of Israel.

Verse 22—I will also send wild beasts among you, which shall rob you of your children, destroy your livestock, and make you few in number; and your highways shall be desolate. In other words, there is going to be effects on people and on particularly there's going to be effects on children and on animal, animal livestock, which is about prosperity. Your prosperity will be taken away from you, and it's going to be so bad that in the end the very highways that have been built, there won't be people travelling to and fro on them because of the various plagues and because of all the disease, and because of the various aspects, which are all connected to suffering and death. There's going to be death, and in the end there's not going to be the people to drive the vehicles and there's not going to be the people that are going to be there to occupy the very highways. And the movement of mankind around society is going to stop because of it.

Mankind will always fight and strive to keep things going, but in the end when a person walks contrary to God and they're not willing to obey God the outcome is that there is going to be great suffering. Because it's a law that God has put in place, blessings for obedience, and cursing's (or suffering) for disobedience.

Verse 23—And if by these things, "if *still* you won't obey Me," you are not reformed by Me, but walk contrary to Me, so if Israel doesn't repent and change, I also will walk contrary to you, and I will punish you yet seven times for your sins. And I will bring a sword against you, which is talking about war and destruction and death, that will execute the vengeance (or the penalty) of the covenant, of the agreement that was made. Now, the agreement was blessings for obedience and suffering for disobedience.

Continuing on, **verse 25...when you are gathered together within your cities I will send pestilence among you.** Now, we can see this taking place in today's society. We can see various aspects of disease that have taken hold in various countries. Well, there's coming a time when these pestilence or these diseases or these illnesses are going to enter the cities of Israel. And because of the way the cities have been built, which is "house on house," which is person on top of person, which is close proximity to one another all the time, God is saying, "I will send pestilence among you," and the outcome... **and you shall be delivered into the hand of the enemy.**

So because of this pestilence they're going to become sick and ill and in the end they're not going to have the strength to defend themselves because of the fact that there is few left in number and there's illness within a particular area.

Well, this can also apply to the fact that mankind is now held in bondage because of his disobedience. He is held in a bondage, which is in the mind. He is now held captive in his thinking. And there is great pestilence and disease and it's all in the mind. Man's mind is diseased. It doesn't even use logic, practical logic. When you look at the human body, and God says He made the body and He put up various things that could enter as fuel for the body, yet mankind ignores these things and eats anything. His mind is distorted. He *thinks* he knows what 's best for him.

I remember many a time Mr. Armstrong said, "Well, if you make a car and the designer said, 'Put petrol in the car and the car will work,' well, you don't go and put water in the car, because it won't work." Well, it's the same for the human body. God has set laws aside that says that, "This is how you fuel a body." Well, the body carries the mind, and therefore, if the body becomes sick, the mind cannot function clearly. Well, man's bodies are sick. They are broken down and diseased, full of chemicals these days. There are very few human bodies that are not full of chemicals of one type or another. Humans in their wisdom sit in cars, drive around in traffic, and the billions of tonnes of pollution that comes out of the back of a vehicle, any type of motor vehicle, whether petrol or diesel, it pours out millions of microscopic particles. And yet people sit in their cars and consume these particles in their breathing. But they'll sit there in traffic for three or four hours sucking in petrol fumes or diesel fumes. Man is just polluted, the body is polluted, the body is breaking down because of what man has designed under the influence and the sway of Satan. Because we are captured, we are in this Babylonian system, the system of confusion.

Well, God says here that He's going to intervene into the life of mankind *because* of their disobedience, and things will just get worse and worse and worse.

Continuing on here ...and you will be delivered into the hands of your enemies. When I have cut off your supply of bread, so food is going to become less and less available to mankind, ten women shall bake your bread in one oven, so what it's saying here is ten people will collect enough to make bread, to bake it, and they shall bring back your bread by weight, so it's going to be allocated back based on what was given. Ten people collect enough food just to bake one loaf of bread, and you shall eat and not be satisfied. So what's going to happen is people are going to be starving to death because of a lack of food. There's only going to be enough food for one in ten. So although they'll allocate back trying to keep everybody alive, the reality is they'll never be satisfied doing that. And what happens with human nature? If there is only enough bread for one person and you try to share it with ten, well, that only lasts for so long and someone will get the idea that they want more for themselves, and therefore, that will cause stress and distress, and people will turn on each other all because of food. Because no one is going to be satisfied in this time.

Verse 27—And after all this, if you do not obey Me, but walk contrary to Me, so, "If you continue to live based on your own thinking of what is right and wrong," which is what mankind has done (**verse 28**) **then I, which is talking about God, Yahweh Elohim, also will walk contrary to you in fury; and I, even I, will chastise you seven times for your sins.** It's going to get worse and worse and worse, because God is going to humble mankind, God is going to correct mankind all for the purpose of bringing them to repentance. Because we've seen in a previous sermon that humility and repentance are connected. Now, this applies, brethren, to us in the Church. During this "Year of Dedication" we, brethren, have been asked by God to humble ourselves all for the purpose of repentance, because there is no point in going to fast or fasting without repentance, because fasting is really "going without food." But a spiritual fast is one where we humble ourselves, we come to see we don't rely on physical things to survive, and we come to see how weak and pathetic we really are, because it doesn't take long without food where we begin to suffer and we begin to see our true condition. We're not very strong of and by ourselves; we're actually weak. Well, humbling ourselves physically is all directed toward something that is spiritual. So there's no point going without food for 24 hours if there is not a level of spiritual repentance, otherwise it's just going without food, adds no value.

God looks at the heart, so He looks at "why" we are fasting, "why" are we humbling. We're humbling ourselves for the point of this spiritual mirror, of looking into God's word for the purpose of repentance. We desire to draw closer to God so that we can think more like God, we can repent of the sin. There are things that capture us, things that have captured us, which all are in the mind, which is all in our thinking. We are to repent of the way we think, because we think selfishly, and there's many a thing in our life, based on pride and selfishness, we just think wrongly. We *do* think the wrong way. So we desire, by humbling ourselves, we desire to think like God. We desire to cast away the bondage we have others held in, which is all done within our thinking. It's not something physical; it's something spiritual.

Verse 29—You shall eat the flesh of your sons, and you shall eat the flesh of your daughters. Well, this is referring to something that is physical where Israel will become so short of food that people

would turn to cannibalism, that they would actually start to eat one another because of this food shortage.

Well, on a spiritual level, brethren, we have to be very careful that we don't destroy our sons and our daughters by the way we live, by what we do on a spiritual level. Because we are wrong examples and we can destroy them (which is the same thing as "eat the flesh of your sons and your daughters," which is based on starvation). Well, we have to be very careful that we set the right example. So by setting the right example they will see the way to live. And if there was only enough bread for one person out of the ten, we would be willing to give it up for them; we would be willing to sacrifice the self for them. And therefore, the other way, and we were selfish, we would be destroying our own flesh, because of our selfishness, by being this wrong example. As members of the Body of Christ we need to be very careful of the example we set so that others can see, and at some point in time they will glorify God.

Verse 30—I will destroy your high places, which is talking about false religion, **cut down your incense altars, and cast your carcasses (your bodies) on the lifeless forms of your idols,** so this is about the destruction of false religion.

Now, during this time that is coming mankind (because of the way he thinks) is going to turn to their gods. And we've covered this in the last sermon, where mankind, when they are distressed, they turn to their gods. Well, God is saying He's going to bring this all down. And we know that Jesus Christ's intervention into mankind's life on the day of Pentecost, at the start of the day of Pentecost in 2019, will bring about the end of this false religious system. But up until that time, false religion is going to continue. People will turn to their idols, what they have been brought up with. And it's going to require a calling by God to come out of this false religion. God is saying that He is going to "cast their bodies onto the lifeless forms of their idols." Well, as people turn to their false religion they're going to die. They're going to die in their false religion. False religion and their statutes and structures will be destroyed. What mankind looks to and trusts in will be destroyed. Mankind will be humbled so that they will learn to look to God as and for their strength.

Now *this*, brethren, is something that is going to be quite mighty on the earth because when you look at the false religions of the world, people do not know they are worshipping Satan in a false system. They just simply don't know. I know that I was brought up as a catholic, and at a particular age I rebelled against what I had been taught as a child, and when I was actually first called the first thing that I did, I actually turned (believing that I was right in my own eyes), I turned to my religion, the Catholic church. But God soon showed me through various things that the Catholic church was actually false. Well, these religions, the Catholic church, all of the Protestant church, the Muslim religion, Hindu's, the Buddhists, Judaism is going to be destroyed. And a lot of this takes place in the process of 3½ years where we're going to see the downfall of many of the religions. Now, we understand that the Catholic church will have a quite dominant part of the united Europe at some point, but that, too, will

come to its end. And God says that everyone is going to be destroyed that hangs on to false religion, hangs on to their idols.

Verse 30, it continues...and **My soul**, or "My thinking," **shall abhor** (loathe, reject) **you**. So God says that if we depend on something else, if we look to something else for our security and we don't look to trust in God, we will be destroyed as well. So, brethren, we have been called for a purpose. We have been called to do a great work. We have been called to dedicate ourselves in this one year, a "Year of Dedication," on a *spiritual level* so that we *can* do the work, the work of God. And *part* of that work of God is standing firm and trusting in God and *living* God's way of life out to the benefit of others.

Now, we understand that as false religion is brought down there is going to be a time of great distress. And it does take time for it to be "laid waste." Hold your place there and turn to **Revelation 17:1**. We understand that Babylon is about confusion. If you look at all the religions of the world, it *is* a world of confusion. **Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and talked with me, saying to me, Come, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot...** Now, this is about Babylonian system, a religious system, which is one of confusion, **who sits on many waters...** Now, we understand that this "great harlot" is about Babylon, confusion as far as spiritual confusion, which is pointing to the Catholic church, "and sits on many nations," or "many waters."

Verse 2...with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication... Well, this is to do with an unlawful relationship. So this is about political compromise, deals. So there are deals done between the "kings of the earth," which are the nations of the earth, and false religion. **...and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication.** So this is about relationships that are promoted by the power of the Catholic church, about the power of false doctrines and the influence that the Catholic church has had over "the kings of the earth," or other nations.

So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness. And I saw a woman, which is a "church," **sitting on a scarlet beast which was full of names of blasphemy**, which is the use of God's name. So somebody here is using God's name, calling themselves "of God," or indicating they are "of God," **and having seven heads and ten horns**. Well, we understand this is about the final revival of the Roman Empire, which is this final ten nations that will come together. There's going to be ten horns. **The woman**, which is talking about "false church" or Babylon, the system (which Satan is the head of), **was arrayed with purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, and having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations**. Well, these "abominations" are "things that are against God." Now, God says because of these things, because of this abomination, **and the filthiness of her fornication**, because of these unlawful relationships, because of this sun worship, Easter, Christmas, all of this confusion, this religious confusion, God is going to destroy it. He's going to bring it down *because* they are against God. They rely on something different. They rely on themselves, but they also rely on Satan and Satan's influence.

Verse 5—And on her forehead a name was written. So in the forehead, of course, it's referring to the thinking, it's the way somebody thinks. **MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS**, so this "Mystery, Babylon," which is this confusion...it's about the confusion of Satan's way of thinking.

Now, the Catholic church is an instigator of this, but the protestant churches are also part of that system. Well, there are also many other false religions that worship *their* god (not the true God), the way that they see. Some worship on a Friday, some on different days of the week. Well, everybody that has this "Mystery, Babylon," this confusion, this religious confusion, which is this religious *power* that they have in their *thinking*, is going to be brought down. So **MYSTERY, BABYLON**, this confusion, **BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER**, she's the instigator **OF HARLOTS**, which are all the other religions that have come out from this particular church, **AND THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH**. So this confusion that has been promoted around the earth, she, the mother, which is all about Satan's ways, because the churches of the world *are of* Satan, they are of Satan's ways.

And I saw the woman, which is this false system, this Babylonian system, **drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of martyrs**, which are somebody that has been a witness by the way that they live, **of Jesus Christ**. Well, that's what we are, brethren. We have to be "saints." We are followers or witnesses of Jesus Christ. **And I saw her, and I marveled with great amazement**. So we see there that there is going to be this time of destruction that is coming. This "Mother of Harlots" is going to be brought down and this whole system, this Babylonian system of world confusion about religion is going to be brought down.

We understand that Satan is the author of this Babylonian system. Babylon is a way of thinking. Babylon is a way of thinking. So it not only applies to the Catholic church, it applies to *all* religious confusion. Now, we understand that there is only one true Church. Now, the Churches that are scattered are now affected by this Babylonian system, this confusion in the way of thinking because they don't have God's holy spirit they can only think one way, which is one of confusion.

Now, when you look at all the different scattered Churches, which is probably over 500 now or more, well, we realize that they don't think the same. They are in confusion. No two agree, because if two agreed, they'd walk together. Well, they don't agree, therefore, they can't walk together. Well, they also don't agree with God, because if they agreed with God they would be walking with God, they'd be part of the Body of Christ, the Church of God.

So here we have this confusion that's not only in the world, but it's in the Churches of God that are scattered and remain scattered today because they walk in this Babylonian system which is one of confusion. They have aspects of the truth—they don't have the truth anymore because you can either be going one way or the other and they have been going the other way. They have been *losing* the understanding of truth. Because truth can only be lived, truth can only be understood by the power of God's holy spirit.

So during this time of this religious confusion being brought down, it's going to be quite distressful for mankind, because mankind is in a state of religious confusion in his thinking, and he believes he's right. He's right in his own eyes, otherwise he'd change and join someone else.

Well, we understand, brethren, the only way to survive what is ahead of mankind is a form of humbling and then repentance. And they're going to *turn* to God. And God has been saying through this blessings and cursing's chapter that He's going to turn even more so. He's going to be against those that hold onto their idols. And their idols are what they set up before them; it's those things they trust in, those things they look to, no matter what it is. And can be money, it can be security systems, it can be alarm systems, it can be anything. Well, all of those things are going to be brought down and destroyed.

There's a program that's on TV now. Many of you would have seen it and possibly watched aspects of it, which is called, "Doomsday Preppers." And there are some very interesting characters that are in those programs and a lot of people have within their thinking the need to save the self. It's not about turning to God and looking to God as our provider, our protector, our high strength, our tower. It's not about that. This is about self-protection. So the "Doomsday Preppers," many of them will have guns, they'll have stored up lots of food, they'll have dug holes, they'll have "bug-outs," they'll have different places to run. And they've got all these different systems and they've got all these different types of food stores. Well, they're all looking to save the self. Well, none of it's going to be of *any* value whatsoever, because the only way to survive what is ahead is to turn to God. And that's what God is saying, "Turn to Me. Look to Me and *I* will provide for you. I will protect you." But mankind, unless called, cannot see it and cannot turn to God. So many of them at some point will run out of food and many of them *will* turn to *their* God, and it does require the fact that God has actually called them to be able to "see."

Well, that's where we come in, brethren. This is our role. This is *our* part in what God is doing. We are required to be an example for God, and an example *of* God and live God's way of life. We are to be bearing the fruit of God's holy spirit out to the benefit of others. And it's going to be difficult. It's going to be quite difficult physically, but on a spiritual level, because of this "Year of Dedication," this year of humbling and repenting, we will be so much stronger on a spiritual level. And that's the key, to be spiritually strong. It's not about the physical; it's about the spiritual.

Well, these blessings and cursing's are based on Israel, on a physical level, for their disobedience or their obedience. And we understand that Israel has disobeyed God, and therefore, all of these penalties, all this *suffering* is coming on them.

[Leviticus 26] Verse 31—I will lay your cities waste and bring your sanctuaries, which are "places of false worship," to desolation, I will not smell the fragrance of your sweet aromas. So whatever is offered up to God, they believe they're offering it up to the true God, but whatever they're offering up is going to be meaningless. God is not going to look at those things, which is to "smell their aroma's," which is there is no satisfaction to God in turning to false religion, in putting up more idols, in worshipping on Sunday and all these different things they're going to do, but He's going to lay their cities waste, and He's going to bring down all these places of false worship.

And this is going to be an exciting day, when we start to see the destruction of all of the buildings of false religion because they're of no value. All of those things they have, all the statues, all the crosses, all those things are a worthless thing. They are a vanity.

Verse 32—I will, this is talking about God, I will bring the land to desolation, and your enemies who dwell in it shall be astonished, they'll be *amazed* at what is happening to Israel, and they'll be astonished at it. They'll be astonished at the destruction of Israel.

Verse 33—I will scatter you among the nations and draw out a sword after you, so after this captivity there will be more destruction and more death, your land shall be desolate and your cities waste. Then the land shall enjoy its sabbaths so long as it lies desolate and you *are* in your enemies' land; then the land shall rest and enjoy its sabbath. Because God had commanded to Israel to rest this land every seven years, and Israel had rejected that command of God and they weren't resting the lands. And that's what's happening today. People don't rest the lands. They just continue to use the one piece of land and suck all of the goodness out of it. It never gets a chance to rejuvenate and have a rest. Instead, man will pour out more chemicals, more chemicals, more chemicals to keep the land productive.

Verse 35—So as long as *it* lies desolate it shall rest—Well, God's saying, "Well, there's one good thing out of this destruction and the fact there's no humans left to work the land (not many anyway), that the land, at least, will get its rest."**...for the time it did not rest on your sabbaths when you dwelt in it.** "Because you occupied this land, you abused the land, you didn't listen to My word, you didn't follow My instructions, you didn't give the land its rest so that it could rejuvenate," and that God would prosper and bless the land and bless you because of it. "Well, you rejected everything I said about it," God says, "therefore, you're going to be destroyed. And if I destroy you, at least the land will get its rest."

Verse 36—And as for those of you who are left, I will send faintness into their heart, so this is that fear in the mind, no security, no peace of mind. Because as we see more and more people around us dying, and if you look at what God is saying, about 90% that are going to die, can we imagine the faintness in the heart of mankind? Not knowing what is going on, seeing the death and destruction, having no one that is going to be looking after *anybody*, because the politics will soon collapse, military will soon collapse, and the land will be left desolate, there will be no food, everyone will be hungry, therefore, anyone that is left, God is saying they're going to have this great fear in the mind. And that fear is, "How will *I* survive? *How* will I survive?" And that's the key, which is, "How will *I* survive?" Well, when mankind gets to that point, when they realize that from a calling from God, that they begin to "see" themselves, they realize they can only survive based on God's will. And if they turn to God and reject their idols, reject what they trust in, God says they can live.

So verse 36 again: **And as for those of you who are left, I will send faintness into their hearts; in the lands of their enemies; the sound of a shaken leaf shall cause them to flee; so this great fear.** It's just dread and fear and spooking at things. **...they shall flee as though fleeing from a sword, and they shall fall when no one pursues.** Because of this great fear they're going to be working things up in the mind and become fearful of things that don't even exist.

Verse 37—They shall stumble over one another, as it were a sword, when no one pursues, so people are going to react to things when actually that's not what's happening. But people will react to it because they're thinking about it so much and there is so much fear that they'll anticipate it and they'll spook at it but it's not actually happening, it's not actually there. ...and you shall have no power to stand before your enemies. So they're going to be in a state of confusion, of destruction, and of fear, so much so that they're not going to have any ability to organize any type of defense.

Verse 38—You shall perish among the nations, and the land of your enemies shall eat you up. And those of you who are left shall waste away in their iniquity in their enemies' lands. Because of the sins of Israel they were going to be taken captive and they *were* going to be humbled and destroyed. Well, we understand that this has already happened in the physical sense, and now we're facing this time where these penalties are coming on Israel again. **...also in their fathers' iniquities, which are with them, they shall waste away.**

Verse 40—But if, now, this is the opposite, this is what's required, But if they confess their iniquity, if they are humbling themselves, repent, and admit to their personal sins, and the iniquity of their fathers... In other words, "Oh, I was brought up with false religion. My fathers were wrong. They lived in sin," admit they were, as a nation, wrong, admit they, as a nation, have sinned; they haven't turned to God at all, so if an individual was to confess their sins and admit where their heritage comes from, that it's all wrong, that their false religion, that they've lived in Babylon, that their parents lived in Babylon, **with their unfaithfulness in which they were unfaithful to Me.** So this is that admission of sin, this admission of being wrong, "Oh, I was wrong. The religion I was in was wrong." "The Catholic church that I was in was wrong." "The protestant church that I was in was wrong." "As a Muslim, I was wrong." "As a Hindu, I was wrong." No matter what religion it is. "As a Jewish person following the Jewish laws, I was wrong." **...and that they also have walked contrary to Me,** so it's about admitting sin, admitting there is no relationship with God, they were worshipping a false god and have walked contrary to God.

Now, this applies to the Churches that are scattered. They *also* have to admit their sin and that they have been unfaithful, that they have been unfaithful to God and have walked contrary to God. They have to repent. "But if they confess their sin," well, they have to do that to live. Now, we understand that God is going to give an opportunity, and He's going to awaken 63,000 that are going to have that opportunity and that potential to live, on a spiritual level by having God's holy spirit dwell in them, and they're going to have that opportunity, and therefore, they will be given this humility and repentance.

So how exciting is this for the Body of Christ, the Church of God, that we will see this soon. This is going to take place, where people that were part of the Worldwide Church of God, that have been scattered, they will be given this opportunity to confess their sins, the sins that have held them in captivity, in Babylon. Because they're held in Babylon, they're held in confusion. They do not know the truth.

Now, I know from this, the fact that I was at one point, my wife and myself, were at this point where we were held captive by our sins. We were in a state of confusion in the Churches that were scattered.

And it was from an awakening, which is God opening our eyes to "see" on a spiritual level that we've been given this opportunity to admit our sins, to admit our unfaithfulness, of what we actually did. We went to sleep, and that we walked contrary to God. Well, this opportunity is going to be given to others and I know what they're going to experience. I know what they're going to experience because I personally have experienced it, my wife has experienced it. There are some in the Body of Christ today that have experienced this, the excitement and the zeal that is within a person's mind and a person is willingly open to admitting and confessing their sin. There is a great joy in admitting it because we can finally "see." There is such a great joy in being awakened, having that opportunity of being able to "see" spiritually once again.

Well, there's millions that are going to be called, and we know there are 63,000 that are going to be given the opportunity of an awakening. Well, this is an exciting time.

Well, God says if we were to do these things, and to repent, that people are to turn to Him. **Verse 41—and *that* I also have walked contrary to them and have brought them into the land of their enemies; if their uncircumcised hearts are humbled, and they accept their guilt—** so this is all about this humbling and repentance. *It's about repentance!* So what we're looking forward to, brethren, in the next 3½ years is all about humbling, then the choice of humility, the choice to humble the self, to realize the self is not right, and repentance. And repentance is change. Repent, turn, go the other way, *think differently.*

So God is saying here that if people are willing to think differently, they're willing to humble themselves, they're willing to *repent* and admit that they have been walking contrary to God in their uncircumcised hearts... Well, we know what an uncircumcised heart is. It is one that is against God. Because God says in the New Testament it's not about physical circumcision, but it's about spiritual circumcision, the circumcision of the *heart!* And that's what is going to take place.

Verse 42—And I will remember My agreement, or "My covenant," with Jacob, and My covenant with Isaac and My covenant with Abraham I will remember, so there's both physical and spiritual components to this. Now, the most important part, of course, is the spiritual.

I will remember the land. So God is saying here that He'll remember Israel. He'll remember them on a physical level, but more importantly, on a spiritual level.

Verse 43—The land also shall be left empty by them, and will enjoy its sabbaths while it lies desolate without them; they will accept their guilt, because they despised My judgments and because their life abhorred My statutes.

Verse 44—Yet for all that, when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, nor shall I abhor them, to utterly destroy them and break My covenant with them; for I *am* the LORD their God. Now, God is saying that even though these things happen and it's going to be quite bad and people are going to be held in captivity on a physical (but also currently on a spiritual)

level, God says that He's not going to forget them. He will not "utterly destroy them." He will not "break His agreement," because God made a promise to Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, which is, of course, Israel.

So we know, brethren, that this promise is one of love and mercy. God is going to bring back a remnant so that that remnant can live on into the promised land into the Millennium.

Verse 45—But for their sake I will remember the agreement, or "the covenant," of their ancestors, whom I brought out of the land of Egypt in the sight of many nations, that I might be their God: I am the LORD. So these, now, brethren, are promises that God is going to fulfill. He is going to remember His agreement (and He hasn't forgotten it, of course) and He will bring out a group of people out of spiritual Egypt, out of the bondage they're held in. And it's going to be done in the sight of other nations because God is Yahweh Elohim, the Eternal. So this is going to take place. Israel is going to be given an opportunity to repent, a percentage is going to turn to God and repent. Now, the majority of Israel, physical Israel, is going to die.

These are the statutes and judgments and laws which the LORD made between Himself and the children of Israel on Mount Sinai by the hand of Moses. Now, God will humble mankind for the purpose of repentance. God desires mankind repent. And that is the whole purpose of what we're facing in the 3½ years, it's about humility and repentance.

Isaiah 5:16—Well, once mankind is humbled and he's brought to humility...But the LORD of hosts shall be exalted in judgment, and God who is holy shall be hallowed in righteousness, or "lifted up in righteousness." Then the lambs shall feed in their pasture, and in their waste places of the fat ones strangers shall eat it. God is the one that provided Israel the blessings, and the blessings will be taken away from Israel. God has promised all these things for obedience. Well, God has also promised—His word is true—that if a person will not obey God, not yield to God, on even on a physical level, "strangers are going to eat," what God has given to Israel.

God looks at the heart, the attitude behind why we do what we do. Now we will see that God is challenging Israel. Their attitude is one of *pride*, and therefore, God says He's going to have to humble Israel.

Verse 18—Woe to those who draw iniquity, or "draw out sin," with cords of vanity, which is twisted with pride. So woe to anybody that is going to continue to sin, and it's all based on this twisting of pride, these "cords of vanity," because pride is the main problem within mankind. Pride is involved in *all* sin, because pride is lifting one's self up against God...lifting one's self up against God. **And sin as if with a cart rope,** so a "cart rope" is intertwined and thick, "sin by habit." So "sin as if with a cart rope," because it's all intertwined, it's all nice and thick, and it's because of this habit. So it's very hard to untangle it because it's so thick and intertwined because of this *habit* that has taken place within the thinking of mankind.

Verse 19—That say, Let Him (talking about God) **make speed *and* hasten His work**, "Do what you said, God," **that we may see *it***. So, "Provide the evidence and prove your power, God." That's what they're virtually saying. They challenge God in their pride. Because people are virtually living a lifestyle based on the habit of sin, and they get to this point of so much arrogance that they no longer believe in God, and now they're virtually challenging God by saying, "Well, God, You've got these laws for blessings for obedience, and penalty or suffering for disobedience. Prove it! Provide the evidence of Your great power, of these laws that You actually have." **And say, let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw near and come**, in other words, "Do it, God! Go ahead and just do it!" **That we may know *it***. "*Prove who You are, God!*" They challenge God to do what He has stated in His words, which are the blessings and cursing's. "Well, prove it! We're doing these things wrong. Well, we've got so much pride and arrogance, well, you prove to us, God, that there is penalty for sin, that there's actually suffering connected to disobeying You." So they challenge God to do what He had stated in His word, that they could have physical evidence to see it, to know it. Well, God is going to provide it.

Verse 20—Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil. Now, *this* is the world's thinking today. What is evil, they call good. For example, like worship on a Sunday. Now, that is actually evil. Worshipping the sun, the sun god, Baal, Satan, on Sunday, which is the first day of the week. Well, they've changed it to say it's now the seventh day of the week. Got rid of the Sabbath! Well, they call evil good; they worship on a Sunday. They'll call Christmas good, Easter good, Halloween good. God says those things are *evil*. Well, God is saying, "Woe to those who call evil," all those things done from the natural carnal mind, "they call it good." And they call good," the seventh-day Sabbath, God's Church, evil. Now, God's Church is good only because God's holy spirit lives and dwells in a person, and that's what's good. Because only God is good and God's spirit is good, therefore, God's Church can be considered good if God's spirit is living and active within a person. They call God's good, His thinking. They call it evil because people look at God's way of life, they condemn, they judge, they pull down, and they call God's servants evil. Now, they call things evil, like the law, the Sabbath, and the Holy Days. They would say, "This is evil!" So they're now calling something that is good, which is from God's thinking, they call it now evil. And that's why the Church of God—PKG is condemned as much as it is because they are calling what is good evil.

Who put darkness (or sin) **for light** (for truth), **and light for darkness**. So now what mankind does is they put sin as something true! They say that it's right! Now, if you look at the false religions of the world, they put *darkness*, the way that they run their masses and their religious services and the gowns they wear, all these different things they do and all of the religious worship, all the different religions, and they bow down towards a particular direction...all of those things are darkness! That is sin! They put this up as light! They put it up as being true, yet it's not! "And light for darkness." So something that is light, something that is true, God's truths, the Sabbath, the Holy Days, the truth that God has placed in the Church, they say it's darkness! **Who put bitter for sweet**, so the things that are bitter, which are the falsehood in the world in false religion, they look at it as something sweet. And yet something that is sweet, which is God's word, God's ways, for bitter! So we live God's ways. They look at it as something that is bitter. They don't want to have anything to do with it.

Verse 21—Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight! Now, this is the problem of mankind. And God is saying these are the woes that He's going to bring on them, you know, "Woe to those that call evil good, and woe to those that turn around and put darkness and make it look like it's light. Well, woe to those that are wise in their own eyes." This is human reasoning, human logic, human understanding of any matter, not based on God's spirit at all. So, "Woe to those that are wise in their own eyes." Everyone does what is right in their own eyes. Everyone is wise in their own eyes. Everyone's right! Everyone is right in their own eyes, "and prudent in his own sight." He's wise in his own sight; he's got his own human reasoning. Anybody that leans on their own understanding for truth, anybody that relies on *human reasoning*, anybody that uses the natural carnal mind is actually going to suffer, because that's what God is saying, "Woe to those." Anybody that is going to look to self, self-reliance, to trust in self during this period that is coming, is going to have to suffer because of this "wise in their own eyes." Now, this is the state or the condition of all of mankind. That's why the woe has to take place because mankind has to be humbled so that he's no longer wise in his own eyes and he's not leaning on his own understanding; he won't be reliant on self.

Verse 22—Woe to men mighty at drinking wine... They have a distorted thinking because they're continually turning to alcohol to live their life, so they have this distorted thinking. Well, God says, "Woe to anybody that is relying on something else to control their thinking." Woe to anybody that is turning to something for a relief rather than turning to God. **Woe to men valiant for mixing intoxicating drink**, so it's all to do with this relying on self, or looking to something else to get through life.

Verse 23—Who justify the wicked for a bribe, so they turn away from what is right because they're getting something back for self. Now, we looked at this previously. This is the way of mankind, "who justifies the wicked," and if you've got enough money to defend yourself in court and get the right lawyers, you can almost get away with murder, and some have. It's not the truth at all. They're not being honest and open. There is a woe coming to those "who justify the wicked for a bribe." In other words, it's not only just the court system; it's anybody that's doing evil. Well, people get kickbacks. It happens in politics, it happens with land deals, or whatever. "I'll give you that if you give me this, and then I'll pay you back a bit more later," this whole aspect of giving bribes to people to gain something from self. They turn away from what is right, and that's really the issue. It's not all about justice. It's not about what's right and what's fair and open and honest. This is about trickery and deceit. ...and **take away justice from the righteous man!** Because they're getting bribed.

Therefore, as the fire devours the stubble, and the flame consumes the chaff, so their root will be as rottenness, and their blossom will ascend like dust. So *why* punishment and destruction? **Because they have rejected the law of the LORD of hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel.** So the problem with mankind is that he has rejected God's way of life, and there's going to be now suffering. And they've rejected and *despised* God's Word, the Holy One of Israel. They've not looked to it. They don't seek it. They don't *care* what God thinks! Well, God is going to provide suffering for them, which is a law. Because of man's selfishness he's going to pay a price.

Isaiah 5:25—Therefore, the anger of the LORD is aroused against His people, which is talking about Israel. He has stretched out His hand against them and stricken them; the hills tremble. Their carcasses were as refuse in the midst of the street. For all this His anger is not turned away, But His hand is stretched out still. So this is this ongoing punishment. And God is not going to turn away until He has conquered mankind, which is going to be at the return of Jesus Christ. Mankind is going to be humbled. And on that day of Pentecost, the last part of the "Day of the Lord" which is that final day of the "Day of the Lord," it's going to be brought to an end. So we will see the end of man's self-rule at the return of Jesus Christ, but *God* is going to intervene through Jesus Christ, and on the "Day of the Lord" it is *God's* day; it's *His* day. Mankind will be humbled. Mankind will be brought low so that mankind will be able to be given the opportunity to live...be able to be given the opportunity to live. And Satan and his demons will be removed.

Well, up until that time, until the end of that day, God's anger will be poured out on mankind. And at the end of that day there will be ushered in peace because Jesus Christ is coming as a peacemaker. He's not going to be keeping the peace, He's going to *make* peace, and His hand is going to be stretched out until the end of that day on that day of Pentecost.

Verse 26—He will lift up a banner to the nations from afar, and will whistle to them from the end of the earth; surely they shall come with speed, swiftly. We understand that the nations of the earth are going to turn and they're going to come quickly to destroy Israel. Their desire *is* to destroy Israel. That's what they desire. God will provide a way for them to do it, to destroy the modern day nations of Israel.

Verse 27—No one will be weary or stumble among them (the nations that attack Israel, that is), no one will slumber or sleep; Nor will the belt on their loins be loosened, nor the strap of their sandals be broken. So nothing is going to stop them from punishing Israel, because it's God's punishment on Israel. And it's God, the one that has "whistled" to them, "Look! Here is a nation that is now weak and you can do it." And God will not intervene. They will not stumble. They're not going to have problems. They're going to be able to achieve it.

Whose arrows are sharp, and all these bows bent; their horses' hooves will seem like flint, and their wheels like a whirlwind. In other words, it's going to be quick. It's going to happen quickly. Now, we know this has happened to physical Israel already, and that this punishment came on Israel and they went into captivity. **Their roaring will be like a lion, they will roar like young lions; Yes, they will roar and lay hold on the prey,** so in other words, they would be taken captive. And we know that God fulfilled it. Now, there is a time coming where the same thing is going to apply, where Israel is going to suffer. Israel is going to be punished because of their disobedience. **They will carry it away safely, and no one will deliver.** No man can save Israel. Only God can save Israel by the intervention of His Son, Jesus Christ.

Verse 30—In that day they will roar against them like the roaring of the sea. And if *one* looks to the land, behold, darkness *and* sorrow; and the light is darkened by the clouds.

Now, we have looked at what God has stated He will do if the nations reject His ways. The physical and spiritual principle is (which we've covered) disobedience brings a reward, which is suffering or punishment.

Now we will look at the outcome of man's last day of self-rule. Isaiah 2:1. Now, this is about the Millennium, and then what leads up to it. **Isaiah 2:1—The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. Now it shall come to pass in the latter days,** which is the end of 6,000 years of mankind's self-rule, ***That* the government,** or "the mountain," **of the LORD'S** (or the Eternal's) **house shall be established on the top of the mountains,** over all other governments. And that's what we know is the end of this 3½ year period, what comes, is the return of Jesus Christ. **And shall be exalted above the hills; And all the nations shall flow to it. Many people shall come and say, Come, Let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob. Why? That He will teach us His ways.** Now they're going to be taught the spirit of the law. They will be taught about being sincere, genuine, and about their own selfish nature. Then, with that knowledge and understanding, they can choose.

And we shall walk in His paths. For out of Zion, which is this government of God, this new government that has been established on this earth, **shall go forth the law.** Mankind does not want God in his life. Well, there's going to come a time where mankind has been humbled and the return of Jesus Christ has been fulfilled. **Then** mankind will be given the opportunity to come to know God, "For out of Zion shall go forth the law," the spirit of the law will be taught, **and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.** Mankind will have to be humbled so they can accept what God will teach them through Jesus Christ as King of kings. The truth will be taught to the nations. They will have access to God and Christ by the power of God's holy spirit, just like we do today.

Now it's continuing...**He shall judge between them** (or among the nations) **and rebuke** (correct) **many people.** Now we see a new way of thinking. During these last days of man's self-rule mankind has been motivated by lust and greed. He was willing to destroy to have power over others. But now there's a new way of life that's going to be taught. He's going to be taught that that is not right, that is actually evil.

And what's going to take place? **They,** the nations of the world, **shall beat their swords,** instruments of war, because war does destroy, so "they're going to beat their swords," what they use to destroy, **into plowshares.** They're going to have to now change their thinking to something that is productive, that will produce. Now, what is it that is productive and produces? It's obedience. So this change of thinking, this beating of their swords, which is a way of thinking, which is one of destruction and destroying and self, it's going to be changed to something that is a way of thinking, which is something that is going to produce. So they're going to move from *disobedience* to *obedience*. **And their spears into pruning**

hooks, so there's going to be a change of thinking. And that's what this is pointing to. It's not just something physical; it's something in the *mind*. It's a change of thinking.

Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore. So there is no need for armies for self-protection, because the thinking has changed. So this way of thinking, of war, of hate and of evil will be changed so that they learn (to come to understand) another way of thinking, the way of God's holy spirit, the way of God. They will not learn evil. They will not learn destruction. They will not learn *selfishness* anymore. But they're going to learn to *be* humble. They're going to learn to be humble and to be repentant.

Now we can look at why the "Day of the Lord" is going to take place. From **verse 5—O house of Jacob, come and let us walk in the light of the LORD.** Let's walk in the truth. **For You (for God) have forsaken Your people, the house of Jacob,** because God has withdrawn His blessings. God has withdrawn from Israel. Now Israel will pay the penalty for sin. Why? **Because they are filled with eastern ways.** Well, what are "eastern ways"? Manmade religious worship like Easter and sun worship. They are eastern ways. And that's the problem with Israel. Israel has turned away from God, modern day nations of Israel, and they have their *own* religion, and it's all based on eastern ways. But if you were to just tell them that, their ways are of eastern ways, they would laugh at you and think you're crazy. But this is what God is saying. "God has forsaken His people, the house of Jacob, because they are filled with eastern ways," false religion.

They are soothsayers, which are "time observers," **like the Philistines,** because, what this is about, they're looking to something else. Because a "soothsayer" is someone who looks to guide or looks for guidance from another source other than God. The Philistines did that. They looked to their gods and they would use different readings and different things and soothsayers, and witchcraft, all for guidance. But God says we're supposed to look to *Him* for guidance, the way to live, and *not* to be looking to these eastern ways and observers of time and looking to other things other than what God says in His word.

And they are pleased with the children of foreigners. Their land is also full of silver and gold, and there is no end of their treasures, so it's all relying on self. **Their land is also full of horses, and there is no end to their chariots.** Everything about gaining wealth and power is their motivation. They trust in things but not in God. They willing to enter into relationships that they *know* will take them away from worshipping God, in obedience to Yahweh Elohim, where God says we should flee those things. Where, if we understand that there is going to be a strong influence of a false religion, we shouldn't get involved in it.

Verse 8—Their land is also full of idols, which is saying God is not first. God is not in their worship anymore. **They worship the work of their hands,** because all these things are manmade, **that which their own fingers have made,** which is they've carved out these idols. We've set up all these things different things as a nation, all the false religions of the world, all the different things man looks to, whether it's his money, whether it's the stock exchange, whether it's his house, whether it's his car,

that's what he puts his time into. That's what he looks to. That's what he trusts in. He trusts in self or something he has made.

People bow down, and each man humbles himself, before an idol. They worship falsehood. They worship a lie. Now, we, brethren, have been called out of this. And how blessed are we? We should not look out and judge and condemn others who are caught up in this Babylonian system. We were in it! And the only reason we are no longer in it is because of a calling, *because* of God's great mercy. Hence the need to often reflect on our calling and to come to understand who we really are as a people. We are the Church of God. We are *God's* people. We have God's holy spirit living and dwelling in us. How blessed are we, compared to the rest of mankind who've been left to the work of their own hands, who bow down themselves to *their* idols, whatever that idol may be.

Now, mankind's biggest idol is himself. Man loves himself. Man puts himself first, his selfishness first. That's his greatest idol. Well, this is all going to be brought down. Now, each man here is worshipping something, whether it's a religion, whether it's money, whether it's property. The main thing they worship really is self. Man sets out to satisfy himself, no matter what that is, whether it's the acceptance of others, whether it's the pleasing of self, it all boils back to self. ...**therefore do not forgive them**, do not accept them. They won't repent and change if they are not humbled. That's just the way it is. Mankind will not repent; mankind will not change, unless he is humbled. God's going to have to bring *everything* down. Everything that man trusts in must be taken away because that's the only way that man will change his thinking.

Verse 10—Enter into the rock, hide in the dust, for the terror of the LORD and the glory of His majesty. God is going to intervene into mankind's life.

Verse 11—The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day. And this is referring directly to Christ's return. But we can look at this during this 3½ year period. "The lofty looks of men." Now, what is "the lofty looks of men?" We understand it's pride. It's everybody! Everybody is proud. Everyone is proud. Everyone is self-reliant. Well, all of this will be taken away and man shall be humbled. Man's going to be brought down. And the only way to do it is to take what he trusts in away so that *fear* enters his mind, so that he can no longer trust in himself. "The haughtiness of men shall be bowed down," so all this looking to self, "How good am I!" "How great am I!" "I am so confident! I'm so self-reliant! Don't you know how good I am?" Well, it's all going to be brought down. Man is going to be moved to a state of great fear. And in the end, "God alone shall be exalted in that day." God is going to be exalted because everything that God is doing is for the best of mankind. And mankind will come to see it. Well, God is going to be in control of all situations.

Verse 12—For the day of the LORD of hosts, now, we understand that this can refer to one year, and also one day, the day of Christ's return. So during this period, this one year period from Pentecost to Pentecost, this is the day that God is going to be exalted. **For the day of the LORD of hosts shall come upon everything proud and lofty**, and that is the problem with mankind, he *is* proud and lofty.

He's lifting himself up in his thinking. **Upon everything lifted up**—they're lifted up in their thinking, **And it shall be brought low**—it shall be humbled. Well, brethren, we have this opportunity during this "Year of Dedication" to humble ourselves willingly, to judge ourselves now so that we will not be judged, so that the "Day of the Lord" does not come upon *us*, so that we do not suffer during this one year period, and on the very last day that we do not suffer because we are not proud and we're not lofty. We've actually turned our thinking to God. We've humbled ourselves willingly before God.

Verse 13—So this is what's coming, this "Day of the Lord," **Upon all the cedars of Lebanon**, well, this points to everything that is strong, **that are high and lifted up**, so that's what the "cedars of Lebanon" point to. It's symbolically talking about everything that is high and lifted up. It's going to be brought down. **Upon the oaks of Bashan**, which is religious buildings, **upon all the high mountains, and upon all the hills that are lifted up**, all the governments of this world are going to be brought down. God is going to humble them. They're going to be brought down. So all governments are going to be humbled.

Verse 15—**Upon every high tower, upon every fortified wall**, so whatever man trust in for protection, things of war, military strength and might, is all going to be brought down. **Upon all the ships of Tarshish, and upon all the beautiful sloops**, which is the economy. Trade is all going to be brought down. "The ships of Tarshish," is symbolically pointing to the economy, trade, the way that man runs his economic system. Well, it's all going to be destroyed. The "Day of the Lord" is going to bring it to nothing.

Verse 17—**The loftiness of man**, which is "pride of man," **shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be brought low; the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day**, in a "Day of the Lord."

Verse 18—**But the idols He shall utterly abolish**. God's going to bring them to an end. Everything that man trust in, everything that man has lifted up, placed before God.

Verse 19—**They (mankind) shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth**. Why? Because they're seeking protection; it's *self*-protection. And mankind's going to want to avoid and hide what is happening to mankind in this "Day of the Lord." Well, they can't hide from it, and that's just the truth, because mankind has to be humbled. ...**From the terror of the LORD and the glory of His majesty,**
when He arises to shake the earth mightily. Mankind will be shaken by the events of the end-time. Mankind's thinking will be shaken. This shaking of the earth by the end-time events will cause mankind to tremble in fear.

Verse 20—**In that day a man (or mankind) will cast away**, which is "to throw or hurl," **his idols of silver and his idols of gold**. So he's going to want to throw away the things he trusts in, because he realizes that he can't trust in them. They're of no value at all. What good is a piece of gold? The apple you can eat; you can't eat the gold. So you can have all the gold, all the things that man has trusted in—not going to provide him *life*! Only God can provide life. God is the author of life and death. So in the end man will cast away what he trusts in and he's going to have to turn to God.

So, "In that day man/mankind will cast away his idols of silver and his idols of gold," **which they made**, because it's manmade, **each for himself to worship**, something to trust in, **to the moles and the bats, to go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the crags of the rugged rocks**, so this is what man has done. Mankind has looked and trusted in something. He's made these things to worship, to look to. Mankind will see them for what they are, worthless manmade object that have no power or strength. None! ...**the terror of the LORD and the glory of His majesty, when He arises to shake the earth mightily.**

Verse 22—What should mankind do? **Sever yourselves from such a man, whose breath is in his nostrils**, so leave them, don't *associate* with them. Have nothing to do with anybody that's trusting in anything, other than turning to God, to trust in God. **For of what account is he?** So what value is there in having a relationship with somebody that is in false religion, or caught up in the Churches that are scattered. There is absolutely none. There's no advantage to a person to do it. "Sever yourselves from such a man who has breath in his nostrils; for what account is he?" So what good is he? He has no value to you. He cannot help you.

The false religions of the world cannot help us, brethren, nor can the Churches that are scattered. They cannot help us because they trust in idols. So if they stay in the Churches that are scattered, if somebody stays with their false religion (because these idols will not protect them), staying where they are won't deliver them. It's only by humbling themselves and repenting can they be saved. To be humble is a state or a way of thinking. I'm going to repeat that. To be humble is a way of thinking because we're either thinking pride or we're thinking humility. Now, humility is coming to see our *true spiritual condition*. Since we humble ourselves willingly during this "Year of Dedication," because we *want* to see our *true* condition, our true spiritual condition. And what is that condition? Well, a humble person knows that they can only rely on God and God's word. We can't trust on anything else. *Nothing* can be trusted in except God's word, God and God's word.

Humility is to come to see the way we really are without God, without God's spirit. Because without God's spirit, what are we? Natural, selfish, and carnal. So if we're humble we will see what we would be like without God's spirit. We know, brethren, without God's spirit what are we? We are nothing. It's a terrifying thing to even *think* that we could lose God's holy spirit. Now, I often think about David's prayer when he says, "Do not take Your spirit from me." Because while we have God's spirit we can "see" the fear that is involved in losing God's spirit. We want this relationship with God. Because we come to "see" that without God's spirit it's a *terrifying thing*. It would be the biggest disaster that could happen to us in our life. Physical things don't matter, the spiritual matter.

So somebody that does not have God's spirit or has lost God's spirit, they can't "see" spiritually. It's not possible. Therefore, they can't "see" their true spiritual condition. They think they're doing okay. They've lost the sight that God gives through the power of His holy spirit. So if we can "see" that without God's holy spirit we have big problems, we are in big trouble, well, that's a good sign that we have God's spirit, because we know, we "see" that without it *we are nothing*. Well, that's humility,

brethren. Coming to "see" that without God's spirit, without God in our life, we have nothing. Well, that is humility. Therefore, because of this humility we can turn to God and trust in God and believe God. And because of this humility we have repentance. We desire to get rid of self or anything that offends God, any sin that is in our life. So we *want* to get rid of sin. We desire to get rid of sin. We "see" the statement, "O wretched man that I am." We "see" it because of God's holy spirit living and dwelling in us.

So this humility is a way of thinking. To come to "see" that without God we are nothing but carnal and selfish, well, that's humility. Humility is to come to trust in *every* word of God and not to lean on our own understanding, the way that we see it. We lean on the understanding the way that *God* sees it; hence, a humble person will be *under government*, under the government of God. They won't lift themselves up to think that they know better or they disagree with God.

So the moment we disagree with a decision that God makes within His Church, we are acting in pride. Because there's only pride or humility. It's either pride and selfishness or humility and repentance. By nature we trust in our own views and opinions because that's natural. That's what we do, brethren. We look at it *our* way. So when decisions are made within God's Church we often have a view or an opinion that is not necessarily in agreement with God. So our role in life, brethren, is to humble ourselves to realize that we trust in God in all things.

The best thing that can happen to anyone is that they are humbled by God all for the purpose of bringing them to true humility on a spiritual level so that they can humble themselves to "see" who they really are. God's purpose for humbling mankind is to, in a point of time, lift them up. So God's reason to bring them down is to lift them up on a spiritual level. Mankind *needs* the "Day of the Lord."

Luke 18:9—Also He (Jesus Christ) spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others. So there's a problem here already, that they looked to themselves, they trusted in themselves that they were righteous. They were doing quite well. They are doing well on a spiritual level, that's what they think, "and despised others." Well, there's a big problem. That's pride! Because now they're looking down on others, they make others of no value compared to *themselves*. This is a problem within the thinking of *all mankind*. They believed they were better than others and looked down on them. This is a natural way of thinking. This is natural for the carnal mind. Pride is our greatest enemy. Pride is what stands between us and a right relationship with God and others.

Verse 10—Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. Now, within that society a Pharisee would have been seen as righteous and the tax collector, well, he was lowly and he was nothing. He wasn't righteous. The Pharisee? A "better than others" attitude. This is an attitude that mankind takes on by nature within his own thinking, that he's better, he does things better.

But the Pharisee, who thinks he's better, **stood and prayed thus with himself**, so he's not praying to God. It's all a vanity. He's praying in a state of pride and God's not going to hear it. And he, what is he saying? **God, I thank You that I am not like other men.** Now, this is a terrible attitude, but this is the thinking of mankind, "Well, I'm glad I'm not like that poor bloke down there. Look at him! I'm glad I'm not like 'that person down there,' 'or that nation over there,' 'or those people over there.' I'm glad that I'm not like that,"—**extortioners, unjust, adulterers, and even as this tax collector.** So this reveals this "superior" attitude. It's this looking down on, thinking "better." It's a state of mind.

Now he explains why he is better than the tax collector as far as *he* sees it, the way he thinks, which is this perverted, twisted thinking. So why does he think he's better? **Verse 12—I fast twice a week.** Now, the word "week" here is like the word "Sabbath," which means "intervals between two Sabbath's." So "within a week," well, Sabbath to Sabbath, he says he fasts twice between the two Sabbath's. **I give tithes to all that I possess.** So in other words, "I give my tithes from everything!" And of course, it's the smallest little matter; he'd be tithing on it because he's righteous.

Verse 13—And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise *his* eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, God, be merciful to me a sinner! Now, one is pride, and now we have the demonstration of *humility*, seeing one's true spiritual condition. What are we really worth? We're worth nothing without God's holy spirit. So one's in pride, one's in humility.

Verse 14—I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, which is "sin is forgiven because of repentance," which takes humility because we have to have humility to be repentant. If we're not humble, we will not be repenting. **...rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself, everyone who lifts himself up, will be humbled,** and that's what we've been through in these scriptures. And that's why this period of man's last days *is* all about humility because anyone that has lifted themselves up (and that is all of mankind that hasn't been called) will be humbled. They'll be made low *in their thinking* because it's about the way we think. **...and he who humbles himself, he does not think he is better than others, who lowers his thinking, then, from that, can move into repentance because they "see" themselves as they really are, will be exalted,** "will be lifted up by God."

So we enter this period of time, brethren, with this being the biggest matter that is to be considered by mankind. So we enter an exciting time, brethren, where God is going to humble the proud and lofty because of the way they think. And those that then, from that point, humble themselves and see their true condition (based on a gift from God), they'll be brought to repentance, and from that they *will be exalted.* God will lift them up by the power of God's holy spirit, by God giving the opportunity to live physically and then to have *true life* in the Millennium, which of course is access to God's holy spirit, which is true life.

We must come to value others as God does. That's a way of thinking. We have to come to value all mankind. They all have the potential to become begotten sons of God and then have the potential to be sons of God in Elohim. Pride must be removed from our thinking. We are not better than anyone

else, brethren. We are *not* better than anybody else. The only reason we are different at the moment is because of what *God* is doing *in us* and our ability to *yield* to God is the key. So it's all about the way we think. And we're going to have this battle of pride for the rest of our life. No matter who we are, we all have pride. We have a degree of pride.

Now we'll change the sermon series, and the next sermon we'll change titles, but we're going to continue with a similar theme of man's last days, but we'll end this *Part 4* here and next sermon we'll change directions slightly. But we'll still look at the period of time where man is going to be humbled and that mankind has to choose to obey God and be blessed or to continue to disobey God and to be punished, which is to suffer.□