

I would like to say, "Welcome," to everyone again on God's Sabbath day. And it's good to be in Phoenix once again and to see familiar faces once again. I started saying, "old faces," but I had to get out of that habit.

God uses the analogy of a garden (a vineyard) in His book that was covered in the last sermon. Today we will look back at some past history of the Church of God and we will look at what God is doing and how He used gardening principles to explain to you and me, His people. And God used it to explain how and why He uses "pruning" in His Church, and to explain to you and me about sin. We will now look at how sin from the beginning of man, how it cut off man from the very beginning. God tells you and me to put sin out of our lives, and this is because it will take us out of God's Church, out of God's vineyard, out of God's garden. That's what it will do.

So we will be discussing this today. So that will be your title today, *God's Garden*. And we are "fastly" approaching the Passover Season, and this is the season that we reflect upon about our coming out of spiritual Egypt. And we understand that this world is in captivity. We understand that it is enslaved to sin. And those in Satan's world do not see God, brethren, and they do not want to see God at this time, and therefore, they cannot understand God's way of life. But you and me, we are to be in God's garden, so to speak, and we are to produce fruit, and we are to produce growth.

And as we focus upon this season of the year, we focus upon the Passover and Unleavened Bread season that will bring you and me to Pentecost, to when the first harvest will take place, those that will be in God's garden, that first harvest, the harvest of the firstfruits to become Elohim, to become in the God Family. And we understand that God's Kingdom is just on the horizon, when that first harvest will take place. But mankind is oblivious to any of this. But we know God's rule upon this earth will soon be here, and mankind will then come to be educated.

We, as the Church of God, we see how evil Satan's world really is. We see it. But the world does not see it. Most still think it's a good place to live. But you and me, we understand that there is nothing in this world that is worthy of saving (absolutely nothing) in Satan's world. There is nothing in Satan's world that is founded upon the truths that come from the Great God of this universe. Satan has managed to pervert and twist everything that is good from the Great God of this universe - everything! But God has blessed His Church, you and me, to understand about spiritual Egypt, about bondage. And God has opened our minds and God has given you and me the ability to understand about spiritual Egypt, about that bondage that we are in. And God is giving us the blessing to understand the true meaning of God's way of life. It is a blessing to understand and see the way that this world is now. It is a blessing. And I hope you understand that. It's a blessing to understand this world that has been influenced by Satan, and we can turn on the TV and see the results of Satan's world.

God has opened our mind to see this world and God has given you and me a glimpse of a world that is coming in just a little while. It's just on the horizon. We are the Church of God that is to be preparing for the Kingdom that is coming to this earth, brethren, to replace Satan's rule, Satan's government, and bring it to an end.

During this Passover and Unleavened Bread season that we are entering we are to seek to grow closer to our God by focusing upon sin. And we are to focus about where we are in time and we are to be coming out of sin, as we know, and we are to be putting sin out of our lives. And we always use Ancient Israel as an example, about the time when God brought Ancient Israel out of captivity and it paints you and me a picture of a time of deliverance. And God tells you and me that the end of this age has come and that these are like our examples that we are to go back and look at. And we are to learn from these examples of our past.

We can see that this world needs deliverance from sin and we have become like Sodom and Gomorrah. That's what we have become. But this world is oblivious at this time. They don't see it. And it's like I said earlier, most think it's still a good place to live. But we, as the Church of God, can see that this world needs deliverance from the captivity of living in Satan's world that has been created by that being. So we, as the Church of God, we partake of the unleavened bread of life at Passover. And we understand about that Passover and what took place, and we understand that importance of having our sins forgiven through what Jesus Christ did for you and me and for the whole world eventually, those that want to be there, those that want to live a certain way of life that God tells us about in His book, in His Church.

We understand about coming out of captivity, and God paints you and me a picture about coming out of that captivity, and He paints you and me a picture through the Holy Days of how it is to be done, the process that everyone that will be here will have to go through, and it is through this Holy Day season that God does it, the Feast of Unleavened Bread and Passover. And that's where we begin, with that picture. We, as the Church of God, partake of the Passover, and then we follow the Passover by eating unleavened bread for seven days. And this paints you and me a picture about being delivered out of Egypt, deliverance from bondage, and it paints us a picture about how our sins are being forgiven through that Passover. And it paints us a picture about how we are to live our lives through those seven days, by living by the bread of true life, Jesus Christ. And God tells us through His word how to live His way of life.

There is a greater exodus coming upon this earth. I hope we all realize and understand this. The first one was a wonderful time, when God brought the Israelites out of Egypt. And it's one that you and me can read about in God's book, and it gives us a glimpse, and it paints us a picture of what is coming. But there is a much greater exodus coming, brethren, in just a short while, the beginning. And just as He delivered Israel from slavery He will deliver a people once again.

And in the past sermons we've been looking at a prophecy in the Church of God that would occur just before Jesus Christ would return to this earth, and it would make an announcement once it took place. And it paints you and me a picture of where we are in time, and just how close we really are. There's so

much about end-time prophecy that God tells us about in the time that you and me live, the end of this age, and much of this prophetic fulfillment is spiritual in nature, and it's not only about physical events that would occur. And it was revealed to the Church of God about an Apostasy that would take place that occurred on December 17, 1994 in the Church of God. And we've looked at some of this in past sermons. But it was revealed to the Church of God that this event that took place in Atlanta, Georgia, the Apostasy that took place, it made an announcement to you and me that the return of Jesus Christ was now imminent. Much of the prophecy at this time is spiritual, and we came to understand this.

We know that the physical events are just on the horizon, and there will be a crescendo that our minds cannot comprehend. All we have to do is turn on that TV, that little box, and look at the news. And we can see if God did not intervene man would destroy every living thing upon the face of this earth. Everything! Man has that capability. So we don't always think about that, but we as the Church of God are here to remind you that this crescendo will take place. We understand that total annihilation *would* take place if God did not intervene and send His Son back to this earth to stop the genocide that would take place.

It was revealed to the Church of God that the abomination of desolation was not about physical desecration, but it was about an abomination that occurred in the Church of God. And this Apostasy began in Atlanta, Georgia. And then it was revealed about the stones of the temple, and it was revealed that it was not about physical stones, that it was about spiritual stones in the Church of God. So we can see that much prophecy at this end-time has been revealed to the Church of God, and that it is much more spiritual than physical.

We began to understand about the Seals of Revelation, and we touched upon that in the last sermon. And we began to understand that the Seals of Revelation was about spiritual battles, about spiritual tribulation, and about captivity within the spiritual Israel of God, the Church of God. And these battles are spiritual and not physical. And some of the greatest spiritual wars of all time, brethren, are occurring at this very time, and it's occurring to end all wars, when we understand.

God reveals His plan and His truths progressively to God's Church, to His Church. And God does this for a reason, because of a being that would like to thwart God's very next move. So that is why God chooses to do it the way that He does. We are in that spiritual war, brethren, at the end of this age. And you don't want to let your enemy know what your next move is - so that's the reason God does it the way He does. And I hope everyone understands this by now. We are in that war, and there have been many casualties, brethren. When we look back through time - God's word talks about the slaughtering of the lambs - and when we look back in time it is like a slaughterhouse, a slaughterhouse for those that have been called by God. And because of this being, Satan, this war will continue until God establishes His Kingdom upon this earth to set up God's Government upon this earth, a just government.

The demons know their time is short. Satan knows it. They understand that God will put a complete end to their influence upon mankind and they understand that Satan will be removed, and they have heard

his fate through this very Church. God will deliver this world from this spiritual Pharaoh, a spiritual Egypt. That's the analogy, and that's the examples that we use out of God's book.

This is the season for Passover and Unleavened Bread (that we are approaching) that pictures that deliverance from spiritual bondage. We liken Pharaoh to a "type" of Satan. And God paints you and me a picture through using that analogy through this Holy Day season. And in the last sermon we looked at what John had written in God's book about the Seals of Revelation, and that Jesus Christ was the only one that was worthy to open those Seals.

God gave to us, the Church of God—PKG, the meaning of the first five Seals of Revelation, and He gave us that understanding of what it was about, that those first five Seals were fully spiritual in nature and that these Seals were about spiritual tribulation upon the Church of God. And like I said earlier, we used those examples of Egypt and the Israelites coming out of sin, coming out of captivity and being delivered by the Great God of this universe. And we understand the prophetic events for this time is not about the literal nation of Egypt. We came to understand this and we came to understand that it is about a spiritual deliverance. And we use the examples of Egypt and what took place. We use Pharaoh as a "type" of Satan, and we used the name of Assyria and its spiritual meaning. We used the term for Egypt and that it's about captivity and sin. We came to understand in the Church of God that the spiritual term for "Assyria" is about captivity and enslavement to governments. We came to understand that this spiritual Assyria is a cause of governments that are failing in the scattered nations of Israel. And we understood that spiritual Assyria had caused much devastation in the Church of God at the time of the Apostasy, and we understood that it was physical *and* spiritual in nature.

When the Apostasy took place in the Church of God it brought about another prophecy that was fulfilled in Ezekiel 34, and some of us were talking about this this morning at the breakfast table. And the ministers, the government in the Church of God, it resulted in the spiritual abomination that took place in the Church of God. And there is just one of them left in the Church of God, one of those ministers at the end of this age. That's how massive it was. Ezekiel 34 has been fulfilled. So that lets us know where we are in time, paints us a picture.

Let's be turning to Ezekiel 5. Let's go back and refresh on some of these scriptures. The Apostasy and the abomination of desolation brought about much destruction in the Church of God, and a great scattering took place, and a great captivity followed. I can look around in this room and I see a few faces that lived through this. **Ezekiel 5:1.** We'll read through this and then we'll come back to some of these scriptures. **And you, son of man, take a sharp sword, take it as a barber's razor, and pass *it* over your head and over your beard; then take scales to weigh and divide the *hair*. You shall burn with fire one-third in the midst of the city, when the days of the siege are finished; then you shall take one-third and strike it around with the sword, and one-third you shall scatter in the wind: And I will draw out a sword after them. You shall also take a small number of them and bind them in the edge of your *garment*. Then take some of them again and throw them into the midst of the fire, and burn them in the fire. From there a fire will go out into all the house of Israel.**

So the spiritual part of Ezekiel 5 has been fulfilled - it paints you and me a picture of where we are in time - by the scattering of the Church of God after the Apostasy, after the abomination of desolation. And a third of the Church of God went back into false religion, most of them into Traditional Christianity. One-third went into organizations that were formed after the Apostasy. And the last third said that they were ... it says they were to endure more trials. And within all the spiritual destruction God said that ten percent of a third would survive. They would survive captivity and they would be offered to become His remnant Church, to be in His garden at the end of this age. We know that some would be in that first harvest that will take place in just a short while, but we also know that God's Church does not cease to exist and there would be some offered the opportunity to live into the millennial reign of Jesus Christ and to continue in the Church of God. God said He would awaken ten percent of that third as a witness, and Ezekiel 5 paints you and me a picture of what would happen to God's Church after the Apostasy.

Let's go to Ezekiel 5 and let's look at **verse 12—One-third of you will die of the pestilence, and be consumed with famine in your midst; one-third will fall by the sword all around you; and I will scatter another third to all the winds, and I will draw out a sword after them.** The first third is about those who just gave up and quit. And we went through the parable of the sower in the last sermon that paints us a picture also. But they went into a full spiritual sleep, so to speak. That's the way ...the term we began to use, a spiritual sleep. And it was so devastating for them that they could not just comprehend and deal with what was happening to the Church of God. Another third, God said, would fall by the sword. And these are the ones that turned from the truth, from the word of God, which we know is the sword of God (the word of God). And they were destroyed by God's two-edged sword, and it cut them off from God's holy spirit. And they also went into a spiritual sleep. The final third were scattered into many, many, *many* different groups. Last count I had it was over 600, so I have no idea now how many that is, probably much more by now. And they all are in spiritual sleep. All of these went into spiritual captivity of Egypt, so to speak, and they became enslaved in spiritual bondage once again. But in the midst of all this, God said a remnant would survive the captivity. And as we just read, they would be tested and tried to see who could remain as a part of that remnant Church that would be there at the return of Jesus Christ to set up the Kingdom of God upon this earth, to set up a just government upon this earth, finally, for mankind.

Let's go back and look at **verse 3** and let's see what God had written through Ezekiel. Says, **You will also take a few in number and bind them in your skirts.** And we know that this is a word for "wings." And it's talking about protection that God would offer to those that would become part of His remnant Church at the end of this age. And this small group was promised protection so that they could survive the captivity, but they would be tried and tested to see who could remain until the end. Some of us have lived this prophecy and we've seen different ones at different times that were offered this protection, and we saw what they did. And those of us in the Church of God began to describe the process of being wakened once again. That was the term we began to use, because it was like a calling, a calling that happens in your mind when God opens your mind to see the truth and to see what was happening. God opens the mind once again.

Verse 4—Let's notice... **Then take of them again and cast them into the midst of the fire, and burn them in the fire.** It does not say scorch; it says burn. So the heat will get pretty intense for those that would be there at the end. So this means that it will be fiery trials. That's the meaning of what is being said. And this is about that remnant Church, those that would be offered to become part of that remnant Church at the end. God offered survival of the captivity, and God offered to them to become part of that remnant Church of God, that... a tithe, ten percent of the third, but they would be tested by that fire.

Let's go to Revelation 3:17. Revelation 3:17. We touched upon this in the last sermon, and this is about Laodicea, that timeframe that took place. **Revelation 3:17**, it says — **Because you say, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing, and know not that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked.** So we pick up an attitude through this verse, about God's Church. And we did not recognize it at that time, brethren, those of us that lived through that time in God's Church.

Verse 18—**I counsel you to buy Me gold tried in the fire, that you may be rich; and white raiment, that you may be clothed, and *that* the shame of your nakedness does not appear; anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten.** Let's notice what God had written through John. It's what God says: **Be zealous, therefore, and repent.** And it's what had to take place. **Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If any man hear My voice and open the door, I will come in to him, will sup with him, and he with Me.** But it had to be those that repented, brethren.

Let's notice verse 21—**To him that overcomes will I grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and have sat down with My Father on His throne. He that has an ear, let him hear what the spirit says to the churches.** And that's you and me, those that have God's spirit. We are the only ones that can hear these words and understand what is being said in God's book.

Back up in verse 15—**I know your works, that you are neither hot nor cold. I wish you were hot or cold. So then because you are lukewarm and neither cold nor hot I will vomit you out of My mouth.** Some of us lived this devastation that took place in the Church of God. And because of what God had written through John, and because of someone that would come upon the scene to explain what had happened to the Church of God, to explain to us about this Laodicean Church and why they would be spewed out of God's mouth... and it was explained to us by one that God sent at the end of this age that all of us were spewed out of God's mouth at that time - all of us! And after God spewed us out of His mouth most then rejected God's offer. Most had pride that was so great at that time, that we just read about in Laodicea, what would take place to the Church, in the Church of God, that pride that would be there, that they needed nothing. But it was explained to us about that Laodicean Church. And they could not humble themselves to become part of that remnant Church that would be there at the end. They were not able to accept those that God would place in His remnant Church as the head of God's government upon this earth at that time. And they could not accept such a thing.

After the Apostasy there were many that did come into fellowship in the Church of God, with that remnant Church, and at some point in time they rebelled against the truths of God that God had revealed to His Church. That's actually what took place, rebellion. They have come and they have gone in God's

Church, even in this remnant Church. And we've looked at some of this in past sermons, about what some have done against the Great God of this universe - because that's who it's about - and what they have done by rejecting those truths that have been revealed to this Church, that remnant Church. And it is against the Great God of this universe and His Son, when we understand that rebellion. It's not about you and me. And they have made their selves enemies of Jesus Christ by doing such a thing. They have rejected the Great God and His Son and they rejected what God had offered to them, to become part of His garden at the end of this age, to be in that garden, to grow. But they were not able to accept God's government - that's what it was about - in His Church, and they rebelled. They could not humble themselves to accept God's government upon this earth in His remnant Church. And many have rejected what God placed before them, and their pride was so much that they could not accept this new remnant Church.

The prophecy of Ezekiel 5 that we just read, it paints you and me a picture about the scattering of the physical nations of Israel also that will take place in just a short while. God tells us through Ezekiel that a tithe (a ten percent of that third) of both physical and spiritual Israel would only survive as a remnant. God paints you and me a picture so that we can understand what happened to the Church of God that was scattered, and therefore, we can understand what will happen to the physical scattered nations of Israel. We understand that there is much destruction and much tribulation coming upon these nations of Israel in just a short while. It's just on the horizon, brethren. God tells us in His book so that we will understand what is coming upon this earth, and it is by what happened to the Church of God that we can understand what Ezekiel wrote about in God's book. And just as the Church of God became shattered and scattered as a result of the collapse of the government in God's Church, it paints us a picture of what is coming upon the nations of Israel when their governments collapse, when those physical governments collapse upon this earth. When those governments collapse, can you imagine what is going to take place? Can you imagine? I know most don't ever think about it. People will become scattered. They will become shattered just as the Church of God did. They will no longer know what to do when the governments that they are trusting in are no longer there. Can you imagine such a time? It's on your horizon.

The Church of God has experienced much tribulation since that Apostasy that began in Atlanta, Georgia. But that tribulation is nearly over. And that's good news for you and me. But physical tribulation is about to occur upon this earth that your minds will not comprehend. We can look at the news and tell that the governments of this world are about to collapse. We don't need God's book to see that. You need God's spirit to understand it, what is taking place. And those of us in the Church of God—PKG, we are looking forward to this next great exodus. We are actually looking forward. This next exodus, brethren, will be so much far greater than that first one that took place under Moses. I hope we can see it. I hope we can see what is on our horizon. Our Passover, Jesus Christ, is coming to this earth to lead that great exodus out of Egypt, so to speak, to free all of God's people. Finally, brethren, freedom for you and me - true freedom - freedom from the spiritual bondage of that Egypt, and Jesus Christ will begin to free all people from the spiritual captivity of Assyria, as all the governments of this world, He will begin to free them. And those governments will then begin to become the governments of the Great God of this universe and His Son, Jesus Christ, to establish that just government upon this earth with that first harvest, the first

harvest out of God's garden that He is creating (the 144,000) to be in God's family, to become Elohim, the first harvest, the first to become Elohim.

And I don't think we focus upon this exodus that is just on the horizon. We don't think about it very much. But it's time for the Church of God that is preparing for the Kingdom that is coming to this earth (to set up that just government upon this earth), it is time for you and me to really think about it and really prepare our lives for what is coming upon this earth, to keep that sin out of our lives. And we are to prepare for what is ahead.

We know about the 144,000, but there are those that God has called at this end to live into the Millennium where God's Government will reign upon every nation upon this earth. And those that are blessed to live into this time, this new age, I hope you understand how privileged you are to see such a thing that is in your future. Brethren, this is not owed to anyone. None of this is owed to you, but God has offered it to you. And only a few out of mankind, when you think about it, in the span of 6,000 years, only a few out of mankind will be able to see what you will see. Whether you are a part of the 144,000 or are a part of those that live into the millennial reign upon this earth it is an *awesome blessing*. And I hope you understand it.

God tells you and me that we are to focus upon what happened in Ancient Israel, that it is an example for you and me upon whom the end of the ages has come. And we are that Church at the end, the Church of God—PKG, "Preparing for the Kingdom of God," that is coming to this earth. And we are to look and learn how God delivered them at that time. This Holy Day season, the Passover and the Unleavened Bread teaches you and me the correct way to live our life, and we are to be repenting of our sins. We are to repent quickly, brethren, especially where we are in time. You've heard me say it over and over - if the mind takes a turn, it's hard to paddle back up the stream, and there's not many that make it back once that mind turns. So we are to be continuously putting sin out of our lives so that we won't become a part of those that have been cast out of God's government. We are to come out of sin, out of that spiritual Egypt, and we are to focus upon what happened way back then in Ancient Israel as an example, because it paints you and me a picture. And we are to see how God delivered them.

The ancient Israelites lived through and saw God's plagues upon those Egyptians. They lived it. And they lived through the first four of those plagues and they saw and they suffered right along with those Egyptians. And I'm sure they were struck with fear when they saw those plagues. And I can tell you, there is fear that is coming as Satan's kingdom comes crashing down upon this earth. And just as God protected those ancient Israelites, God tells us that He will protect us. And I can tell you that you will want God's protection as this age comes to a close. And whether you live into the Millennium or whether you are part of that 144,000, it makes no difference, brethren, absolutely none. You are being blessed now to see the most awesome events - that's what you will be blessed to see - that will ever take place upon this earth. To see Jesus Christ return in those clouds. I hope you can just see that one event in your mind if you can't see anything else at this time, to see the blessing that just that one thing would be, and to see Jesus

Christ returning in those clouds to set up a just Government upon this earth. Just to know that that is taking place. It is an awesome blessing of your calling, brethren, to see those things.

Satan does not want his system to end and he will put up a massive fight as spiritual battling comes to a close, comes to an end. And there will be fear for God's people just as there were in ancient Israel - I'm sure of that - even though we understand and know what is coming. Moses told the Israelites to stand still and see God's deliverance, and you and me will have to do the same at the very end. But God has promised to you and me a protection as His Kingdom comes to this earth. God says that we are not to fear what is coming, that we are to conquer it through our faith and through our understanding that He has given to you and me. And you have to be close to the Great God of this universe and His Son to do such a thing. God tells us that Satan's system (Babylon) is self-destructing. We can see it on the news. We can see it coming apart. We can see that it is crashing. We can see that they are continuously struggling to keep the world's economic system from collapsing.

Germany and Greece were at it this week. They told Greece, pretty much, just to "suck it up and deal with it!" So we know what that'll probably do. That'll probably send them running to Russia. So we can see things that are going on in this world. We can see the debt that we have amassed in America. So we can see that we are losing that battle just in that one area alone, the economic system.

The ways of mankind will not work because they are based on the Babylonian system, Satan's system that has been created. And they will not work in the end. It will collapse. And this world is on the brink of a total economic collapse. It's not just America anymore, it's worldwide, brethren. It's everywhere. Can you imagine the panic that is coming when this economic collapse occurs? Just that one thing alone. We know what God says. Sudden destruction will come.

Let's go to Isaiah 2 (**Isaiah 2:2**), and let's refresh one about what God had written through Isaiah in His book about the end of this age. It's about the time that you and me live. God had Isaiah write that, **It would come to pass in the latter days**, that's now, brethren. That's where you and me live, "the latter days," the last days upon this earth just before Jesus Christ comes to this earth, **That the mountains** (the governments) **of the Eternal's house** (the Kingdom of God) will reign upon this earth. And that's what's being said. And it **will be established upon the top of the mountains**. What this is saying is that God's government is going to reign over the nations of this earth, **and it will be exalted above the hills**, so it's talking about the smaller nations, **and all nations will flow to it. Many people will come and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Eternal, to the house of the God of Jacob.** And let's notice what will take place: **He will teach us His ways**, what you are learning now, the correct way to live. And that's what this is saying, "He will teach them His ways," and they will be taught what you have already learned, brethren, to observe the Passover, to observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread and all of God's Holy Days and God's Sabbaths. And let's notice...**And we will walk in His paths**. In the way that God says through His government to walk, a just government finally upon this earth.

And let's notice...**For out of Zion will go forth the law**, from that City of Peace that will be here. **And the word of the Eternal from Jerusalem**, the City of Peace that will then teach the way of peace to all

the nations, that's what is actually being said. And **He will judge**, let's notice who it's between... **between the nations**. There will be a just Government upon this earth to judge, true judgement from the Great God of this universe and His Son. And let's notice the rest of the scripture: **And rebuke many people**. And let's notice what will take place: **They will beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks, and nation will not lift up sword against nation**. We cannot comprehend such a time. The whole world is on fire. All we have to do is turn on that little box and look, and we can see the massive killings that are taking place in this world. We can see. I cannot imagine anyone that could do such a thing, as cut off a person's head while he is alive. And I believe that it was just this week that ISIS cut off, what, 21 that we know about now? 21! So it's ongoing. Can you imagine such a mind that could do such a thing? *Who* do you think that mind is influenced by, brethren? So we can see these killings that are taking place throughout this world. We can see Russia, Iran, Greece, Iraq, Syria; Boko Haran taking women captives and doing such horrible things and horrific things that I can't even mention them in the sermon... the things that they are doing to those women and those young children.

God says He will stop every bit of this. God says **they will not learn war anymore**. It will be over, never to happen again, except once more when Satan is released, just one more time. But God will take care of that very swiftly. Jesus Christ will now reign as King of kings over all the nations. And if you continue in this way of life you will see this take place, because of the time you live in. Can we just imagine seeing such a time, such a thing? To live into... You will see mankind finally beginning to learn the correct way of life, to learn the way to true peace. And I cannot imagine a time when there will be no more war upon this earth. I *think* about it. But just in my lifetime, my father and his brothers, they were all in WWII, some in the Korean conflicts and other conflicts, friends fought in Vietnam. So it's not been a time of peace just in my lifetime, even though I have been afforded much of my life to live in peace in the United States of America. And I'm grateful for that, and I understand that because it is a blessing that comes from God through Abraham - because that's how we have that privilege today, because of those blessings. God says there will come a time when **they will learn war no more**, upon this earth. God says it's coming.

Verse 5—Oh house of Jacob, let us walk in the light of the Eternal. And now it's going to tell us about some things that had taken place. **For You have forsaken Your people, the house of Jacob**, and let's notice - **because they are filled with eastern ways**. Let's notice why. So this is a reference to religion. And most in America worship the sun god, Sunday, the day of the sun. And God says, **They are soothsayers like the Philistines, and they are pleased with the children of foreigners. The land is also full of silver and gold, and there is no end to their treasures**. It's a good description of the nations of Israel, because they have been blessed because of what God promised to Abraham. **Their land is also full of horses, and there is no end to their chariots**. And just as we were coming over here on this freeway or interstate, whatever you call it, that massive highway, there's a lot of "chariots" on just that one road. And when you place that all across the nations of Israel, can you imagine how many modern-day "chariots" there are running up and down those highways? God says there would be "no end to their chariots." So we can see that. We can see those modern-day "chariots." And they are everywhere, brethren. So we understand exactly what this is saying. I know where we live around Atlanta, Georgia, if

you arrive there about 5:00 you will be there for awhile. And I'm sure it's the same way in Cincinnati and some of these larger cities.

God says there is also... **Their land is also full of idols.** Man will worship anything, brethren. And this is well said because they do **worship the work of their own hands**, things that they make. And they polish these modern-day "chariots," keep them clean. Some pretty much worship that machine. If you don't believe it, go by the car washes and look. They're rubbing them, patting them... So it's amazing what they do, you know, what they get attached to, things that they make. So this is a perfect description of Satan's world, because that's what man does. "The work of his hands," that's what he worships. And the more toys they have, the more they worship them. **They worship the work of their own hands, that which their own fingers have made.**

Verse 10—Enter into the rock, and hide in the dust, from the terror of the Eternal, and the glory of His majesty.

Verse 11—The lofty looks of man will be humbled. Mankind will be humbled in just a short while, brethren. God says so. And it's just on your horizon. **The haughtiness of men will be bowed down, and the Eternal alone will be exalted in that day.** It's hard to comprehend such a time, but God says it will take place. And I know we look so forward to when this takes place, so forward to this day. **For the day of the Eternal of hosts shall come upon everything proud and lofty, upon everything lifted up—and it will be brought low—**everything will be humbled. Every man and woman will be humbled. And after Jesus Christ returns to this earth on the day of Pentecost, deliverance from bondage and captivity will be here. Can we see the magnitude of this exodus that will take place upon this earth? Satan and the demons will be chained and put into their prison, and they will not be able to influence man for another thousand years. Can you imagine the celebrations that will take place once mankind realizes that they have been delivered from captivity, captivity from Satan's world?

Verse 17—The loftiness of man will be bowed low/bowed down, and the haughtiness of men will be brought low; The Eternal alone will be exalted in that day, but the idols—let's notice—He will utterly abolish. They will go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, from the terror of the Eternal and the glory of His majesty—let's notice when—when He arises to shake the earth mightily.

Let's notice what will take place: **In that day a man will cast away his idols of silver and his idols of gold, which they have made, each for himself—let's notice, just what we were talking about a few minutes earlier—which they made, each for himself to worship.** And this is what man does. He worships the almighty currency, the almighty dollar here in America, the almighty automobile, the mansions that they build for themselves. But let's notice what God says they will do. **They will cast it to the moles and to the bats, to go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the crags of the rugged rocks, from the terror of the Eternal.** We can see that God says there will be terror, there will be fear, **And the glory of His majesty, when He arises to shake the earth mightily.** And it will be a glorious thing for you and me to see that glory. There will be a lot with fear, brethren. But for you and me, it'll be a joyous time for you

and me, to "see the glory of His majesty" come to this earth. And it's kind of hard to say such a thing when you know the destruction that is coming, but it will be a happy time for you and me, brethren, because we understand what is taking place upon this earth.

Isaiah 27; **Isaiah 27** and let's look at verse 1. It's about the restoration of Israel. That's the context of what is being said. And in the last sermon we looked at God's vineyard (God's garden), and that's the context of what is being said here in **verse 2. In that day sing to her, A vineyard of red wine!** So we can see that this is picturing red wine that comes out of a vineyard. And we use wine when we are celebrating, when we are relaxing. So this pictures a time of protection and a time when someone would actually relax. **On that day, let's notice, the Eternal will say of His pleasant vineyard, I watch over it and water it continually.** That's what God says. **I guard it day and night so that no one will harm it.** Remember the protection that we were talking about as this world comes to a close? God says that He waters it continually, and He says He will guard it day and night so that no one will harm it.

He says, **verse 4—I am no longer angry with the vineyard, with His garden. If there were thorns and briars to fight against,** let's notice what God said, **I would burn them up completely.** The New King James says, "Fury is not in Me." **Who would set briars and thorns;** in other words, "Who would do such a thing?" God says, **Who would do such a thing against Me in battle?** That's the question that is being asked. Who would dare do such a thing at this time? Let's notice God's reply to one that would attempt to do such a thing: **I would go through them, I would burn them together.** God would clean it up when it took place, brethren, and we know God has a day to burn those that would do such a thing, to burn them up completely, never to have life again, to not exist for all of eternity.

Verse 5, let's notice, **But if the enemies of My people want My protection...** So this is talking about the enemies of God's people, if they then begin to want God's protection, let's notice what God says they will have to do. **They will have to make peace with God. Yes, let them make peace with Me.** So if they listen to God and repent they can, at this time, make peace with God. **In the days to come the people of Israel, the descendants of Jacob, will take root like a tree, and they will blossom and bud.** So it's like God's garden. Israel is God's garden, and He is picturing Israel as blossoming and budding. So it pictures a wonderful time upon this earth, when all of mankind can begin to do such a thing. **And fill the face—let's notice—and fill the face of the world with fruit.** So this is picturing a time of peace, a time of prosperity for the earth and for God's people and for those that choose this way of life. And God uses the analogy of a garden, a vineyard that produces fruit. **The earth will be covered with the fruit they produce.** That's what God says will happen.

God tells us in **verse 7—Israel has not been punished by the Eternal as severely as its enemies nor lost as many people. The Eternal punished His people by sending them into exile.** So this is an explanation. **He took them away with a cruel wind from the east. But Israel's sins will be forgiven only when the stones—let's notice—of pagan altars are ground up like chalk, and no more incense altars or symbols of the goddess Asherah are left.** So we can see a time when all the churches, all the religions - the Catholics, the Baptists, the Methodists, the Buddhists, Islam - God says it will all be done

away with. **The fortified cities lie in ruins. It is deserted like an empty wilderness. And it has become—let's notice—a pasture for cattle, where they can rest and graze.**

Verse 11—The branches of the trees (I'm reading this out of a different translation if you're using the New King James). **The branches of the trees are withered and broken, and women gather them for firewood. Because the people have understood nothing.** So let's notice what God says, **God their Creator will not pity them or show them any mercy.** He will cast all their altars down, brethren, and they will have to make peace with the Great God of this universe. **On that day, from the Euphrates to the Egyptian border,** so let's notice what's being said, **the Eternal will gather His people one by one, as threshing separates the wheat from the chaff. So shall it be in that day,** as a result of what God does at that time, **the great trumpet will be blown. They will come, who are about to perish—let's notice—in the land of Assyria,** those that are captive to this world's governments. That's what's being said, **and those who are outcast in the land of Egypt, and will worship the Eternal, who is in the Holy Mountain at Jerusalem.** So we see the timeframe. God will bring an end to every government of man and He will establish His true Government upon this earth. And this will be the most awesome exodus that has ever taken place upon this earth, brethren, as God frees mankind from the bondage and the captivity.

We know our name, so we are to be practicing now what is to come upon this earth. We are to practice what this Holy Day season will teach you and me. We are to be repenting of sin and we are to continuously work to keep this sin out of our lives. We are to come out of spiritual Egypt so that we can see this great exodus that is about to take place upon this earth.

Let's go over to John 15...John 15. And we read this at every Passover, but let's go through it because the context here is about the true vine, and we are looking at God's vineyard, God's garden today. And God uses the analogy of His garden (His vineyard), and Jesus Christ says in **verse 1** that He is the true vine, **And My Father is the vinedresser.** So God is the gardener, so to speak. Jesus says, **Every branch in me that does not bear fruit He takes away, and every branch that bears fruit—let's notice—He prunes that it may bear more fruit. You are already clean because of the word, let's notice what's being said - because of the word which I have spoken to you. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.** There is no other way, brethren. This is the only way. **I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him,** so here is the analogy of a garden again, **bears much fruit.** It's the way God had it written... **for without Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and withered,** so that is what takes place once the mind turns. And it is a frightful thing, because when someone turns from God and rebels against the truths of God, they don't see it. They actually don't see it. God says if repentance does not come, God says that He will **gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned,** never to have life again. Death for all eternity.

Verse 7—If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, "abide in, dwell in, continue in," that's what it means, **you will ask what you desire, and it will be done for you.** And the desire is to be in God's Kingdom, brethren. That's the desire. **By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit,** and if

you "continue in, abide in," as Jesus Christ says, you will bear fruit...if you do these things. It says, **you will be My disciples. As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love.**

Let's notice **verse 10** and what is said, **If**, here is that word "*If*". **IF you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love.** So we can notice here that Jesus said that He kept God's commandments, and He is talking about the 10 Commandments from His Father.

Verse 11—These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and *that* your joy may be full. This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. And this is what Jesus Christ did. He gave His life for you and me and for all that want to be in the Kingdom of God, to live the way of life that God says to live, to put sin out of our lives. Those that desire this way of life, Jesus gave His life for those, all those that want to live God's way of life. **You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know—so let's notice what's being said -does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things,** let's notice (we talked about this earlier), **all things that I heard from God (His Father),** let's notice what Jesus is saying, "All things He heard from His Father, He has made known to you and me." We have everything that we need to be in the Kingdom of God. Better said: He is making it known to you and me, because it will be never-ending, when we understand. We will be *ever learning*.

Jesus said, "I have made known to you," and **You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you**—let's notice what we are to do, that we are to **go and bear fruit.** That's what we are to do. Every one of us that God calls, those of us that are in God's garden (so to speak), we are to produce fruit. We are to bear fruit. Jesus said that our **fruit should remain**, in other words, it should always be there. We should never have our fruit withering in the vine. Repent quickly, especially where we are in time, so that your fruit *will* remain and *not* begin to wither and that mind take that turn, because that's what will happen. **...that whatever you may ask in My Father's name He may give you.** So what this is talking about, it's talking about understanding of the correct way to live life, the way God says live it. God's way of life, that's what the context is. **These things I command you—let's notice—that you love one another. If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before *it hated* you. And if you were of the world, the world would love its own.** And I think all of us have experienced these scriptures. We've lived this. We know that we are not very popular in this world. **Yet because you are not of this world, and I chose you out of the world, therefore, the world hates you.** Because of that calling, because of what you know, because of what you understand, and because of the way you live life, they hate it. And we are not well liked in Satan's world, but that's about to change, brethren, in just a short while. But they do not like you and me at this time.

Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. And they do. All of us experience this persecution in this world, Satan's world. **If they kept My word, they will keep yours also.** And there is coming a time in the near

future that you will see this take place. They will *want* to know what you know. **But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake, because they do not know Him who sent Me.** And they don't. And they don't want to know the Great God of this universe at this time. They want no part of God's word at this time. They want no part of what you and me believe. But that's about to change.

If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have no sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. He who hates Me hates My Father also. And they do, even though they don't understand it. **If I had not done among them the works which no one else did, they would have no sin; but now they have seen and also hated both Me and My Father.**

Let's see what **verse 25** tells us. Let's notice why. This tells us why all this happens: ***This happened that the word might be fulfilled which is written in their law, 'They hated Me without a cause.'***

Let's go back to the beginning of Adam and Eve. Let's pick up the story in Genesis 3. Genesis 3:1—And we looked at part of this in the last sermon. **Now the serpent, Satan** (we know the serpent was Satan), **was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?'"** So it's a question that Satan is putting to Eve. So Satan is putting doubt in Eve's mind. **And the woman said to the serpent (Satan), We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden,** so we can see God's garden that God had planted for Adam and Eve, and God said, **but of the fruit of the tree—let's notice—which *is* in the midst of the garden,** so there was a tree there that was forbidden to them, **You shall not eat it, nor shall you even touch it, lest you die.** So here came the lie, the deception. **So Satan lied to the woman and he said, You will not surely die. For God knows—let's notice what he said—that in the day that you eat of it your eyes (your mind) will be opened.** And here is the enticement that he used—let's notice— **you will be like God.** Now, how would all of you like to be like God? That's the enticement he used, to have that kind of knowledge, to have that kind of power as the Great God of this universe. So can you imagine Satan offering such a thing? And let's notice, **knowing good and evil.** In other words they would actually raise their thinking above God, to know better than God, to raise their thinking above the Great God of this universe. Can you imagine doing such a thing? To even think you could do such a thing with this human mind?

So when the woman saw that the tree *was* good for food, that it *was* pleasant to the eyes, and a tree—let's notice—*desirable to make one wise,* to give understanding, to make one smart, actually, to make one smart. It'll make you really smart, smarter than God. **So she took of the fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.**

Verse 7—Then the mind of both of them was opened, and they knew that they *were* naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves covering. So this shows that they were ashamed, and now they wanted to cover up. Why else would you want to do such a thing? **And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden,** the garden that God had created to sustain their every need. Think about it. So now they were hiding themselves in that garden from God because of what they had done, because of sin, because of rebellion against what God told them not to

do. They had disobeyed, so they had actually rebelled against the Great God of this universe by going against what God had told them, not to eat of that fruit. They were disobedient.

Then the LORD God called to Adam and said to him, **Where *are* you? And he said, I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid.** Do you think Adam was ever afraid up to this time in that garden that provided their every need? So now we see fear, **because I was naked; and I hid myself. God said, Who told you that you *were* naked?** So they had become "smart," I guess. That's how they knew that they were naked. They had become really "smart," because of that fruit that they had ate. **Have you eaten from the tree which I commanded you that you should not eat? Then the man said, The woman whom You gave *to be* with me,** so here comes the justification and "the passing of the buck," so to speak, **she gave me of the tree, and I ate. And the LORD God said to the woman, What is this that you have done? And the woman said** (justification and "pass the buck," on to someone else), **The serpent deceived me, and I ate.** But she also knew what God had said, and so sin entered into their lives because of what they did.

Verse 22—Then the LORD God said, Behold, the man has become like God (better said), and he has taken it upon himself to raise his thinking above the Great God of this universe. That's what took place. **And now, lest he put forth his hand and also take of the tree of life, and eat—let's notice— and eat and live forever.** So there was a tree of life in God's garden. There weren't just the physical trees that God had placed in that garden. There was something else. And they cut themselves off from that knowledge that would have been provided about the tree of life that they would have been offered. But they cut themselves off by sin, by rebelling, and that cut them off from any further knowledge from the Great God of this universe. Can you imagine doing such a thing? To cut yourself off from that knowledge, that kind of knowledge? **Therefore, the LORD God sent him out of the garden of Eden—let's notice—to till the ground.** So now Adam would have to plant his own garden. That's what God is making him do. And I can assure you that it was not going to sustain him like God's garden sustained him. We know that there will be weeds, briars, and thorns that will come up in his garden. God said there wouldn't be any in His, if you remember what we read earlier. God sent Adam and Eve out of His garden **to till the ground from which he was taken. So He drove out the man; and He placed cherubim at the east of the Garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life.** Let's notice: "To guard the way to the tree of life." So they were cut off from the way to that tree of life.

God did not just create Adam and Eve and abandon them, brethren. We know that God taught Adam and Eve the correct way to live their life. God did not leave them just to figure out life, to decide for themselves how to live. God told Adam and Eve the correct way that they were to live their life. And we know that God told Adam and Eve about a way of life that would be rewarding, that would be exciting, a way that they would have no shame—if they lived God's way of life. They would have no fear. God tells us about His ways that are contained in His book, and that is the way that you and me are to strive to live, by what is written in God's book, to use the whole Bible, not just pick and choose as some people upon this earth do out of a little condensed version.

Once Adam and Eve sinned something happened in their mind and they raised their thinking above the Great God of this universe. And they began to decide for themselves what was right and what was wrong, and that cut them off from a relationship with the Great God of this universe, from the true ways of God, from the true knowledge, that that's the only place that it could come from, from God. Now their minds were polluted. Now they were to use *their* mind to decide. That human, carnal mind that is naturally hostile to God, that's the mind that they were now to use. And sin had cut them off and polluted their minds. Sin cuts you and me off from God, from the correct way to think when that mind turns, when sin enters in. They rejected God's way of life and they began to decide the way of life that they wanted to live without God, without God's influence in their life. They just wanted to live it the way they wanted to live it. The way mankind is today. And you see the results of living that way of life. Man will destroy every living thing upon the face of this earth by living the way that he sees to live life. That's what would take place. Nothing would be left - a puff of smoke - if God didn't intervene.

So we see in the book of Genesis that man became cut off from God, from God's presence during the very beginning. And we know that for the next 6,000 years, unless God specifically wanted to use someone, unless God offered to them, made an offer to them to call them to be part of His Family, man was cut off from God. And only then, unless God called, could man come into a relationship with the Great God of this universe, and eventually, His Son. God has progressively revealed His ways down through time and He revealed Himself one way to Adam. He revealed Himself one way to Moses, another way to Abraham. And God has revealed Himself down through time in different ways to those that He has worked with and is working with. And that is why you see the many different names for God in God's book, because of the different ways that He worked with those in the past, but God has been leading mankind back into a relationship with Him, and just as it was with Adam and Eve in the beginning. Can we comprehend what they were given, to be in direct contact with the Great God of this universe? God has worked to bring mankind into a time upon this earth, a thousand-year reign of His government upon this earth, to begin to teach mankind, a time when God's spirit will be here to help bring back mankind into a relationship with Him. Can we comprehend it, what is taking place?

Let's turn over to the book of Acts, Acts 3:19. **Acts 3:19.** It's in this Kingdom that God will begin. Through His Son, God will restore all things that mankind should have had as the true ways and the true knowledge of life. That's why the words of Peter on the day of Pentecost in AD 31 are so important. God told, through Peter, let's notice... **Repent**, that's what God said. That is a very important word in our lives, "repentance." We know this means "to think differently," and then we know that we are to become converted, we are to become changed. Actually it means back to becoming what God offered in the beginning to Adam and Eve, when we understand. But they cut themselves off in that garden, God's garden. And they were cut off from the tree of life and its true meaning. But now God is offering to you and me, those in the Church of God that is preparing for this Kingdom that is coming back to this earth, to teach those things once again, to bring mankind back into a relationship with the Great God of this universe. God calls it a "time of refreshing." Last part of verse 19. God tells us that when that time comes, the time of refreshing, so **that your sins may be blotted out**, let's notice what's being said, **when the time of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Eternal. That's Acts 3:19. ...and that He**

may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before, whom heaven must receive—let's notice—until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets—let's notice how long—since the world began. We know that Jesus Christ is sitting at the right hand of God at this time waiting for the time when He can come to this earth to begin this process.

Verse 22—Moses truly said to the fathers, The Eternal your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your brethren. Him you shall hear in all things, whatever He says to you. And it will be *that* every soul who will not hear that Prophet—let's notice—will be utterly destroyed from among the people. The pruning that would take place. Yes, and all the prophets, from Samuel and those who follow, and as many as have spoken, have also foretold these days. You are the sons of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying to Abraham, And in your seed all the families of the earth will be blessed. To you first, God, having raised up His Servant Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one *of you* from your iniquities. The Greek word used as "refreshing" is also a Greek word that could mean "revival." And I even hate to use that word because of what the Protestant world does with it. But Adam and Eve turned away from the Great God and they turned to their own thinking to decide for themselves, and that is the path that all of mankind has followed ever since. We have followed in their footsteps, and man now decides for himself what is right and what is wrong. And man judges by the way that *he* wants to live life, the way that he thinks. And he judges by what he thinks in a matter. That's how he lives. Man judges how he wants to worship God and it does not make any difference what God says in His book. Man uses his own mind to decide those things.

And you can look at where this has led. You can look at this world. Let's just take Christianity in itself. No secular group agrees with the other. The Baptists, the Methodists, the Catholics—doesn't make any difference, you can go on and on—there is no agreement. And because man uses this carnal mind to decide for himself, he thinks whatever he thinks in that mind is the correct way to worship his God. That's what he uses, that mind, and there is no agreement when man uses his mind without what God says about how to worship Him. But man thinks that he looks to God for knowledge. Some actually think that! But we know that man does not do such a thing. We are the only ones that can do such a thing with God's spirit. And this is the only place that you can find the true way to worship your God. It's the only place on the face of this earth. But God is working to bring mankind back into unity and harmony with Him that He offered in the very beginning. That's what He's doing. Just like He offered to Adam and Eve from the very beginning how to live life the correct way and to be obedient to His instructions, but man rebelled, so here we are in time.

So Peter is telling you and me to think differently. Peter is telling us to repent—that important word—to think differently. And we are to become changed in our thinking. That's what takes place when God opens your mind. "Converted" is another way of saying it. The mind becomes converted to God's way of thinking once you are baptized and receive God's spirit. And we are to do so by thinking and living differently. We do. We live differently from anyone else upon the face of this earth. And we are to come into agreement with God and God's way of life that He tells us about in this book. And we are to live this way of life, the very things that God gave to Adam and Eve in the beginning in His garden, the correct way to live life.

We know that their sins cut themselves off from any communication with the Great God, but God has made a way for you and me, that remnant Church at the end, that will be there at the end, made a way for us through the Passover, Jesus Christ. And this paints you and me a picture of what He did. The Passover, the Feast of Unleavened Bread paints us a picture of what we will all have to go through, the process. Everyone that will want to live this way of life, that's what they will have to do, to do what you're doing now. They will have to begin to keep the Sabbath. They will begin to keep the Holy Days. They will then have to become baptized. They will then have to receive God's spirit and keep the Passover. God says it will become a "time of refreshing" when man begins to do these things. And we can see why because of what it will create upon this earth, and it will be a joyous time upon this earth. It will be a happy time upon this earth when there are no more wars, when there is peace upon this earth, and everyone that wants to be there will be seeking to live God's way of life. Can you imagine such a time as that? And it will be a time of refreshing, just as God says in His book. It will be a time when man's sins will become blotted out and that refreshing will come from the presence of the Great God of this universe and His Son.

And when those times of refreshing came for you and me, do we know when that began? It began when we recognized we had some truth. God opened your mind and now you could think differently. And it was refreshing to know! It was so refreshing that you ran to everybody you knew and you told them about what you had found out. And you thought it was really refreshing at that time! And it was... just for you. But you found out very quickly it was not for everybody else. So you became to understand that it was a calling from the Great God of this universe and it refreshed your mind. So that "time of refreshing" began then for you and me, when God opened that mind.

But that "time of refreshing" will come in just a short while to the whole world when this Millennium begins upon this earth, when Jesus Christ sets His foot upon this earth to set up the Government of God upon this earth. In the beginning, in the Garden of Eden, God began to educate Adam and Eve in His ways of life. There was so much knowledge, I'm sure, that Adam and Eve were given at that beginning, but it was cut short because of sin. The first two human beings upon this earth were cut off, the very first two that God put here. They cut themselves off from God, and Adam and Eve ceased to learn what God had really offered them. They were cut off from that knowledge, of what was really in the future, from that tree of life. They were cut off from it. And then they began to lose what they had received from the Great God of this universe. We can see it now. We know that those that have been, walked side-by-side amongst us, and they are losing what they were given. So we are witness to these things just by those that we know have left God's Church. We see how that mind, when it takes a turn and that knowledge drifts away. I know some in this room have experienced it. And probably back during the Apostasy and afterwards, some of you probably started mowing the lawns on the Sabbath. Am I right? Did any do that? I see heads nodding. So we know firsthand how that can happen. Would you think you would ever do such a thing? I never thought it would come down the way it did, but it did, but God has given us an explanation through His progressive truth.

You've heard me say many, many times when that mind takes a turn they begin to lose what God has given to them. Once it does it, that's the beginning of it. It's fading away. But you know what they think? They think physically from that time on. That's what they do. Just like Adam and Eve, they now have to use that physical mind. And they try to physically keep the Sabbath. And you would probably have to tie them in a chair to get them to eat pork. You'd probably have to force it down their throat. And they do not understand that they have been cut off from the Great God of this universe and His Son. They do not think they've left God, brethren. They think they still worship God. But God says that's not so in His book. There's only one way. There's only one Church, only one truth.

Adam and Eve was cut off when they sinned, when they turned against the Great God of this universe, because of that rebellion that they did. And then they could no longer be in God's Garden, His spiritual creating that He was creating, His Family, Elohim. God is growing a garden. And I hope we understand that, because it's an analogy that God uses in His book. He's growing a spiritual garden and it started in that Garden of Eden. That tree of life was there in the midst of the garden and the example of what happened to Adam and Eve, what they did, has been repeated over and over and over down through time. And it's like a broke record; it just keeps going. Adam and Eve were given access to God from the very beginning, but in time they made the choice to disobey and partake of that forbidden fruit and sin, and that cut them off. That sin, it cut them off to see what God had prepared for them *beyond* that physical Garden of Eden. And they lost it. It was taken away. Once sin entered, their eyes were closed to anything that was spiritual from God, and they could no longer continue in God's ways. They were now to use their human, carnal, physical mind until they died, and they could no longer continue in God's ways, because you cannot do it without God's help.

When I made the statement about cutting the grass on the Sabbath, that's a fine example. Because God's spirit was not there and that's what happens. You cannot do it without communication to the Great God of this universe and His Son.

Since Adam and Eve sinned, they were cut off, and mankind had to be called (be invited) by God and be offered the chance to be in what God is creating, Elohim, His family. You have to be invited. Once the Church began on the day of Pentecost the means for forgiveness of sin through the Passover became manifest. And once you and me were called into God's Church and we received that Passover sacrifice into our lives, we were given access to God's spirit at baptism, and we were given the opportunity to repent and think differently, to change and live the way that God says to live life. And God opened your mind to that way of life, of how to live life. We know that there are those that have been tried and tested at the end of this age, who would no longer follow God and have reverted back into the old sins, just like Adam and Eve, in deciding for themselves what is right and what is wrong about following God. And they are cut off from God's spirit just as Adam and Eve was cut off from that tree of life.

Brethren, for someone to do this, to turn against God after God has awakened them, it's a scary thing, because if repentance does not take place there is that lake of fire and I'm afraid some that have walked amongst us have gone too far. John teaches us through God's book that when they do such a thing that

they become antichrist at that time. And they will continue to be antichrist to the day that they repent and this is no small thing with God.

God's laws, God's ways, and God's truths, and God's words are spiritual and I hope we've come to understand that, and this can only be learned and sustained through God's spirit dwelling in your mind. It's the only way you can know this. And you have to be continuing, dwelling, dwelling in this way of life to have God's spirit. Remember that word "if"? "*If you continue in...*"? "*If you abide in...*"? "*If you dwell in...*"?

Just like John 15 that we just read about the Passover, those words. Sin will cut that flow of God's spirit off and that is the reason repentance is so important. It is so important to repent quickly, brethren. Sin cuts you off until you repent and that's what this season of Passover and Unleavened Bread is about - sin and the importance of putting sin out of our lives. It paints us a picture of how we are to live our life. God has it every year to remind you and me of what sin will do to those of us in God's Church. If someone today becomes cut off from God's spirit they can no longer hear what you and me hear. And when the "man of sin" did what he did in Atlanta, Georgia, in the Church of God, and he created the Apostasy in the Church of God, we know that he became the ultimate antichrist, as he was the head of God's Church upon this earth (the physical head). So he became the ultimate antichrist. But those that do such a thing, they become the same - antichrist. That's what they become and they no longer have the life of God and Jesus Christ living in them, in their minds, and they become just like Adam and Eve. They become separated from God, from communication with God. There's no more communication. Only in their mind is there communication. And that's what happened to Adam and Eve. They were no longer to communicate with the Great God of this universe about how to live life. That's the reason repentance is so important for you and me. God made a way for you and me through the Passover to cover our sins so that we can continue to learn what God leads in a progressive manner to you and me Sabbath by Sabbath, Holy Day by Holy Day. But once you are cut off you will lose what was given to you, if that takes place.

So to repent, to think differently is very important for you and me, so that our sins will continue to be blotted out, so that we can be there when the "times of refreshing" comes, when God sends Jesus Christ back to this earth to bring about the restitution of all things. And God has spoken about those things by all the holy prophets down through time. It will be exciting to see what was there in the beginning, in that Garden of Eden - be exciting to see those things.

I want to use some of what Ron wrote in the post that just came out. This sermon was already prepared. And I'll just quote just a little bit about what Ron wrote about Adam and Eve. It's amazing how God does things sometimes.

Ron says, "The most important thing God told the first two created humans was that they were to 'dress and keep' **themselves**, but they did not have the ears to hear. Mankind, beginning with Adam and Eve, was the primary focus for all of God's creation, although God's creation of Adam and Eve (just as any individual)

was not completed simply when they were created as physical beings. Their creation was to have continued," just what was in this sermon, brethren. "Their creation was to have continued beyond the instantaneous physical one that gave them physical life, and a creation 'in them' was to have continued over their lifetime."

"Adam and Eve, because of yielding to their own selfish nature, cut themselves off from being able to continue in the process of God's creation that could have transformed" —let's notice — "their human mind and thinking to that of God's. The choice to follow one's own selfish nature is simply the way of mankind," exactly what we've been talking about, "and since such choices are opposed to God's ways, they simply result in sin. All mankind has sinned, except for one — Jesus Christ. So in God's timing and according to His purpose, He determines when He will call (invite)" just what we've been talking about, "a person into a relationship with Him for the purpose of a 'continuing creation' that has been ongoing from the beginning in order to bring about Elohim through the transformation of the mind in those who are called. This is an 'ongoing creation' in the development of a new mind and not of one that is instantaneously created."

Let's turn over to Isaiah 55:8... Isaiah 55:8. We will see what God had written through Isaiah. God clearly reveals that mankind's own ways are not of Him, but are actually against His ways. Isaiah and Paul both speak about this. God says in "Isaiah 55:8—'For my thoughts (in other words) [ways of thinking and reasoning] are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,' says the Eternal," the Great God of this universe. So putting this simply, "Both ways are opposite to each other in motive and intent. God's thinking and ways are outgoing to the benefit of others, but mankind's thinking is inward (selfish) to the benefit of self above others."

"As it has been recently pointed out, this is why God makes it clear that man's ways must be changed. The mind of mankind is to become healed of selfishness." Isaiah 57:18... Isaiah 57:18. And this "is what is being spoken of when God says, 'I have seen his [mankind's] (talking about mankind's) ways [that are selfish by nature], (and let's notice) and will heal him.'"

Let's go over to Romans 8:7 and we'll begin to finish up. Romans 8:7—"Paul addresses it a little more directly." We probably know this by heart, but it's good to see it in print. "Because the carnal mind [the ways, the mind, and the thinking within human nature] is enmity [is hostile, is opposed]," to the Great God of this universe and His Son, "for it is not subject to the law of God (and let's notice), and neither can it be." Just can't. Can't do it without God's help. Just what we've been talking about. "By nature, the human mind and thinking is opposite of God." That is just our nature. And, "This is true to the degree that the human mind is actually **hostile** and **naturally opposed** to God's ways, so that God's ways can only be seen as a threat, an obstacle, and a great interference to how one wants to live life their own way (of life)."

God is going to restore again what He began to give and reveal in the beginning. We know that through time God has been progressively restoring truth. God has been restoring His ways and His purpose. And it's been primarily to the 144,000, the firstfruits, the firstfruits of the harvest from the Great God of this universe, from God's garden, the first harvest out of that garden. And they will be there with Jesus Christ when He returns to set up the Government of God upon this earth, in that first harvest, the reaping of that first harvest, to become the firstfruits of God, to set up the Government of God upon this earth. And we are nearly at the end of this period of time and we are about to enter that millennial reign of Jesus Christ upon this earth. And that will begin "the restitution of all things," for mankind during the Millennium, during the thousand-year reign of Jesus Christ upon this earth and the 144,000, the firstfruits out of God's garden that will be here upon this earth.

So, brethren, remember that God has a garden. That is what He likens it to in His book and we are God's vineyard. We are God's garden. And hopefully everyone that is here now sitting in this room will be there at the end, and they will produce fruit so that they can be in God's garden. We know that the second harvest at the Last Great Day is a much greater harvest, brethren. We look so forward to that Hundred-year period when mankind... some will be given a second chance to live the way of life. And there are many that have walked among you and me that will be there, that will come up in that next resurrection, and they will begin to tell others about this way of life that they learned, the parts that they learned in the first life, that this is the correct way to live.

So, brethren, with that we will end the sermon today.□