

Welcome to this seventh-day Sabbath, brethren.

Last week we considered the fact that we know and understand one of the greatest mysteries that God has revealed to mankind, yet we often underestimate the knowledge, the understanding that we have about being human, about being natural. The knowledge and understanding of the truth that we must change the way we are, change our thinking, is an incredible gift from God. The world does not have this knowledge; they have no understanding about this transformation that must take place. It's a mystery of God which they cannot come to see or understand of and by themselves.

The title of today's sermon is, *Everyone Must Change*, and this will be *Part 2*.

The purpose of this sermon series is to explore what it means to change our thinking. Last time we looked at various scriptures in Jeremiah and also in the book of Romans, and they related to the fact that we have been born, or we have been given a natural mind, that it's of the flesh, and of and by itself it cannot recognize anything that is spiritual. Now, the gift of God is God's spirit living and dwelling in us. Well, this gift reveals our nature, what we really are.

We finished *Part 1* in Romans 8, and we're going to pick it up in verse 11. Romans 8:11. Now, last week we did establish the truth that God has revealed about what we are, *who* we are, the natural carnal mind, that our mind is nothing like God's mind. We do not think like God. Of and by ourselves we are selfish, and God is not selfish. So the two ways of thinking are poles apart, and we looked at that. We do not by nature think like God. We are of the flesh. We are selfish.

Romans 8:11—But if the spirit of Him (God the Father) who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through/by His spirit (by God's spirit) which dwells in you. Now, this is a great promise and this is the purpose of life. To live a life with a natural mind, then to be called, to have our minds opened by the power of God's holy spirit so that we can choose to change, and then God reveals truth to our minds and we have a choice whether or not we're going to yield to God, yield to God's spirit, and we're going to have our minds transformed (have our minds changed) so that at some point in time God, through the power of *His* spirit and the fact that we have God's holy spirit living and dwelling in us, will raise us up as He did Jesus Christ and He will give us spirit life. Now, *that* is the purpose of life.

Verse 12—Therefore, brethren, we are debtors—not to the flesh, so we do not owe the flesh anything. We owe our natural carnal mind nothing; it has to be actually gotten rid of. ...**to live according to the flesh.** Well, we should not yield to our desires, the things of selfishness. **For if you live according to the flesh,** so if we "live according to the flesh," if we live and choose selfishness over God's way of thinking - so we have a choice in this - if we "live according to the flesh," we yield to our selfishness, **you (we) will**

die. Because? We cannot enter Elohim. Now, there's only one outcome in life for those that choose to yield to the flesh and not yield to God's holy spirit. Now, God, in His mercy, gives us opportunity to yield to His spirit, and there is many that have been called and they haven't been chosen. They're not part of the 144,000. Well, going forward the same principle will apply, that those who live according to the flesh, those that *desire* to yield to their own selfishness, those that desire *not* to fight, they will not go against themselves, against their own desires, they will die. Now, God in His mercy gives, sometimes, more than one opportunity for a person. So someone can be called and then go to sleep or rebel against God, and at some point God will give them the opportunity to see themselves once again; He'll provide His spirit back to them so that they can have this opportunity. Now, there are thousands and thousands of people that are in this position because they're going to be resurrected and they're going to have the opportunity to live a life again, which is to live life in the Hundred-year period. Now, we understand that there are many from the era of Laodicea that have actually gone to sleep, and God will give them the opportunity to come into the Millennium through an awakening, through the provision of His holy spirit to their minds again, and they will have a choice. They'll have a choice whether or not they want to live or whether they want to die. It *is* their choice.

...but if by the spirit, "now, if by the holy spirit," **you put to death the deeds of the body,** those things which we do by nature, the selfishness in us. So we have to be putting to death this selfishness that lies within our natural thinking, **you (we) will live,** because we will have God living and dwelling in us. So there is a clear choice here, brethren. We're either fighting and we can live, and if we don't fight, we will die. Now, this refers to two things. This is about battling on a spiritual level, because if we are willing to fight our selfishness, our motives and intents, to bring them into check, to bring our motive and intent to God's motives and intent, we will live. But if we want to yield to our own selfishness, we will die - spiritually. We will die spiritually and in the end (the end result goes back to something physical) we will die. Our natural bodies will be destroyed. They won't have spirit life. But if we take on the mind of God and we're fighting against our own selfishness, fighting against our selfish motives that we have by nature (and we do this by the power of God's holy spirit), we will live, we will be given spirit life. The physical body will be gotten rid of, but we will have a spiritual body. We will be in Elohim, which is the purpose of life.

For as many as are led by the spirit of God, these are sons of God. Now, we looked at this last week, also, with regards to the fact that we required God's holy spirit living and dwelling in us for the purpose of making us sons of God, because without that we're not sons of God. It's only by the power of God's holy spirit that we are called sons of God. God must be living and dwelling in us. Now, when we look at that term "sons of God" with this sermon series we can see what it's about. It's about the natural carnal mind and God's thinking. So, natural thinking. God's thinking. Well, we have to be led by God's thinking, God's spirit living and dwelling in us. We have to be led by God's way of thinking. And with this we are then called "sons of God." Well, really, we are "*begotten* sons of God," because we've been begotten by God's spirit; we've been begotten by God's thinking. Well, this thinking in us (God's spirit living and dwelling in us), well, this makes us begotten sons of God, because this, now, tells us the potential. We have the potential to be in Elohim. Well, we're begotten sons of God. Once we are changed to spirit, we become

truly *sons* of God because God's spirit lives and dwells in us forever and will never be taken from us. God's thinking will be in us. We'll no longer think selfishly; we will think like God. We'll have our own personalities, but we'll have godly thinking. Now, godly thinking cannot sin. God does not think that way. Well, as we have read before with regards to the two ways of thinking, God's thinking and man's thinking cannot be compared. They are poles apart! It's only this being led by God's spirit or being begotten by God's spirit that makes us sons of God.

Verse 15—For you did not receive the spirit of bondage, well, we didn't receive this spirit from God that takes us back into this natural way of thinking, **again to fear**, because we've now got a different way of thinking, **but you received the spirit of adoption**, which is this spirit of a sonship (we're begotten sons), **by which we cry, Abba, Father**. So we're now in this personal relationship with God and we're not in a relationship about selfishness. We're in a relationship with God so that we can yield to God. We want God to transform our thinking. So we're now begotten sons. We're *in* this personal relationship with God, and we have a desire that matches God's. God's desire is to transform our thinking. Well, we're in a relationship with God because we desire to have our thinking transformed.

Now, what is this all about? Well, when we look at it there's lots of things that have happened in our life. Firstly, God has called us. Then we have come to see, to accept the very sacrifice of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins. So Jesus Christ has paid the penalty for sin: "The wages of sin is death." Well, now forgiveness is open to us. Because sin has been forgiven, forgiveness is available to us. Now, based on that forgiveness we now enter a relationship with God and the transformation of our thinking can begin. Now, this transformation can only happen powered by God's thinking living and dwelling in us. God's holy spirit lives and dwells in us, which is the beginning process of this transformation of the way we think. We're moving from selfish motives to godly motives. Now, *that* is that transformation. Now, it's all based on repentance and forgiveness, because as we see that we are wrong in so many things in the way we think, we can go to God and repent. Repentance is the fact that we are changing the way we think; we don't want to think the way of selfishness anymore and we want to come into unity of spirit with God. We want to be at-*one* with God. To be at-one with God and to be in unity with God we have to get rid of the way we think naturally and take on the very thinking of God. Now, that is the purpose of life. The purpose of life is to transform the way we think. It can only be done by the power of God's holy spirit living and dwelling in us. God's spirit must reveal what we really are - selfish. So this transformation is all for the purpose of becoming at-one with God or being in unity of spirit with God. We believe God. We come into unity with Him. We become at-*one* with His way of thinking.

Now, if that is taking place in our life, at some point in time God will fulfill His promise and raise us (change these mortal bodies) to His spirit body, to a spirit body like Jesus Christ has been given, and we will then be at-one and in unity with God forever. Marvelous plan that God has. How incredible is God that He would do this for physical humans? Because we're nothing. Compared to God, we are nothing. But this is God's great love and this is God's desire for a family that will be fulfilled within humans. God will have a family. Now, whether or not we want to be part of that family, whether we want to continue to fight against our selfishness, these are choices that we have in life. And to stay close to God, to have

God's spirit living and dwelling in us *is* about this ongoing repentance and God's willingness to forgive and provide His spirit to us so that we can transform our thinking.

Verse 16—The spirit itself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, so now we are becoming in unity with God and we are *now* truly sons of God. Now, when we are changed to spirit we *are* sons of God. So at the moment we are begotten.

Verse 17—and if children, then heirs, so we are now heirs of a promise, **heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ**. Now, Christ has already inherited. Now, we are joint-heirs because we can gain the same thing that Jesus Christ has been given. God will give us what He has given Jesus Christ, and that is spirit life in Elohim. Now, when we look at this physically we can see that a father has a son and the son becomes an heir. Well, we are sons of God. We are begotten sons of God, therefore, that makes us heirs of God. So we will inherit what God is going to give, which is what God has given to Jesus Christ. Well, we're the same. We're going to be given it at a point in time **if indeed we suffer with Him**, if we suffer with Christ, **that we may also be glorified together**, that we may be changed to spirit.

Now, what is this "suffering" that we're going to have to do. Now, Jesus Christ suffered in the flesh. He had God's thinking, but He suffered in the flesh. So He suffered pain from the point of view of physical pain. He suffered the torment, the rejection, all of those things of mankind, but He always thought the way God thought about the matter. He knew His purpose in life. Well, brethren, we know our purpose in life, and that's what we're covering - to change the way we think. Now, "if indeed we suffer." If we suffer: How do we suffer? We have to suffer by denying selfishness. We have to fight pride. We have to fight sin. So we suffer everyday because the desire that comes up in us, the thinking that comes up in us, we have to put it to death, we have to deny self, we have to control self, and we have to take on the very thinking of God, God's way of thinking about a matter.

Verse 18—For I consider the suffering of this present time, so this suffering of the present time, these battles that we have in the mind, these battles that we undertake every single day about fighting the pride, about fighting the selfishness, about fighting the hurt of self, because self hurts. When self is criticized or rejected or things don't go the way self thinks, it suffers. Well, that's good, because when we feel that pain we know something's wrong. We know pride is being affected. Well, we need to then reject those feelings of pride. We need to battle against it. We need to come to think, well, what's really going on within our minds. "Why do I feel this way? Why am I anxious about this?" Or, "Why do I feel hurt because somebody else has been elevated in a role of service? What's all that about?" Well, that's all about pride. We have to now suffer. We have to suffer by getting rid of self because getting rid of self is painful. Getting rid of self is painful! Now, we have to take this battle in the mind and get rid of self. We have to take on the thinking of God.

Verse 18 again—For I consider the suffering of this present time, what we're going through now and all the different sufferings that we're going to do, **are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us**. So this development of character, this transforming of the mind that is going to take place *is not to be compared* with what God is going to give us - godly character in Elohim, spirit life!

So what's going to be revealed in us? God's thinking, God's character. And when's it going to be given? At a resurrection, at a point in time. The glory we're going to receive is God's very character, God's very thinking that is going to be revealed in us, and we're not going to be able to sin. We're not going to be able to feel pain. So what we go through now, there's *no comparison*. It's like we did before with that comparison between the heavens and the earth. Well, God's thinking can't be compared to natural thinking. Well, the transformation that can take place through suffering, through denying self, by getting rid of self (powered by God's holy spirit), we can't compare to what the gift is, the gift of God, the glory of God, God's mind, living in Elohim. We can't compare it. Well, being natural it's very hard to "see" these things, to see them on a spiritual level. But God is saying through Paul that we shouldn't compare them, that we're not worthy of any of what God is going to give, and all we have to do is set our minds to fight self, to recognize self, to recognize selfishness in us and fight against it till the day we die. Will we sin? Will we fail? Absolutely. We will fail regularly! But through God's great gift of mercy we have the gift of repentance and forgiveness so that we can continue to battle, to never give up, to endure to the end. And enduring to the end is enduring the battle against self until we no longer have to battle. And the day we don't have to battle anymore is when we die or when we are changed to spirit.

Verse 19—For the earnest expectation of the creation (mankind) eagerly awaits for the revealing of the sons of God, the 144,000, and, of course, at a point in a resurrection to come. So God's way of being has to be within mankind for this transformation to take place, this revealing of the sons of God. **For the creation (mankind) was subject to futility.** Yes, we were made with a natural carnal mind that is hostile against God and not subject to the laws of God and indeed cannot be. So we're subject to vanity. We're subject to this way of thinking, but it wasn't done for no reason. It was done for a purpose. ...**not willingly, but because of Him**, God the Father knowing what His plan was, **who subjected it in hope.** We have a hope because we know what is taking place within our life, and we know the outcome. Now, this is an incredible gift! This goes back to the very beginning of this sermon series. We know (we understand) the purpose of life, that God made us this way for a purpose, so that we can be transformed in our thinking so that we can enter Elohim.

Verse 21—Because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage (from the bondage of sin), of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. Freedom! We will be free from decay. We will not be destroyed. We will not be gotten rid of. Because? We're going to be delivered by this transformation of the way we think.

Hebrews 2:1—Therefore, we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away. So we have to be aware of what the purpose of life is. We have to be careful about the way we think. We have to give *earnest heed*, we have to be very careful, we have to *pay attention to* the things we have heard in the Church (the truth) lest we drift away. Because we can drift away from the truth. By? Neglect! By not fighting against selfishness. So we have to now be very careful not to neglect our calling, because that's what we would do. *If* we neglect our calling, we will be not fighting against our own selfishness. We've forgotten who we really are. We've forgotten we were made physical with selfishness and we're yielding to that selfishness. And it's easy. It's an easy path to get on. Now, "drifting

away," what happens? We can put a piece of wood in a river and it will drift away. Now, drifting away is a slow process; it just drifts down the river, and it's easy, there's no resistance to whatever it is we've put in the river (the boat, the piece of leaf, or the wood). It just drifts along slowly and it's not being rocked and tossed to and fro, it just drifts on. Slowly, slowly, slowly, and there's no resistance. There's no battling going on.

Well, this is what takes place. We drift away from the truth, we drift away from God, because we're not paying attention to the things we have heard in the Church. What are the things we've heard in the Church? The truth! We have heard the truth within the Church. We have heard how to think differently. Now, the truths are a revelation of a way to think differently than mankind. So if we're paying attention, if we are being careful about what comes into our minds and we're studying the truth, thinking about the truth, we will not drift away. Because this drifting is just a slow process and things just drift away. We drift away from God and it's all done by neglect - neglect of believing the truth, neglect of thinking about the truth, and neglect of what God is telling us in the Church. Because we have been told in the Church over and over again how to have a *true* relationship with God. Now a relationship with God is about unity, about becoming at-one with God. To drift away means we are not fighting against our selfishness, and before we know it (because we won't know it) we have actually left God. People have often left God's Church and they've left a relationship with God. And how's it come about? Generally, by neglect, by letting the natural carnal mind of selfishness take over. Because the natural carnal mind thinks it's right. It thinks it knows better.

And another way that we can drift away from the truth and drift away from the Church is through being unthankful, to be unthankful to God for our calling, to be unthankful about the truth, to be unthankful about the way God is transforming our thinking! And He transforms our thinking by the power of God's holy spirit. It is an incredible gift to be in the Body of Christ, the Church of God, at this time. And if we are not careful, if we "neglect so great a calling," if we neglect the truth, if we neglect the *understanding* that we have been given - the truths - the things that separate us *from* the world, and if we're unthankful for this calling, well, we will drift away and we'll go back to the natural carnal mind of selfishness.

Verse 2—For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, which is God's judgment, because God has made a judgment about rebellion, about sin, because "the wages of sin is death." That is the judgment. Because no one can have a relationship with God that is *not* at-one or in unity with God. We have to be at-one with God. So those things that are not at-one with God, those things that are not in unity with God's way of thinking, what value are they? They're of no value and they will receive a just reward or a just outcome or a judgment. We also understand here it's talking about the angelic realm that have now earned a reward for their decisions.

And now, **verse 3—How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation,** this calling that we have been given, **which at first began to be spoken by the Lord (Lord Jesus Christ), and was confirmed to us**

by those who have heard *Him*, through the apostles. So the apostles here are the ones that have gone out and confirmed what Jesus Christ spoke about a way of living a life, which is this transformation of the mind, about Jesus Christ being our Savior, the Savior of all mankind. The wages of sin have been covered (the death penalty has been covered) by Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ has fulfilled His part. And now the apostles were out preaching, and therefore, it has been confirmed to us about what it is we have to do, about the transformation of the mind that will give us salvation, which is a gift from God.

Now, they heard these things through the Church, "by those who heard Him," which was the apostles. **God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the holy spirit, according to His own will?** Which is? This is the way that God works. We can see where God is because of God's holy spirit. We can see the fruits of God's holy spirit within His people. And it's God's will where He will place His spirit.

Verse 5—For He (God) has not put the world to come (the age to come) of which we speak, in subjection to angels. No, it's not going to be given to angels. **But one testified in a certain place, saying (which was King David): What is man that You (God) are mindful of him, or the son of man that You (God) take care of him?** In other words, "Why is man here and why is man so important?" Well, we understand this. Mankind doesn't understand it. We understand it. God has given us the knowledge of this!

Verse 7—You (God) made him (mankind) a little lower than the angels (angels are spirit, mankind is physical). You (God) crowned him (mankind) with glory and honor. So this is the potential that mankind has. Now, we have a glory, and that glory is the mind of God. We can have the mind of God now. So, "You crowned him with glory." Well, he was made physical all for the purpose of fulfilling what God's plan was, which is to enter Elohim. So he's been crowned with this opportunity, he's been crowned with this glory and honor, which is a prophecy about the gift that God will give mankind. **...and set him over the works of Your hands,** which He has done on a physical level, and it will also happen on a spiritual level, that mankind, when transformed to Elohim, will be over the works of God's hands. Incredible promise that God has given! Well, we understand from Genesis that man was made physical and he has been given authority over the works of God's hands, the physical creation. Verse 7 really is talking about something that is spiritual. It's a prophecy about what God is going to do for mankind when he is changed to spirit and enters Elohim, therefore, it's still to be completed. It's still to happen.

Now, we're part of this process. We're part of this transformation of the thinking that we have, from selfishness to God's way of thinking so that we can fulfill this prophecy of God. "You crowned him," mankind changed to Elohim, "with glory and honor." So one is about a potential, and then there's the actual fulfillment of it which is yet to be completed within mankind. It's incredible!

Verse 8—You have put all things in subjection under his feet. So *everything* of God is going to be placed under the feet (under the control) of mankind. So this is a prophecy about mankind. **For in that He (God the Father) put all things in subjection under him, He (God) left nothing to be put under him. But now we do not yet see all things put under him (under mankind).** It hasn't been fulfilled yet. It

hasn't happened because this is about something that is spiritual in nature. It's yet to be fulfilled. Now, this is the purpose of life, what we're doing. We're overcoming self through the power of God's holy spirit so that this very prophecy can be fulfilled, that "all things will be put under mankind," under us once we are transformed and changed to spirit in Elohim.

Then it goes on and says, **verse 9** (refers to Jesus Christ)—**But we see Jesus, who was made a man, physical, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, that was His purpose, Passover, crowned with glory and honor, so He is the first to enter Elohim. God has fulfilled in Jesus Christ verse 7, "crowned Him with glory and honor." He is now in Elohim. He is spirit, which is the purpose of mankind, to change to be in Elohim. ...crowned with glory and honor, that He (Jesus Christ), by the grace (favor) of God, might taste death for everyone.** He was our Passover sacrifice for sin. He has fulfilled it.

Verse 10—So what was this all about? **For it was fitting for Him (God the Father), for whom *are* all things** (talking about God the Father), **and by whom *are* all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the author of our salvation** (talking about Jesus Christ) **perfect through suffering.** So this is what the purpose of mankind is, and God is now in His plan "bringing many sons to glory." Now, this is what our transformation of our thinking is all about, to be brought to glory.

So what are some of the things that are needed to be changed within a person's thinking? This transformation that must take place? Now, we do think differently, and there's a lot of rejoicing in this, brethren, when we understand the transformation that is taking place within our minds, because we don't think the same as the world. Now, this is a wonderful thing to come to know and come to understand. We can rejoice in this.

So let's look at some of the things we have changed, and let's look at some of the things we need to change and that mankind is going to have to do. Everybody in the Millennium and the Hundred-years is going to have to come to this way of thinking. This transformation of the mind must take place before they can enter Elohim. So why are we rejected by the world? Because we think differently. Now, we should rejoice in this, that we think differently.

So let's go through some of the things that we *need to change* within our thinking, and also the things we *have* changed. Now, within the things that we *have* changed, there's always a greater knowledge or understanding to be gained as we go through these various things. Let's look at the very first thing that we *have* changed in the way that we think. The world can't see it. The world doesn't know it, but we do. Now, *because* of this change of thinking we will be persecuted, which is a great thing! This is good news for us! Because if we're persecuted for righteousness' sake, it's a good thing. If we're persecuted because of our own stupidity, that's not a good thing, but for righteousness' sake. So we have to be persecuted because we think like God. That is an honor and a glory because it's God's thinking in us.

The first one: The seventh-day Sabbath because the Sabbath remains the main sign of God's true Church! People need to yield to God's way of thinking. Well, what's God's way of thinking on this? Well, let's do a

quick review. At creation God created the seventh-day Sabbath, the rest, by resting. So He created it. Now, this was something from creation to the end of physical man that will always be in existence. It will last for 7,100 years, where the Sabbath is important for mankind. Now, Christ went on to say the Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath. Well, what's that about? The Sabbath was made *for* mankind. It's a *benefit* to mankind. On a physical level it was about resting from work; there's a physical rest. Mankind needs to stop working, stop thinking about working, and actually physically rest. It was made *for* him. It's a great *benefit* to him.

Well, mankind, of course, because of the way they think (selfish), rejects what God has put in place. When a person is called they first begin to change the way they think by observing the seventh-day Sabbath. From Friday sunset to Saturday sunset is a period of time called "a time of rest." Now, there *are* people in the world that so-call "rest" on the seventh-day, and they do it on a physical level. But they can't do it on a spiritual level because they don't have God's holy spirit.

So what is the spiritual purpose of the Sabbath? The spiritual purpose of the Sabbath is for us to rest physically, but to rest spiritually, to stop thinking about our own self and to start to turn our attention more and focus on what *God* has for us. Through the power of God's holy spirit, God teaches us on His Sabbath. God pours out more of His spirit on the Sabbath so that we can change the way we think, from selfishness to God's way of thinking.

Now, for us in the Body of Christ a Sabbath has a physical component and it has a spiritual component. For example, on a physical level, yes, we would stop work. We would not earn an income. Well, we can look after the things that we need to, but we wouldn't do the washing, we won't mow the lawns, we wouldn't do those things of maintenance around the house, etcetera. They're all physical things. But underneath all of that, of course, there is a spiritual component which is about motive and intent. To do those things on a Sabbath, the physical things like mowing a lawn, house maintenance, or washing, or going and doing the shopping, a big shop on that particular day, is an outward sign of selfishness, because the natural carnal mind in its desires has taken over from God's holy spirit. If we had God's holy spirit, we would realize what this day really is about. It's a time to *stop* letting our selfishness dominate us. And God created this particular day for a purpose, and it's one of education. So we can rest on the Sabbath physically, but the bigger component of this (which is more important) is the spiritual component. The spiritual component is about two things. Firstly, it's fellowship with God Himself. How do we do that? Through listening to God. How do we listen to God? Well, if we're blessed to be able to hear a sermon that God has provided, that is listening to God. And we would stop, stop *our* thinking, and listen to what God has to say to us through His ministry. If we don't have access to sermons or to tapes or to recordings from the past (whatever it may be), we still have time to study God's word, to go over the truths that God has already revealed to the Church, or to read components of scripture that means something to us that we may be inspired to read on that particular day.

Keeping the Sabbath can be listening to a sermon, and that's the most important part, but if we don't have access to a sermon, we then should study God's word. We should take time to reflect on what God

says about life, about what God says is sin, about what God says is righteousness, so that we can implement it into our life.

The next important part is that of physical fellowship and spiritual fellowship with one another. Now, *this* is very important, because as scripture says, "iron sharpens iron." One of the greatest blessings that can be given to any human is physical fellowship and spiritual fellowship with the brethren. Now, often we neglect this because of choices that we make. Without even understanding it often those physical choices are simply selfishness. Not fellowshiping when we can is actually an outward sign of selfishness. We're giving into self. It doesn't suit us. It's a little bit too hard. It's a little bit too expensive, or we're a little bit too tired. No. This is a day of rest. This is a day of resting, physically, but it's also a time to take on the very thinking of God and for "iron to sharpen iron," to have fellowship with one another. We may not think we need the fellowship, but someone else may. And I have seen many a time when God has provided a physical fellowship for a purpose of a spiritual fellowship for somebody else. Because sometimes two members of the Body can get together and they may not say a lot, they just talk generally, but there's a great uplifting about two becoming one. It's about a unity of fellowship. Because, what's true fellowship? True fellowship is two people that have God's holy spirit living and dwelling in them yielding to God's holy spirit and having a relationship together. And it can be a lot about the weather, it can be about a lot of things. It doesn't matter. There is a great peace when you have two people that believe the same thing, two people that are in unity, two people that are in fellowship with each other because of God's holy spirit. It's a great blessing! And we should *never* underestimate it, brethren. Now, if we feel that we may not need that particular fellowship... But what about others? What about sacrificing the self to the benefit of others and to put ourselves out so that we do spend that extra time in the car, or that we *do* allocate time to drive or to travel or to get to services so that we can fellowship with one another? Now, this is God's spirit at work, because true fellowship is based on God's holy spirit.

So the Sabbath is about drawing closer to God and God feeding His Church, providing His way of thinking to His called out ones. And it's about God's sons, begotten sons, coming together on the day that God pours out His spirit so that we can have true fellowship with one another. It's a glorious time, the Sabbath. So we think differently.

Now, the world thinks about other days. They think on Friday's and majority think about the day of the sun. Well, that's their day, whereas God's day is the seventh-day. It's the Sabbath. Now, this Sabbath remains the great sign of where God is and that this is God's true Church. Anybody that says they are God's true Church and don't keep the seventh-day Sabbath has wrong thinking, and that thinking is going to have to change.

Well, we've changed our thinking, brethren. Isn't this marvelous? Now, because of this change of thinking, because we don't think like the world does, what's the outcome? Suffering and persecution. Because we are drawing away, we're "coming out of her, *My people*," we're coming out of the way of thinking that we had before. Well, we can rejoice in this. So if we are persecuted because we're Sabbath keepers, we

can't get particular jobs, this is a good sign! This is exciting, to be persecuted for righteousness! Sabbath-keeping is righteousness because we're dedicating ourselves to God. God is first. We're demonstrating God is first in our life and we won't do work, we won't do certain things on a Sabbath, on God's day that He has assigned for *our* benefit. We're acknowledging that and we're living it; we'll be persecuted. It's a time to rejoice. So if we ever get rejected for a job because we're Sabbath-keepers, we shouldn't get down in the dumps about it. We should go home and rejoice, just like many in God's Church have when they have been persecuted for righteousness' sake - not because of our stupidity but for righteousness. So Sabbath-keeping is an outward sign of our dedication of putting God first in our life. Now, *this* is a great sign of the fact that we have transformed our thinking by the power of God's holy spirit. We think differently than others. We are Sabbath-keepers. We do everything to worship God on this day. We put in effort to have fellowship with one another, people of the like-mind, people that are at one, that are in unity of spirit on this day. This is a great transformation of the mind!

Another sign that we can look at with regards to this transformation of the way we think is tithing. It's tithing. So let's look at what God says about tithing in Malachi 3:8. Now, the world can't understand this, and we shouldn't expect them to. There are many religions of the world that have a way of tithing, but they don't really tithe. Tithing is a principle of God and it's the way that God thinks. And the way that God thinks is to benefit others. Tithing is about benefitting His work, God's work. So what does God say about tithing?

Malachi 3:8—Will a man (will a human) rob God? Yes, they do, because of selfishness, because of the way they think. Mankind, of and by himself, doesn't like to *give* anything of his own, what he thinks is his own. But it's not really his and that's the problem within the thinking of mankind. Continuing on, verse 8...**Yet you have robbed Me!** Now, God is talking to Israel here. "You have robbed Me!" **But you say,** so Israel, mankind says, **In what way have we robbed You?** Like it's like a justification, "What do you mean I've robbed You? I've not robbed You!" Now, this very statement says a lot, because we as humans, because of our selfishness, do not believe that everything belongs to God in the first instance. We just don't think that way. When a person goes to work, they think they earn a living. It's *their* income. It's *they* have earned it. It's through their intellect. It's through their effort that they have earned it. They do not know, they do not understand, and they reject the thought that *everything* comes from God. The truth is they only have the intellect they do because God in His mercy has given it.

Now, one person can be more intellectual on a human level than another person. One can be "brighter," is what the term often is used. The problem is the person that is "brighter" takes it to themselves and looks down on the person that may not have been gifted with that particular thought process that they have. But mankind takes it to themselves and that's the problem. They don't recognize that God gave intellect. God makes all humans for a reason. They all have the *same* potential, yet, because of this so-called "brightness" they are in bigger danger because they're taking more to self, therefore, they have more pride and pride has to be destroyed. They need to come to understand (and they will at some point in time) that God gave them every single thing.

Now, the same for work. One person can work harder than another person, and they think they have *earned* it because of their efforts. Well, in some ways that is partly true, because of the effort, but it was still God that gave them that ability to work the way that they do, to have the job that they have, for example. Because God is the one who lifts up and God is the one who pulls down. So we shouldn't take anything to self. If we have a good job, and if we have better income, we should thank God. But the problem is, mankind won't. Mankind takes everything to himself. And mankind robs God because they don't give credit to God that God owns it all and that God is the one who provides *all* things.

Yet you say, In what way have we robbed You? "...robbed You, God?" In tithes and offerings. Now, tithes and offerings are a test of a person's way of thinking. If we think like God we will be willing to sacrifice for others, so we will, firstly, honor God in our tithes. We will then take a percentage of our net income and we will give it to God for God's work, to be used according to decisions made by God's Church. And God has an apostle in His Church at the moment and those decisions about where tithes are spent or allocated sits with one person. It's that person's responsibility. So once a person gives tithes, they no longer have to think about or worry about the use of tithes. For example, if a person tithes in faithfulness because of righteousness, because of God's thinking in their mind (because it takes God's thinking in their mind to tithe correctly because it's about an attitude), it's not about just the allocation of funds, it's about an attitude behind why a person tithes. A person tithes because they love God; they love God's way of life. They know God's word, they believe God's word, they believe this is God's Church, therefore, tithing is not an effort, it's not a worry, it's something they desire to do.

And offerings are the same. Offerings test attitudes, the way a person thinks. "Will I allocate something to God? Will I give of myself to God; it's something from self?" Now, God commands an offering on the seven High Days, and therefore, we should give an offering - whether it's one cent, whether it's one dollar - but it all comes back to this attitude. It tests the spirit of the matter, why we're doing what we're doing. This is a transformation of the way a person thinks.

So we can rejoice, brethren, that we do not think like the world. We know, we understand that every single thing we have - whether it's physical or whether it's spiritual - it's a gift from God. God has allowed us to use it. God has allowed us to have it. And why? To see what we will do with it. God tests us by giving us more or giving us less. Because this very principle about tithing and offering is a test of a spirit. It tests attitudes. If we earn more, will we be faithful to God? Will we rob God? Well, many have. Now, we can rob God in tithes, 1st tithes, and 2nd tithe. Now, I have known people that have paid 1st tithe faithfully but have failed to save their 2nd tithes faithfully, because it's testing them. And God sees the heart. God knows why we're doing what we're doing.

We, brethren, understand this. We know it. We understand these principles, and these principles are about giving to God because all belongs to God. God requires 10% of our net income to support His work. What's His work? His work is the ministry, and His work has changed from time to time in the sense of what is required to be achieved. We have been through a period where what was required to be achieved was the publication of two books and literature, the development of websites, the maintenance of

websites, and the truth on that website. These things all cost money. And God has set up a system so that His ministry and His work would be supported, and it's done through tithes and offerings. So when someone is unfaithful in tithes and offerings, what are they doing? They are robbing God.

Now, this is the way we *think* brethren; therefore, we think differently. Therefore, what will happen? We will be ridiculed. We will be criticized. I know in many-a-situation when there's a husband and wife and maybe the wife is in the Church and earning an income and the husband will turn around and say, "Why are you giving this money to these people? What's wrong with you?" Because they only see physical things. They just see people! They see other humans. They don't see God in it. And the reason they don't see God in it is they can't.

What does God continue to say? **Verse 9—You are cursed with a curse.** In other words, there's going to be a penalty to be paid. Now, how's it going to be paid? It's paid, first of all, in our thinking. *If* we know we should give tithes faithfully and give offerings faithfully, and we don't, because we've chosen an attitude of selfishness, we will be under a penalty, and that penalty will be *in our thinking*. It's a spiritual matter! We're going to be "cursed with a curse," which means we're going to be rewarded with a penalty, the penalty of the wrong way of thinking - unless we repent. If we repent we will be rewarded with the right way of thinking. We'll be rewarded with righteousness. Because that's what it's about. We're either selfish in our thinking or we have righteousness in our thinking.

For you have robbed Me, we have robbed God because of our attitude, because of this wrong way of thinking, **even this whole nation**. This whole nation of Israel is robbing God. Well, this is talking about the Church. We have to be very careful that we are not robbing God in tithes, 1st tithes, 2nd tithes, and offerings. We have to be very careful that we don't think the wrong way.

Now, this is an incredible thing. The fact that we understand these spiritual principles, we can rejoice. And, yes, the outcome is that we will be persecuted because of our righteous thinking.

Verse 10—Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in My (God's) house, in God's Church! So God says that we are to do this on a physical level. We're to give tithes and offerings all for the purpose of showing an attitude so that His work on this earth can be funded, "food in My house." But because of the attitude of people within God's Church, bringing "all their tithes into the storehouse," into God's Church, "that there will be food," spiritual food, "in God's house." And that's what happens! Because people are faithful *to* God, God then provides them spiritual food to be consumed on a Sabbath and His High Days, spiritual food in His House. We *are* His House. We are the Temple of God because God lives and dwells in us, God pours out His holy spirit, and then we can absorb spiritual food by yielding to God's holy spirit.

And prove Me, test Me **now in this**. Well, test God! How do we test God? By doing it! Do it and see whether God is a liar or not. God is faithful. And that question is: Will we be faithful to God? Well, God is faithful. God says, "Well, try Me in this. Test Me in this. Prove Me. Do it. Have a go at it. Be faithful in 1st, be faithful in 2nd, and be faithful with offerings. Do it and see the result! See the reward that's going to

come." Now, because we're human, because we're physical, one of the things that we do in our thinking that we think wrongly is we think it's instant. I have known and seen that there are people that are faithful in tithes and offerings for 10, 20, 30 years, but they don't seem to have been rewarded on a physical level. But I know they have been rewarded on a spiritual level. Why? Because they're *in* God's Church! They remain in the truth! They remain with spiritual knowledge and spiritual understanding! They have been *faithful* to God and God is faithful with them because He's providing food in His House. He's providing the truth to their minds and they still are with God. They have God's holy spirit living and dwelling in them, and they are of God. Now, that is an incredible reward! Let's not look at it on a physical level, let's look at it on a *spiritual* level! To be part of the Body of Christ, to be part of the Church of God, to be *faithful* to God in tithes and offerings, which really is something physical but has a spiritual component, is a great blessing from God. It's an *incredible* thing! Therefore, we will be different. We will view things differently.

Because the world would view it and say, "Well, you have nothing. You've been with this Church for 20-30 years and you keep giving them all this money. You keep 'so called' tithing and giving them 10%, and you've also saved this other 10%, and you also give them money seven times a year! And from that, what have you got? You're still living in this old house. You still don't have any money in the bank. You still have no funds, you have no assets." So that when people turn up and say, "What are your assets," and you say, "Well I don't have much." And they can't see it because it's all physical. And yet I know that people can say, "We have *everything!* We have *everything!*" I know personally I have everything that I need. And the one thing that I need is God's holy spirit. I need the truth. I need to stay with the Body of Christ. So we, brethren, can say the same. We have everything we need. People can look at it all different ways. They can criticize us and they can ridicule us, but that will not change the fact that we have everything we need to live this life. We have the truth! To have the truth is the most important thing *any* human can be given, and *any* human can have. Here is another thing where we think differently, therefore, we're not going to be loved by the world, we're going to be persecuted. We're Sabbath-keepers and we pay tithe and offerings faithfully to God, we don't rob God, and therefore, we're going to suffer. Yep. We're going to suffer because of righteousness' sake.

Now, let's look at another thing where we think differently. Let's look at it from the point of view of what we understand. We know, we understand what man is. We understand that we have been made mortal and physical. We understand we don't have an immortal soul, like many people believe. We know, we understand that we are temporary, we are living this life for a purpose. We're mortal and we will turn to the dust when we die. And when we die we don't go to heaven and hell. We understand we don't have an immortal soul, and therefore, we don't go off to heaven and hell. Now, *we understand* these things! But mankind doesn't. Mankind does not understand these things. They believe in all of these weird things like, for example, they believe that when somebody is really bad they go down to hell and they live forever being chased around and being tortured by somebody for eternity. That is just absolute cruelty. Or they believe that when you die your soul (so-called), this "immortal soul," goes off to heaven and whatever you do up in heaven is what you do, but you're there and you're happy. Now, we understand what man *is*. Isn't this incredible? We were made physical for a purpose and we can then learn what we

really are, that we're selfish and inward. We understand that we don't have an immortal soul. We understand that we are waiting for a resurrection. Now, this separates us from mankind. Mankind doesn't think this way. The majority of mankind believe that they have an immortal soul.

Some believe that they only live once and you die and that's it, it's all over. In other words, they have no life after that, and therefore, they live life and let's get on with it and live it and do whatever we want because it doesn't really matter, because you get one go at it, which is the theory of evolution. Now, when people talk about evolution, what they're really saying is that they live and die, it's all temporary. Well, brethren, what a great blessing it is that we have been given this truth from God that we understand that we are temporary, we don't have an immortal soul, *and that* we must change the way we think. We understand the purpose of life. We understand the spirit in man. We understand the difference between the human mind and the animal mind. We understand that man has the spirit in man, within the human brain, that gives it the ability to think freely, creatively, and has memory. Because we know this, we understand it, we can explain a lot of things about the animal kingdom versus what humans do. We understand the way humans are; they're selfish and inward.

Well, these things also separate us, therefore, we draw away from the way humans are and the way humans think. Now, another beautiful thing that we understand is that with this human spirit, the spirit in man, it can be connected to God's spirit that will enable us to know and understand God's true ways of being, of the way God thinks. We can understand what righteousness is.

Now, these are incredible things! We know that at death the spirit of man returns to God. It's dormant. It's dead. It's like a USB or a device that you would put into a computer. You can store all this information and put it away and leave it there for years and years and years, but if you were to activate it again (to be resurrected), it would have all that it had on it. It will be the same. Well, the same with the spirit in man, that when man dies that's what happens. Now, we understand these things and we can rejoice in these things. We think differently. And how's this happened? It's happened because of the power of God's holy spirit because we've been called to change the way we think. *Everybody* must change before they can enter Elohim. Well, we have begun this process.

So these are some of the things which we have already changed the way we think. And we should rejoice in it, and we should *never forget* these particular things. Now, there are many, many more and we'll continue in some of these and we'll also, in probably the next sermon, we'll actually get into the other things that we haven't got necessarily obvious and clear thinking about.

Another thing: We understand that God the Father has to call or draw somebody so that they can have this transformation of the mind take place. Without this calling from God the Father they cannot, a human cannot change the way they think. Now, if they change the way they think, it's all done for selfish reasons or for an advantage. Now, people go off to colleges, and the reason for college is to change the way a person thinks. Because the education system is simply changing a way a person thinks, to be educated in a way of thinking. Now, unfortunately the system is about a funnel and about pouring down of information so that the person then knows how to answer a particular question. God's way of thinking

cannot be taught to a human without God's holy spirit. God's holy spirit is the *only thing* that can transform or change the way a person thinks on a spiritual level. Now, people can think differently in the sense of physical things. One person can believe in the death penalty, and then after a period of time change the way they think about it because of education or because of events or because of things that are said. And they can say, "No, the death penalty is wrong." Or vice versa, someone can say, "No, the death penalty is wrong," and then they can say, "No, I change the way I think. I now believe in the death penalty." Well, those things are possible. But the one thing that's not possible is for them to come to understand the spirit behind it, or the intent behind it, or the mercy behind what it is. For example, the death penalty is actually an act of God's mercy. It's a revelation of God's mercy.

We understand that God the Father must call or draw a person so that they can be converted, their mind or their thinking can be transformed. Only those God calls can change the way they think. Only those God calls can receive the gift of God's holy spirit.

We understand about demons and Satan. We understand that there is a spirit world. We think differently about the world. But if we went out into the world and said, "Listen, and let me tell you this. Satan and the demons are involved out there. They're transmitting their thoughts, their thoughts of sin, their thoughts of evil into the human mind so the mind can consider these thoughts," people would think we're insane. Because there are a lot that believe that Satan doesn't exist, and there are a lot that do believe that Satan does exist. Some believe in spirit worlds, as far as more than one. Others believe in influences; they don't necessarily call it demonic. Other cultures have demons and they believe in demons. They don't understand it, but they believe they exist and they believe they exist for evil. We understand that Satan has deceived the *whole world!* Satan has deceived the whole world. Only those called into the relationship with God, into the Body of Christ, the Church of God, who have God's holy spirit living and dwelling in them, who are actively yielding to God's holy spirit, understand what Satan and the demons are doing. They are the only ones that understand Satan and the demons destiny, the final outcome for their rebellion. We understand it. Nobody else understands it. This is one of the things that we think differently about. Therefore, can we have a relationship with the world when we think so differently? No, we can't.

Now, this takes us into other areas like all the theories that are coming out from mankind. Now, it's important to stand back and to look at this from God's perspective. God knows the truth. God has revealed through His word what the truth is. God has revealed through the book of Revelation much of what will happen. God has revealed through His Holy Days the plan of salvation. God has revealed through His Church what will happen, what is necessary to be known about what is going to happen, and about this transformation of the mind that must take place. Now, that knowledge in itself is enough. That knowledge in itself is enough for members of the Body of Christ to know, therefore, for somebody to go off with theories and about all these other things about all the different things that are out there these days - I don't know a lot of them anymore - but about bankers taking over the world and conspiracy theories, this is spiritually dangerous territory. Let's stand back and look at it.

Any theory or anything that is coming out of the world media or any theory that's coming out from anywhere else *is* of deception. It has to be! Why? The natural carnal mind is selfish. The natural carnal mind is self-deceived. The natural carnal mind lies by nature. Therefore, if it suits the writer of a particular theory or a conspiracy theory, it's something coming from the *human mind*! It's *not* from God! Therefore, for somebody to set aside *any* time - *any time* - of reading conspiracy theories or reading the garbage coming out about theories or conspiracy or things taking over the world that are not in line with what God says, is wasting their time. And it's a dangerous path because it can take people out of God's Church. So if anybody raises anything about conspiracy theories or theories or "look at this," or "look at that," as a member of the Body of Christ we think differently. We believe God. We go back into God's word to say what *God* is going to do and how the end result comes about.

Yes, the Day of the Lord, we understand. Yes, we understand the Millennium. Yes, we understand the Hundred-years. And yes, we understand the end, gehenna fire, the second death. What else would a person want to do? So why would anybody go into reading theories and theories of evolution or conspiracy theories or weird beliefs of other people? Well, it's a path of great spiritual danger and it goes back to this whole thing about thinking differently. We're either going to be thinking of righteousness, the ways of God and what God says is important, the transformation of the way we think, *or* we're thinking with the natural carnal mind which is about all of this selfishness of mankind. There's two choices. Therefore, why would somebody want to spend *any time* on *anything* outside of the truth, outside of God's word? No conspiracy theory, no theory of evolution can even draw close to the thinking of God. *Nothing* like it! It's like what we read before, they are poles apart. One is selfish and carnal and one is righteousness, God's mind. So why would we spend one second on the mind or the thinking of man. In actual fact, it's spiritual suicide. It's spiritual suicide because we're going to die if we go down that path. We're going to die spiritually because we have to transform the way we think, and the only way to do it is to stay close to where God is. God is in God's Church and God is the one that has called us to transform our thinking, to be changed.

Well, we can see, brethren, how we think differently. We are different. Let's rejoice in it. Let's rejoice in the fact that we *are* Sabbath-keepers, that we *do* tithe, that we *do* give to God because we recognize God owns all things. And let's rejoice in the fact that we were called, and that we *are* transforming the way we think. And let's rejoice when we suffer for righteousness' sake, when we're persecuted for righteousness' sake, when our husband or our wife or friends or relatives or people that we know turn on us and mock us. It's a blessing! We're suffering for righteousness' sake. We're suffering because God is transforming our thinking!

One other thing that we think differently about is the hope of a resurrection. Now, mankind doesn't have this hope. Mankind thinks they go to heaven and hell. But we know about a resurrection, therefore, our view of life is totally, totally different. We think differently about death. We think differently about death. Yes, death, physical death of a loved one or anybody can bring sorrow because it's sad to lose something. In that we have to be careful that selfishness doesn't come in and that we are sad or depressed because we have lost something, something that is close to us, something that belongs to us.

So it is natural to grieve. God has built within mankind the grieving process. If we're not careful grieving can overtake to depression, and depression really is an outward sign of a way of thinking. So within death we have a hope. So when we go to funerals we are different! We think differently.

Now, when we get involved in funerals we have to learn to show balance. There is a balance to be shown in these things. We believe the truth. I believe my mother and father will be resurrected in the Hundred-years, in the resurrection of the judgment, which Jesus Christ talked about, which John wrote in the book of Revelation, which is about this judgment. Remember when Christ was talking about that these people will be resurrected with the people of Nineveh? This is the judgment, the resurrection to judgment. Well, there is a great hope in this, because the lives that have been led by thousands and *millions* of people - in actual fact *billions* of people - is not futile. It's not a waste of time! God in His mercy has left a time of judgment for them, which is a Hundred-year period that follows the millennial reign of Jesus Christ on this earth. Because God has *not* been trying to save the earth over the last 6,000 years. God has only been working with those that He has called and then chosen to be part of the 144,000. And there are many others that have been called but not chosen. God has given them the opportunity to begin to learn the truth. Now, because we know, because we think differently about death, we are different.

Now, people can turn around at times and say, "Well, I think you're a bit callous about the death of your mother or your father." No, I believe God. I believe God. I truly believe what God has said. Now, there is great hope in a resurrection. So, brethren, we think differently. Now here's another thing that will separate us from the world. So when people go into great mourning or go into depression about death and about the loss of something, the loss of a loved one, we have to show balance and believing God at the same time. We have to show that we believe God. There is a hope in a resurrection. And we don't get depressed and we don't go into great sorrow about the loss of somebody through death because we believe God, we believe in a resurrection. So all of the thousands of people that are in Africa, all of the thousands of people that have all been through Europe, that are through the U.S., that are through South America that have died - they haven't died *in* the faith, but they've simply died - will be resurrected. Now, we think differently... we think differently. So this is another area that we can rejoice in. We can rejoice in God's word, that we have this hope, the hope of a resurrection. Now, for us, brethren, we have a hope of a resurrection to spirit in a time-order. That is our hope! Because of this hope we're going to be different, we're going to act differently. We *think* differently, therefore, we're going to act differently. This separates us from the world, therefore, people will not see us in the same light as others because of this transformation of the way we think. Something else to rejoice in.

We'll have a look at Amos 3:1. Now, the reason we're covering this is because it *is* about a way of thinking. Amos 3 is covering about a relationship between God and Israel. Now, it is about a relationship, so when we read this it is best to think of it about a relationship. All the relationships that we can have within God's Church, all the relationships we can have about the world have to be based on these principles, about what God is saying to Israel because God thinks differently than Israel. God thinks righteousness. Israel is selfish and carnal. They did not have God's holy spirit. So when we read this we

can read it in light of two different ways of thinking, but we also read it because it's about relationships, *all* relationships.

Amos 3:1—Hear this word that the Eternal has spoken against you, talking about Israel. So Amos is now talking to Israel saying, "This is what God has spoken *against* you," **O children of Israel, against the whole family which I (God) brought up from the land of Egypt, saying...** So this is about deliverance, that God is now saying He's speaking against Israel because of the way they think. God thinks one way. He has delivered them. He has saved them and yet there's no thanks for that saving and they are continuing to think differently than what God has said. God has revealed the way to think through the 10 Commandments, yet they refuse to think that way.

So let's look at this on a physical and spiritual level. **You**, talking about Israel or talking about us, brethren, the Church of God, **only have I known of all the families of the earth.** So it's only Israel that God has had this relationship with. Well, it's the same for the Church of God. You (us, brethren) only (it's only God's Church, the Church of God—PKG) have I known of all the families of the earth. So God has known His people through the Church of God, which has gone on since 31 AD. Well, today it's only us, brethren, that God knows of all the families of the earth, of all the churches of the earth. It's God that has a relationship with us. Well, God's saying He separated Israel here on a physical level, and He had known them, He had given them His laws to make them an example for mankind, so that other nations could see the blessings and they could see the way to live, and then other nations would follow it. But, of course, Israel did not follow God and God is saying here, "Well, I've isolated you." Out of all the nations He could have used, He used Israel, and He's given them the opportunity, He's given them the truth, but, of course, they didn't follow it. **Therefore, I (God) will punish you for all your iniquities**, or "all your sins." Well, God was showing Israel the way to live and they had rejected it. So God's saying, "Well, because you have rejected Me, I'm going to reject you and I'm going to punish you. There's going to be an outcome for your sins, because of the way you think, because of this relationship. The relationship can't work because God says to be in a relationship with *Him* you need to come into unity or be at-one with His way of thinking. Well, we can do that ourselves, brethren. We have to be at-one with God or come into unity with God, to His way of thinking. If not (if we don't do that), God says that there is a reward (called punishment) for our sins. What are the wages of sin? It's death. So unrepented sin will bring death penalty. But if we continue to not repent, if we continually accept or leave unrepented sin with us, we're going to have a consequence, we're going to suffer spiritually.

Verse 3—The question. And this is the principle that we're going to look at. **Can two walk together**, in a relationship, be united, **unless they agree?** So, can two minds meet together if they don't agree? The answer is, no. So two cannot walk together unless they agree. We'll look at this now on a physical level. When somebody joins into a business, normally the two partners would sit down and they'd put funds in, the money in. Now, they have to agree on the principles of how they're going to run their business or how they're going to work their business, and they have goals and they have outcomes. Now, if they don't agree, they won't join together, they won't become at one and the relationship in the business cannot work. Now, this often happens because they don't agree about the way the business should be managed.

Now, this can apply, also, on a physical level within a marriage on a physical level. Two people cannot walk together, they cannot be united in mind unless they agree, unless they have the same principles that are going to apply to their marriage on a physical level. For example, "Will we have children or won't we?" Now, if one says, "No, we're not having children," and the other one says, "Yes, we will," they don't agree. So how difficult is it going to be to have a relationship? It's going to be very difficult. They have to meet together in unity. There has to be a oneness in thinking because over time they'll just grow further and further apart because they don't agree. Now, this can apply to child-rearing. They might agree to have children. One, they say, "I want to bring my child up as a Catholic," the other one says, "I want to bring it up with no religion at all," or "as a Protestant," or "as a Hindu," or "as a Muslim," one of them. Well, can that marriage last? Can this union last? Can this relationship last? Because two cannot walk together unless they agree. The answer is, well, they can't. This won't work. And imagine how difficult and the arguments that are going to come up about when the child is going to be educated.

Well, this same thing can apply within God's Church. There has to be physical agreements to things, that someone may have to give up their view and they have to agree with the other person. So two people can disagree on a particular thing, for a start, but over time they can say, "Well, let's do 'this,' let's do 'that,'" and they talk it through and there might be a change in one person's mind or there may not. They'll just agree to do nothing about a particular matter. Two cannot walk together unless they come to some level of agreement. The relationship can't grow.

Now, we can apply this to a marriage, on a marriage level within the Church. Firstly, let's just say two people have God's holy spirit and are joined together. Now, they have to agree on a spiritual level, otherwise they can't be at-one. So they have to agree with the truth. Now, the moment somebody no longer agrees with the truth, the two cannot be at-one, because one believes God's word, stays with the Church and the other one doesn't, they go in a different direction. Now, therefore, on a spiritual level they cannot have true fellowship. It's absolutely impossible because they don't agree on a spiritual level with the truth. They can't have a good relationship. But they *can* have a relationship...they *can* have a relationship. Because one person can leave God's Church and the husband (or the wife) could still stay in a union of marriage, if they decided, if they could. Because one person may say, "Well, I'm going to stay with the truth," and the other person may say, "I'll never talk about the Church. We'll just have a relationship," but it won't be on a spiritual level. They could agree on a physical level. Now, it's going to be very difficult.

God has called many-a-people from a physical union of marriage, and one person has been given the truth and called to the truth, and they are now thinking differently. Well, they, then, have a difficulty in that marriage because they do think differently. But the other person can agree (the non-converted person can agree) to stay with that union, or the person that is baptized can say they want to stay with that union because they agree on many things on a physical level, that the person can have a happy marriage because it's based on a physical union, like a business, they agree. They agree on particular things that are all based on a physical level. The difficulty is, of course, for the person that is converted, that they have to look at the spirit of the matter, therefore, they have to work their way through various

situations *in* a marriage. But that does not mean to say that they do not have a marriage; they do. So it can be that two unconverted people can be at-one on many things within a marriage and their marriage can be successful. Two people that are converted can have a marriage and they can be at-one and they can come into unity on a physical and spiritual level and they can have a happy marriage. And there are two people, one that is converted and one that's not and their marriage can be successful.

So this principle needs to be applied in the fact of the way a person thinks. Now, there is a series of posts about true fellowship that talk about this, about a person that is baptized and a person that is not baptized, can still have fellowship. There's a level of fellowship, because one person, the unconverted person, is happy to dwell with the person that is thinking differently.

But God is talking about here, about a way of thinking between Israel and Himself. So He's saying here, the principle, "Can two people walk together unless they agree (unless they have the same way of thinking)?" The answer is no. Because over time they will drift apart because they think differently. Now, that's why we have to come out of the world. We don't think like the world, we think differently, and therefore, we don't agree and we cannot walk with the world because we don't agree with the world. So God is saying, "Can two walk together," can two have a really good relationship, can they be united together in the way they think, "unless they are in full agreement?" Unless they believe the same thing? The answer is no.

Continuing on in **verse 4—Will a lion roar in the forest, when he has no prey?** Well, the answer is no. The lion roars when it has conquered its prey. It's a sign, it's an outward sign or expression by the lion that it has its prey. **Will a young lion cry out of his den, if he has caught nothing?** No. There's nothing to eat. **Will a bird fall into a snare on the earth, when there is no trap for it?** No, it doesn't. The bird will continue to fly because there is no trap for it. **Will a snare spring up from the earth, if it has caught nothing at all?** There's nothing that has set off the trap. No. The answer is, no. **If a trumpet is blown in a city, will not the people be afraid?** Well, the answer is, yes, they will. So if there is no trumpet the people won't be afraid. But if there is a trumpet that is blown, the people will be afraid because the trumpet was a warning about war. So, yes, they will. **If there is a calamity in a city, will not the Eternal have done it?** Yes, because God allows it. God allows these things to take place because God is in control of all things and God has given 6,000 years of man's self-rule, and therefore, God allows it. So, for Israel, if there was a calamity in the city the people should have known that God allowed it - like the plagues that came in because of their sin.

So if we look at this whole thing, this is about God talking to Israel about making sure that they were being warned first so that if anything was going to happen there was a cause. There's a cause and effect. Therefore, God is saying, well, things don't happen of and by themselves. God is giving a warning first to Israel, and if they are going to continue to walk differently, they're not going to be in agreement with God's way of thinking, they're not going to be in agreement with this relationship with God on a physical level, the cause is them not thinking like God, them not wanting a relationship, to be in unity with God, not agreeing with God. The effect is something is going to happen.

Verse 7—Surely the LORD God does nothing, so there's not going to be an outcome, there's not going to be a problem within Israel, **unless He (God) reveals His secret (God's secret) to His servants, the prophets**. So God is saying there is government within the Church and that God will warn His people through His Church. God will warn the people of Israel, which He has done in the book *2008-God's Final Witness*. Israel has been warned of the consequences of *not* agreeing with God, of not thinking like God. So God is going to be against Israel because they refuse to think the way He thinks. Well, the same applies to us, brethren. We have to be sure (we have to be careful) that we do not think differently than God. And the purpose of this sermon series is to look at, to examine how we *do* think differently, and then to look at other things (other topics) that we need to change the way we think.

So let's look at this again. "Can two walk together unless they agree?" The answer is no. And it's on a spiritual level, and it's on a physical level. There has to be agreement. Well, we agree with God. We agree with God's thinking. We agree with God's word, therefore, we *can* walk together with God. Why? Because we agree with God. We agree with God's word.

Now, one particular thing that is not spoken of much within the world is a principle that has been developed (and particularly within the United States of America), is this concept of the "freedom of speech." Now, it is only a concept, because within God's word mankind is not entitled to the "freedom of speech." Now, this is something that has to change within the thinking of mankind. So during the Hundred-years and during the thousand-years mankind is going to have to come to understand that they are not free to say anything they like because the natural carnal mind has many thoughts. Now, have we the right to just say what we think? The answer is no. The freedom of speech is *not* what God has said in His word. Mankind does not have the freedom of speech. Mankind is asked by God, is told by God, is required by God to think differently than just having the freedom of speech. We have to learn to think differently. We have to come to understand that we have to exercise self-control. Now, if we understand the principles behind God's thinking and man's thinking, God's thinking is righteousness, and yet man's way is one of selfishness. Therefore, could man have the freedom of speech to think from his own natural carnal mind which is based on selfishness? The answer is no. So mankind *does not* have the right of freedom of speech because his natural carnal mind is selfish: "It's hostile against God, is not subject to the law of God." Therefore, what's going to come out of it, what his speech is, what he reveals through his speech is based on pride and selfishness, and he is not free, he is not free to live pride. He is not free to lie. He is not free to not exercise self-control. Therefore, mankind *does not have* freedom of speech. God requires mankind to *control* one's thinking. Mankind only has freedom of speech if it is in unity, if it is the same, if it is at one with God's way of thinking. Mankind has "freedom of speech" if it is powered by God's holy spirit and it is in total unity with the way that God is, with the way that God thinks.

Well, brethren, we'll end *Part 2* there and we'll pick up the sermon series next time. □