

Welcome, everybody, to this Sabbath.

The purpose of this sermon is to look at two big problems that exist within mankind's thinking. These problems are really connected together and one leads to the other. The first problem is forgetting their Creator and that is done because of self-reliance. So these two problems are joined, and they are self-reliance and forgetting their Creator because that's natural within mankind.

Mankind has this nature that is self-reliant. It relies on its own thinking and its own understanding and they do this because they forget their Creator. They forget that they are even created. Mankind is in that position now where they forget their Creator and everyone is relying on themselves, their own understanding, what they think is right and wrong.

The title of this sermon is *Remember Me*, and the "Me" is God. "*Remember God.*" The "Me" is a capital "m" because it reflects remembering God, *Remember Me*.

We'll start in Proverbs 3:1 which gives an instruction about what actually happens to mankind's thinking and the warning that is here within this proverb. **Proverbs 3:1.** Now, really, this is God talking to His people and its God talking to us, His people. **My son,** "My son or daughter, members of the Body of Christ," **do not forget My law, God's law, but let your heart keep My commandments.** This is what the problem is within mankind, this forgetting. "My son, do not forget My law." Well, mankind has done that. They've walked away from it. We, within the Body of Christ, are to remember the law, what it's really all about. It's about the way we live and what's behind that is our motive and intent, about how to make right choices, which is all about love. "Do not forget My law." Well, mankind does that by nature. "But let your heart," let your inner motives, let your intent, "keep My commandments." So our purpose in life is to continue to examine our motive and intent, to make sure that our motive and intent, which is behind the law of God, the 10 Commandments in the main, to come to understand why we do what we do. If we really know ourselves we know that we have a tendency of self-reliance, that we know better, we have an opinion about everything. That's our nature.

This warning is for mankind and it's for God's Church. "My children," my son, "do not forget My law," God's commands, the way He has implemented those and now revealed through Jesus Christ the spirit of the law, the motive and intent behind those commandments. "But let your heart," let your thinking, your inner motives and intent, "keep My commandments." So we

have to examine why we do what we do. We have to examine our attitudes. Why are we responding this way? Why are we doing things a certain way?

When God gave them His law, His Commandments, His statutes, and His judgments, His instructions and all the warnings that were entailed in that, God then outlined what would happen if they kept them, if they strove on a physical level to keep them; and if they disobeyed them, what would actually happen. Well, that is mankind today. Mankind doesn't understand the law. They don't "see" the law. They can't on a spiritual level, but they could see the physical component and they could keep the physical component, but they don't because of self-reliance. Mankind thinks he knows better. He is right in his own eyes.

So we're going to now look at **Psalm 9:15—The nations have sunk down in the pit**, which is going down into sin, **which they made**. They have made it themselves because of their own understanding, what they think is right and wrong. So they've made this way of life, in other words, and the nations have continued to spiral down in immorality. There is no morality left.

In the net which they hid, their own foot is caught. This is really referring to the fact that when you set a trap for a bird you hide it, but when the bird comes there it springs out; the bird can't see it. Well, this is the same for mankind. They have set this trap, which is the way of life that has been established, influenced by Satan, but still based on this selfishness or self-reliance and forgetting God, not remembering who they are and how they were created and the purpose of life. All of that's been thrown away and it's irrelevant to them. Well, they are now caught; they have caught their foot in this trap. In other words, they're held by this. They're in bondage. They're held captive. Their own foot is caught in their own trap because of the lifestyle that they are choosing, which is everybody's right in their own eyes. Everybody is self-reliant. They're leaning on their own opinions, what they think is right and wrong, but mankind is now caught in this because of this thinking.

The Eternal is known by the judgment He executes. Now, this is really referring to a reward for obedience and a penalty for disobedience. At some point God will implement judgment, but the reality is that there are laws in place that are automatic. So these judgments come into play because of decisions, because of self-reliance. The more a person goes in a direction of sin its automatic that the judgment or the penalty for disobedience will come into play because God has established it that way. God executes judgment because of sin, and because of righteousness, there is a judgment. That judgment is a reward. There is a reward for disobedience, which mankind doesn't understand. That's why he is caught. That's why his foot is caught. That's why his whole thinking is caught - because it's really about his thinking. It's not about his feet or his arms or his eyes, it's actually about his mind. His mind has been caught because of his thinking.

The Eternal is known by the judgment He executes. The wicked is snared in the work of his own hands. And it says, *Meditation* or *Selah*, which is "think about this." Think about this evil. Evil intent will be paid for because there's a penalty. There is a judgment connected to wrong thinking.

Now, we don't often think about this where we stop and think, well, if we make this particular decision there's going to be a blessing or a curse, or a reward for whatever decision is made. "The wicked," because of the way that they think, "is snared in the work of his own hands." He brought it on himself because of the decisions, because of this self-reliance, because of this opinion or view or thinking that has been established within him. We should think about this in our life every day. As we live our life in the Church, the Body of Christ, as we strive to be an example of God's way of life to others we should make sure we're examining our motive and intent, why are we doing what we're doing? Now, this is something that should never stop. It should never stop in our life. I know from personal experience that often you can get into a pattern of things and you just automatically do things without really stopping and meditating and thinking about it. Why am I thinking this way? Why am I doing this? And often it'll come as a bit of a shock when we stop and really mediate on it. We realize we've actually caught ourselves in a thinking. We're just thinking wrongly and it's a trap. We're caught and there's going to be a judgment or an outcome because of this thinking. Yet we don't even know it. We don't stop and think about it. We just get into habits of automatically doing things.

For example, why do we respond a particular way when somebody says something? It's because there's a pattern of thinking that's in our mind and when somebody generally challenges our pride or somebody says something we don't agree with - can be lots of other reasons within our thinking - we then respond accordingly, and it's often from a pattern. We're caught. Our foot is caught in the trap. Our thinking is caught. And because of our own thinking, our own hands, the way we think, the work of our hands (it's the thing we do, it's the things we think), well, we actually get caught because of this pattern. Well, God says think about it. Why do we respond the way we do? As it has been stated, nobody makes us angry. We choose to get angry because that's a reflection, again, of our pride. We don't agree with what's going on or we disagree with the way that it's being done, therefore, we get angry or upset. Somebody does something that we think affects us, therefore, we respond a particular way. Well, we need to stop and think about it and mediate on why we do the things that we do. That's what God is encouraging us to do.

The wicked shall be turned into hell. It's the grave, because the wicked will die. Not only the first time around, but also the end result. An unrepentant sinner who chooses willfully not to repent, in other words, if they refuse to repent, well, they will be "turned into the grave." They will be dead. They'll be "ashes under the feet of the righteous," as the Bible clearly says.

...and all the nations that forget God, anybody that goes and forgets God, who doesn't remember God, "Don't remember Me," as God is saying. All nations that forget God they are going to be destroyed. They'll go into the grave. "The wicked," the unrepentant sinner, "who forget God," who go against God, "shall be turned into the grave." They'll be turned to ashes. That's the end result. "And all nations that forget God." That's what's going to happen. Everybody, every nation that forgets God, well, there's trouble coming their way because of judgment. There's an automatic judgment that's going to take place because people will refuse to obey God. People will refuse God.

For the needy shall not always be forgotten, because they will turn to seek God. Seeking God is the answer. Seeking God, remembering God, remembering their Creator, "Remembering Me," as God says, "Don't forget Me, who I am, what I've done for you," remember this in our life every single day. Think about it. Meditate on it. Check our motive. Check our intents. Well, if we don't forget God, well, God says He will reward us, which is life everlasting or everlasting life. So there is a reward for disobedience and there's a reward for obedience.

...the expectation of the poor shall not perish forever, those of a humble spirit, because really you can look at this on a physical level, but this is really talking about something on a spiritual level. "For the needy shall not always be forgotten." We, brethren, should be the needy because we seek God in our life every single day. We seek God to be part of our life every day. We don't forget God. We don't turn away from God. We don't want to be self-reliant. We do not forget God. Anybody that is needy on a spiritual level seeks God. They turn to God. They look to God's word for the answer. They look to God's Church for the answers in life. "The expectation of the poor shall not perish forever," which is those that are of a humble and meek spirit, well, they won't perish. Although physical things happen to them, this is really about a spiritual matter. It's about spirit life.

Verse 19—Arise, O Eternal. Do not let man prevail. Well, they're not going to. Man has to come to see himself. He has to come to see his self-reliance. He has to come to see that he's cut God out of his life, that he hasn't remembered God in his life and he's turned to his own understanding and he's decided what's right and wrong in his own eyes. Now, the world has done this, and we can see it, and Israel did it. God has always delivered a judgment because of this disobedience. **Let the nations be judged in Your sight**, which is those that are against God, those that haven't turned to God or come to seek God. Now, in today's world it's a bit different because of the fact of whether they're called or not, but mankind still could repent on a physical level. They could still turn to God, but people don't. They turn to God if it suits them, if it's what they want in their life, if it makes them (so-called) happier, if it helps their self, their self-reliance.

Let the nations be judged in Your sight, in God's sight. Put them in fear. Well, this is what is actually coming. Mankind is going to be put in fear. There's going to be different levels of fear. There's going to be terror because of what's coming. Mankind is going to be terrified. They're going to be so fearful. Some are going to be given the opportunity to be put in fear. Now, this real fear, there's different ways to look at this and this word has different meanings, but the reality is different types of fears. There's a natural fear. There's a fear of self-preservation: "I'm fearful for my life. I don't want to die. I don't want to suffer." That's a fear. God's going to put them in that fear. There's going to be a fear about life itself. Then others are going to be put into fear which is the fear of God, to learn to fear God. They're going to be given the opportunity through a calling and they will be given that opportunity to truly fear God, to get rid of self-reliance and to remember their Creator.

Put them in fear O Eternal, that the nations may know themselves to be but men. Selah. Now, we are to think about this. What is coming is for a purpose. God is going to do this. He's going to allow it. He's going to bring it to pass for a purpose. That purpose is to establish a new government, which is the rule of Jesus Christ and the 144,000. They will introduce a new way of thinking, a new way of living. They are going to be teaching that self-reliance and not remembering their Creator is a problem. That's what's caused all this problems in mankind. This is where it's led, to total destruction. It's led to fear, the fear of life itself. God is going to introduce suffering for mankind. He's going to allow it and then He's going to intervene so that mankind doesn't totally destroy himself. But the end result is this, "that the nations may know themselves to be but men." Because in the end people are going to turn around and say, "What is there? What is there in life? What's the purpose of life? I'm fearing just to be alive. I'm fearful that I'm going to die, never exist again." Well, God is going to intervene and give many an opportunity so that they're going to come to know that they are but men. That's all they are, just men, physical, mortal, and God has a plan. God is love. God is merciful. God is going to give them an opportunity to live into the Millennium and to continue with life and not be in fear, to learn a new way of life, to learn a new way of thinking, to not be self-reliant and to always remember their Creator.

This has always been a problem for mankind because self-reliance started with Adam and Eve where Eve became self-reliant. She relied on her own understanding and Adam followed suit. He gave in and he didn't stand for God and they forgot their Creator. They forgot that they were created. We have to stop and think about it. We have to remember as well that we are just created beings and we've been given this marvelous and wonderful opportunity now for a purpose. We have to be in fear of God. We have to remember God in our life every single day.

Let's look at Judges 8:33. We're actually going to go back and look at Deuteronomy and the flow of Deuteronomy, what God said to Israel. Well, Judges 8:33 is after this event, of course,

but it shows you where mankind's thinking is. It's the same today, but this is a classic example of where people go with self-reliance and not remembering what they are - physical, mortal, temporary. People forget this. They live life as if they're going to live forever and it's all about self, self-reliant, my opinion, my view, the way I see it. Well, this is the outcome of what happens when people leave God.

Judges 8:33. This is actually foretold. This is what God said would happen because God knows mankind. God knows what man is like. **And it was so, as soon as Gideon was dead,** Gideon has died, **that the children of Israel again played the harlot,** so they went back to their own self-reliance, **with the baal's,** with false gods. They forgot God, the Creator of the universe. They forgot all that God had done through Gideon. **...and they played the harlot,** which means they had a relationship with the baal's, not just one, with different god's, false religion, **and made Baalberith their god. Thus the children of Israel did not remember the Eternal their God.** That's the problem. They forget who did things for them, who gave them life. Everything that we have, that we have access to comes from the Creator. He allows it. Now, if God wants to work with a person He can intervene and give them more or take more away. It's up to God. It's God's decision.

That's something we should remember all the time and be thankful for, is that whatever we have in life, no matter what it is, and no matter what trial we are in we must always remember the Eternal our God, the Creator of the universe, and not lean on our own understanding and not lean on our self-reliance, not rely on our self to get through life, because we can't. We'll be just like everybody else if we're not careful and forget our Creator. We'll be just like everyone else because everyone else has forgotten their Creator. They have all gone this way, the same as Israel did here. They are playing the harlot with the baal's. They're engaged in false religion right up to their eyeballs, as it says. Everyone is involved in something.

Now, if they haven't got a false religion they're atheists, or they don't believe anything at all. Well, it's the same thing, really, it's a false religion. They have forgotten their Creator, because an atheist who says there is no Creator, what have they done? They've done this. They have forgotten their Creator. They don't acknowledge a God of any type and they have moved to being self-reliant. They rely on themselves totally! They don't even have a god of any type. They just say, "No, there's no God. We're here. It's temporary. We came out of the slime. We evolved and now we just simply are living life and when you're dead, you're dead." Well, that is exactly the same as someone who believes in a false god, who plays the harlot, because that's what they do. They play the harlot. They have this relationship with something that is false. That is actually idolatry, but they can't see it. They don't know it. Whereas we have this opportunity to come to understand that we cannot play the harlot with the baals.

We cannot rely on anything, which includes self, or any other doctrines that are false. We can't rely on those because we'd be playing the harlot with the baal. We have to have a relationship with God. We have to remember our Creator.

Thus the children of Israel did not remember the Eternal their God who had delivered them from the hands of all their enemies on every side. We have to remember our calling, because with a calling God, Yahweh Elohim, has delivered us from the hands of our enemies. Our enemies are Satan and the demons. That's our real enemy. Mankind's not really an enemy to us. They may hate us. That's all temporary. That's all going to pass. That's all going away. The ones that really want to destroy us is Satan and the demons.

God through a calling gives us an opportunity to enter into a battle so that we can be delivered from the hands of our true spiritual enemy, an enemy on every side because it's constant; it never stops. If we ever think that Satan and the demons have given up trying to destroy God's people we are not remembering our Creator, we're not remembering our past, we're not remembering our future. Because when we forget our past, which is we forget our calling, what happens? Just like these people here, the children of Israel, physical, carnal Israel, who didn't have God's spirit, they did not remember the Eternal, their God. Well, that's what we do. We give up on a calling. We give up on an awakening. We do not remember God and everything that God has done for us, everything God has given us.

...and delivered them from the hand of all their enemies on every side. Yes, we are delivered from our enemies by repentance. It's a gift from God. We can "see" clearly. We can see motive and intent. We can see where we're wrong. Well, when we see that and we repent and acknowledge we are wrong we're being delivered from the penalty of sin, because we are in a state of repentance and the penalty of sin, death, has been paid for us. Our enemy is death. Our enemy on a spiritual level is Satan and the demons. The other enemy that we have is death. Death is an enemy for mankind, not only on a physical level but more on a spiritual level because we don't want to face a second death by any means. So we can be delivered from the hands of all our enemies on every side.

Nor did they show kindness to the house of Jerubbaal, that is, Gideon. They forgot all the things as Gideon as a leader and they didn't show kindness to him. They didn't remember all that God had done through Gideon, **in accordance with the good that he had done for Israel.** What God did through Gideon for Israel, they forgot. They forgot God. They forgot all of the benefits that God had given them. They had forgotten they were created. They became self-reliant and relied on their own understanding, formed their own views and opinions about things, and lived life naturally. Well, that's mankind and that's what God had said would happen.

Now we're going to review some of that in Deuteronomy 4:1. God had given Moses the law on Mount Sinai previously. Now we're seeing a revision of this matter and God now speaking to Israel through Moses about reminding them of certain things: "Remember Me." "Remember Me," and all the things that God has done, and the warnings that were there for Israel, which is the same for the Church today. There are warnings for the Church today, which is, "Remember what I have done for you. Remember your calling. Remember your awakening. Remember what you were like and now the transformation that's taking place. Remember what I have done for you in placing you in the Body of Christ, the Church of God. Remember all of the benefits, all of the truth that I have given you, all the food, the spiritual food that I have given you and don't rely on your own understanding. Don't form your own views and opinions. I'm there to benefit you. I'm there to help you. If you rely on Me and lean on Me you will make it. I will give you more. I will give you everlasting life in Elohim." What a great benefit!

Well, we need to look at this physical account and look at it on a spiritual level as well because physically we understand Israel was carnal, where we can see more clearly. We should be able to see more clearly all of the benefits that God has given us through a calling or an awakening and placing us in a relationship with God.

Proverbs 3:1—My son, sons and daughters of God, brethren, My son, do not forget My law. The spirit of the law. Don't forget it. Look at your attitudes, check your attitudes, look at your motive and intent, and don't become self-reliant where you think that you know better than what God is feeding the Church through Jesus Christ and an apostle. That's probably the greatest warning of all. Don't become self-reliant thinking we know better as individuals. It's a great warning. God said this is to Israel, "Don't forget Me. Don't forget the way I work, how things work. Don't lift yourself up. Listen to Me. Hear Me. Remember Me. I'm leading you. I want to give you more. Remember these things." Well, that's the spiritual component. Well, God did it with Israel on a physical level, but He's doing it with us on a spiritual level.

Deuteronomy 4:1—Now, O Israel, Church of God, spiritual Israel, listen to the statutes and the judgments which I teach you to observe that you may live. Physically we can understand that. If you want to have physical life, well, you need to obey God. If we want to have spirit life, what we're being taught, we need to observe that we may live, that we may live on a spiritual level now, have spirit life living and dwelling in us, and not be cut off from the flow of God's holy spirit. Well, we're being taught to observe these things because God is teaching us in the Church through Jesus Christ through an apostle. **...and go in to possess the land which the Eternal God of your fathers is giving you,** because God wants to give. Well, it's the same for us. "And go in to possess..." We want to possess the land; we want to enter Elohim at a point in time, "which the LORD your God of your fathers," which God is, God is the

One True God of our fathers, "is giving you." So what God wants to do, it's going to happen. God is actually giving us the Kingdom. He is. He's giving it to us. Whether it's part of 144,000 or in the future, God is giving it to us through the power of His holy spirit. As He works with us He's actually giving to us, He's developing us and shaping us so that we will fit into a temple environment on a spiritual level. So we're being molded and fashioned now because God is giving us something. He wants to give it to us; the problem is us because we forget our Creator and we forget what we're really like, that we're self-reliant.

Verse 2—You shall not add to the word which I command you. Big problem for Israel, there were people that rose up and thought they knew better. There are many examples in the Bible of that, where people lifted themselves up and thought they could deceive God and get away with things. Well, that's not true; it can't happen. **You shall not add to the word,** something we have to be very careful about, that we don't add to what is given to the Church, **which I command you, nor take anything from it.** So don't diminish it, don't pull it down, don't fight against it, and don't try to take away from it, which is saying, "Well, no, He didn't really mean that. This is not what was said." The truth is the truth and we have to make sure that we're not adding to and taking away. We need to remain in a meek and teachable spirit so that we can take these things on board and meditate about them and make the changes in our thinking in our life.

Continuing on, **verse 2... that you may keep the commandments of the Eternal your God which I command you.** We understand the 10 Commandments. We know those 10 Commandments. It's the spirit and motive behind our thoughts, words, and actions that's the key. Because just knowing the 10 Commandments, "Thou shall not steal," well, that's good to know, but the motive and intent of everyday living, for example, when it comes to tax returns or dealing with other authorities we have to make sure our motive and intent is right, which is to obey Caesar: "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's, and give to God what is God's." The more important part here in the beginning is give to God what is God's, and then make sure we give to Caesar what is given to Caesar. Whatever laws are in place, the laws are in place for our benefit (according to man's thinking), well, we should follow those things. We're commanded to follow those things, to be in subjection to mankind's authority, whether it's good or bad. Taxation is bad, but we're still to be subject to it.

Verse 3—Your eyes have seen what the Eternal did at Baalpeor: for the Eternal your God has destroyed from among you all the men who followed Baalpeor. We can look at this now on a spiritual level. "Your eyes have seen what the Eternal did at Baalpeor: for the Eternal your God has destroyed them from among you." Well, what's being destroyed from among us? False doctrine. False religion. Someone that is called, what God is doing is destroying something within a person's thinking. Wrong thinking's being destroyed. By the power of God's

holy spirit we can think differently. Well, that's the destruction that is taking place of baal, which is false gods, things that we rely on. We are self-reliant. That has to be destroyed. God is saying here that "He has destroyed from among you, all the men who followed Baalpeor." Well, what we're seeing is all of the things, all our thinking that is false needs to be destroyed, and in this we're not to rely on our own thinking, thinking that, "Well, I know better," and "This person's wrong." No, God says He's going to work with us in a certain way through an environment called the Church, and our thinking will be transformed. By the power of God's spirit it will be destroyed from among us, this false thinking, because worshipping baal is false, worshipping falsehood. So anything false within us God is going to have to remove it from us, and it takes a lifetime.

Verse 4— But you who held fast to the Eternal your God are alive today, every one of you. We trust in God. We are alive today because we have "held fast to the Eternal your God." We are members of the Body of Christ. We still have God's holy spirit alive and active in us today because we have stood for the truth and God has not abandoned us. We have not abandoned God. We have not turned away. We have stopped. We have listened to God. We are now not forgetting the Commandments. We're not forgetting we have to fight every day. We're not forgetting who we really are. We're trying to destroy our self-reliance.

Now, in saying that, "We're trying to destroy our self-reliance," God will do it for us. But by nature we are self-reliant. It's just natural for us to have our own views and our own opinions about everything in life. It's natural. We can't forget we are natural by nature. That's what we are. We're not right in our own eyes and it takes God's spirit and God's mind to be placed in us. Through the power of God's spirit we get this new way of thinking, we're granted this repentance. Well, when we are we have to hold fast to the truth. Mr. Armstrong used to say, "Hold fast to the trunk of the tree." The trunk of the tree is the truth, what God places in the Church. It's the law. It's the Commandments. It's the seven annual Holy Days. The trunk of the tree. Hold fast to the Sabbath, these things we are to hold on to in our thinking. We're not to start to wander off and start to have other views and other thoughts about things. No, we're to hold fast to what the Eternal your God (our God) has given us in the Church and we are alive today because of it.

We, brethren, spiritually you are alive! Yet you have known and I have known many that have been in this position where they've held fast at different times, but they let go. They let go of holding fast. And what is the cause of this letting go? Self-reliance. They had a different view or different opinion than what God placed in the Church. They thought they knew better. They thought they were right in their own eyes or they disagreed with decisions God made. With this self-reliance comes something - forgetting God. They forget God. They forget how

God works. God works a particular way in the Church today and we should know it. If we don't know that, well, that's going to be a problem for us.

Because the reality is that if we know how God works and if we believe this is God's true Church we will hold fast and we will always remember God, because this is God's Church. The moment we forget this is God's Church we will lean on our own understanding and we will rely on self. When we rely on self we form views and opinions that are contrary to God's because self, by nature, is contrary to God.

Verse 5—Surely I, this is Moses speaking here, have taught you statutes and judgments, which were God's, just as the Eternal my God commanded me, that you may act according to them in the land which you go to possess. So this is about a way of life. We are to learn these things now because when we go into a promised land (the first part of this is in a "type" only), which is the Church, we're to function a particular way. Well, we've been given statutes and judgments so that we can function a particular way in life now. When we go in to inherit a promised land, the statutes and judgments, which are all about a way of behaving, which is thinking like God, well, that's what we're going to do. We've been given an opportunity now that we should act according to these things now because that's how we're going to act in the future. We're going to rely on God and we're going to always remember who we were and who we are now, because we'll remember these things about what we are and what potential we have. It does say in the future that the past will be forgotten, basically, because of where we go in the future. Well, over time I'm sure that will happen. But while mankind exists, even as spirit beings, we'll remember what we went through. We'll remember the growth that took place. We'll remember all the problems that we had, because then with that, we'll be able to help others, which is this acting according to them, to the statutes and Commandments, the judgments, "In the land which you go to possess."

We have the opportunity now to implement change into our life now. **Therefore**, this is a warning from Moses, which is coming from God, **Therefore, be careful to observe them.** Be careful to observe the statutes and judgments and Commandments, the instructions: "Be careful to observe them." Now, when you observe them you implement them into your life. They're in your thinking. So we have to take these things into our thinking, to observe them, which is to do them.

...for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples, who will hear all these statutes, and say... "This is your wisdom," the wisdom of God, the mind of God. The statutes and Commandments and all the instructions of God are wisdom because God is wisdom. Wisdom is the word of God made manifest by the spirit and intent of a thing. So when we look at anything we have to look at the spirit intent of it because it's our "wisdom and your understanding." We have these things, now as members of the Body of Christ, we're

examining how we live and we're examining our motive and intent all the time, that's our wisdom and our understanding. We understand God's plan of salvation. We understand. Mankind has no idea, has no clue. We understand our human nature. Mankind has no idea and no clue. They've not been called to it.

Well, our wisdom, our wisdom is in God's word, is what its saying, therefore, be careful to observe God's word. For in this, "your wisdom and your understanding is in the sight of the peoples." Now, people will see it. They won't understand it now, but as it has been revealed, in the time of visitation, whenever that is, whenever the person's given the opportunity, called to see God's word as we do, this is what they will see, "Ah ha! Those people had the wisdom and understanding of God. They knew about God! They didn't rely on themselves. They remembered their Creator every day through prayer," because remembering God is about our relationship with God, trusting in God's word, relying on Him, not relying on ourselves.

"Who hear all these statutes," which they will in the future, and say, **Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.** Now, this was looking at it from Israel's point of view, that God was working with Israel on a physical level, and as they went into various lands people would say, "Wow! What an incredible people, that their wisdom comes from God, the Eternal God, the Creator. Look what they're doing! All these things they do, well, it's very wise. And look at the understanding they have, and how happy, how generous they are as a people, how loving and concerning they are as a people." That's what should have happened. Well, of course, we understand what Israel did, that Israel went off and committed harlotry with baals. They forgot their Creator and went off in another way.

Well, this can happen spiritually to members of the Body of Christ if they are not careful. Therefore, be careful to observe God's word, because God's word, God's spirit living and dwelling in us, which is the Word of God manifested in us, that is our wisdom and our understanding in the sight of others and it won't be revealed who we really are until another point in time. Well, we have to be very careful about how we think, our motive and intent now, and what example we reflect to others now because there is coming a point in time where people will be given the opportunity to remember who we were and how we lived our life. What a blaspheme it would be if they turned around and said something contrary to this, where they didn't say, "Ah, now I understand where they got their wisdom and understanding from." Well, we know it comes from God.

Continuing on in **verse 7...For what great nation is there, that has God so near to it?** I really enjoy this scripture because this is relevant now today to spiritual Israel, the Church of God—PKG, those that are in the temple and that are implementing change in their life through the power of God's holy spirit. People one day will say, "For what great nation is there?" Well,

we're a great nation. We're a holy people. We're special. We're small but we are a great nation in the sense of spiritually because there's nothing like us anywhere on this earth, because God's nowhere else. God is in His Church. God is in His people. Therefore, we are a great nation. We're a great people. Small as we are, we're only great because God lives and dwells in us. God makes us great. Now, if we don't have God, we're nothing, we're not great at all. We're just people. We're self-reliant and we're carnal.

For what great nation is there that has God so near to it? What great nation is there that has God in it? Because God is not only near us, He is in us. He lives and dwells in us. We have a relationship with God. We remember our Creator and we don't rely on self. We're the opposite of mankind. We're opposite to what Israel did. Israel was an example of what not to do, but that's exactly the only thing they could do, because without God's holy spirit, what do people do? It's always been the case. The history of mankind is they are self-reliant and they do not remember their Creator.

Now, people might say there's Catholics and Protestants, and that they remember their Creator. No, they don't. They don't listen to the word of God. They don't remember Him, all the instructions. For example, the Sabbath. There's a classic. They don't remember that. And what about the first Commandment? You'll have nothing before God. Well, everybody out there has many things before God. God's not first by any means. He's well down the line, and if it's too difficult, He's out of the picture altogether. That's man. That's natural.

Well, we are this great nation, brethren. We are this great nation now that has God so near to it. **...as the Eternal our God is near to us, for whatever reason we may call upon Him?** Now, that's what they were saying. "Wow! What an incredible thing that these people had this access to God, they knew God, they understood what God's plan was, and for whatever reason if they wanted to they could at any time call on God and God would listen. Now, what a comparison! Isn't that incredible? People in the future will say, "Wow! Isn't that incredible! There was a group of people, very small, at the end-time. After the seven eras had been completed there was this small group preparing for the Kingdom of God and they had God so near to them that God lived and dwelt in them. It wasn't about them, but God was working with them for a purpose! He wanted to give them something and they could call on God at any time, this great power that existed, and God loved them, and God was nurturing them and wanting to give them more? He was helping them to overcome themselves. They had to desire it, but that's what God was doing? They could overcome themselves by the power of God's holy spirit if, if they wanted to, if they strived and never gave up. What a great nation! What an incredible group of people that God was working with. How blessed were they? How fortunate were they? They had an opportunity that most of the 7 billion that were alive at that time never had! What an amazing thing this was going on!"

Well, we're part of that, brethren. It's about us. "What a great nation that has a God so near to it." God is near us because we have God living and dwelling in us.

Verse 8—And what a great nation is there that has such statutes and righteous judgments as are in this law, which I set before you this day? This law, all of the truth that has been given, this righteous judgments, the way that God thinks is there for us. And if we are looking at our motive and intent we have access to these statutes and judgments, to the law of God, the 10 Commandments that have been set before us because God has set them before us and Jesus Christ revealing the spirit of a matter was the key. Not just the physical obedience to the matter, the spirit of it, why we do what we do, what's really our motive of why we do things, the way we think.

So why do we ever watch certain programs? What's that about? What's that really about? Let's look at that from a spirit intent of things. There are certain things on TV that shouldn't be watched. There's certain things on the internet that shouldn't be watched. What is the motive and intent of somebody watching that? It is about self. It's forgetting God and it's giving in to selfishness because it is selfish. It's about self-satisfaction and getting involved in those types of programs or the way the TV programs are today with all the different scenes that are there, there is a time to turn away from those things, not thinking that we can actually handle them. These are things that we will have to strive to improve in. Well, these are things we can all improve in, and over time these things won't exist. What we're coming into in time in the future these things won't exist.

Once Satan and the demons are removed from mankind, from the influence of mankind, things are going to change. We actually have an opportunity now to fight, to fight while these demons are around, while Satan is around. What a great opportunity this is to fight and grow and develop.

Verse 9—Only take heed to yourself, "Only take heed to yourself," and diligently keep your self... Isn't this a good scripture, talking to the Church now, "Only take heed to your self"? Take heed. Think about it. Meditate on it. Make decisions. Stand for God. Remember God. Remember our Creator. Remember what we're really like. Remember self. Remember your self, what we're capable of, every one of us. Every one of us is capable of selfishness in different degrees, in different areas. "Take heed." It's a warning. "Take heed to your self. You want to guard yourself. Worry about yourself." That's not selfishness, but worry about your self. Let's not worry about and put your self first; it's worry about your self, your selfishness. Worry about that. Take heed to it. Be concerned about it and fight on it. Don't worry about other people's problems, worry about your own problems, what you've got to grow in. Worry about what we've got to grow in, what we've got to overcome individually.

"And diligently keep yourself," which is guard your self. Keep your self from these things. ... **lest you forget the things your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life.** So this is a warning. "Forget the things your eyes have seen." What have we seen, brethren? Israel saw certain things. They saw the crossing of the Red Sea. They saw many miracles. They saw the Commandments being delivered. They saw fire on mountains. They saw water coming out of rocks. They saw lots of things. What have we seen? Well, this is about the spirit of the matter. We don't need to see anything on a physical level. We do not need to see anything on a physical level. We do need to see our calling. We do need to see an awakening. We do need to see truth. Now, we can see things, like we've seen the Apostasy - many of us, not all have seen the Apostasy. "Do not forget the things your eyes have seen, lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life," because it's got to be in our thinking.

The truth sets us free. So we have seen the truth. We see it. Not just words, 57 words written out. We see the spirit of a matter. Therefore, don't forget that we "see" these things, and not departing in our life by departing the Church or not remembering God. That's one thing, take heed to our selves, guard our selves, guard our selfishness, guard our self-opinions and our self-reliance. And then there's another part here which is a problem for mankind, because it is about the way that they live, but it's also something that needs to be implemented in a person's thinking. "And..." So there's something else. Now the reason Israel goes off the rails all the time is because this, because of adults and their selfishness, because they're too lazy to do things, **and teach them**, these laws, these Commandments, these statutes, these judgments of God, the way God thinks. ...**teach them**, teach the Holy Days, teach the Sabbath, the meaning of all these things, **and teach them to your children.** In other words, live it within your own family. Teach it by an example. Teach by an example to your family. Teach them. ...**and your grandchildren.** How do we do that? Well, we do that either through words or through actions.

So we can teach our children by our example. Because words are cheap. Sadly, is that people have been hypocrites where they may teach things, but then not live it, not do it, and say, "Oh, you've got to show respect to others," and then they criticize the minister or live certain things, "You know you've got to keep the Sabbath," but meanwhile do the washing on the Sabbath. Actions are very important because actions come from the mind.

So we have to teach our children and our grandchildren by an example and not arguing and fighting is a great example. We don't blaspheme. We don't say things that are wrong. We don't swear and use vulgar language. Well, it's noted by grandchildren. It's noted by others that we're different. Well, that's great! That's the way it should be. So we need to teach our families, we need to teach our own environments. Now, if we're in both, in the Body of Christ and we're in the Church of God now, well, this is a command. We are not to not teach. It says,

"Take heed to your self." It's a warning. Teach them. We have to teach them not only words, not only sitting down and spending the time with the children, teach them about God, the Creator of the universe so that we remember, so that they can remember - if that blessing has been given to us and that opportunity's there - we're to teach them verbally, but we're also to teach them by our example. And by our example is the key

Especially concerning the day you stood before the LORD your God in Horeb, when the LORD said to me, Gather the people to Me, and I will let them hear My words... Now, this is in the wilderness. Horeb is in the wilderness. It is in the desert. So they've been gathered together to hear God. ...and I will let them hear My words. God was going to speak to them through Moses, or to even directly, **that they may learn to fear Me**, to respect and hold in awe, to fear God. Now, to fear God really is to obey God. People say they fear God, and if they don't obey Him they don't fear God. It's pretty simple.

And people that have left the Body of Christ, the Church of God say they hold in awe and respect God, "They're a liar and the truth is not in them." That's a hard statement but that's what God says. They are liars, because to fear God is to obey God, and to obey God one must be in the spirit of the matter, in God's Church, in the Body of Christ. You have to be in the temple. Now, if you're not in the temple and a person's not in the temple they are not fearing God. They are not fearing God and they're not hearing the words because they're not listening to sermons, therefore, they're not hearing "My words," which is not mine, but God's words. When God through an apostle speaks they are words of God. That's what God's giving to the Church. If the person doesn't fear God because they don't have God's spirit anymore, they're not going to obey, they're not going to respect and hold God in awe the way God works through the Church.

...all the days of your life on the earth, and that they may teach their children. Now, this teaching of the children is a key to the future, because when we go into the Millennium this very scripture will be expounded even more and it's going to be a wonderful thing. "Take heed to your self and diligently keep all these instructions, and teach your children," because that's the key, teaching children, and we teach children by the way we live.

Verse 11—Then you came near and stood at the foot of the mountain; and the mountain burned with fire to the midst of heaven, which is it was rather large and the flames and the color and everything that was there because God appeared there, **with darkness, clouds, and thick darkness. And the Eternal spoke to you out of the midst of the fire,** which is the word of God. **You heard the sound of the words,** which is the delivery of the 10 Commandments, **but saw no form,** saw no similitude or any image of anything. **You only heard a voice.** So they heard certain things and they were in fear of all of that because of what was going on.

So He declared to you His covenant, this agreement. Now, this agreement really on a physical level was the 10 Commandments, which is an agreement. You shan't do this. You can do that, and this is the way you're to live your life and just implement it. Well, at baptism we entered a new agreement and we declared this agreement with God. We agreed with God. Now, this agreement is that we would obey God, we would fear God, we would remember God, we wouldn't be self-reliant, and we would fight self. "Take heed to your self." Here God is saying, **He (God) declared to you His agreement**, which we've done at baptism, **which He commanded you to perform**, which is we are commanded to stay in humility. We're commanded to not be self-reliant. And we're commanded to remember God, to fight our self, to fight our selfishness. **...that is the Ten Commandments; and He wrote them on two tablets of stone.**

And the Eternal commanded me at that time to teach you statutes and judgments, that you might observe them in the land which you cross over to possess, which is about going into the promised land. Well, they are written in stone, two tablets of stone. There's lots of analogies here that we could use. We know that we are to take these now, these, the law, the spirit of the law, and place them on the tablets of our heart, which is the inner mind, our intent. Now we are living stones. Now, as living stones and part of the Body of Christ, the Church of God, it's referring to us. He wrote them on two tablets of stone, which was physical. Spiritually the law, God's thinking, has been written on the tablets of our mind. We are the stones, the living stones. We are living stones. We're alive and we have the law written in our minds by the power of God's holy spirit and we are to live the law.

To live the law, we are alive; we're living by our example, God's word, and we don't fit into the world. We can't because we're different. We're lively stones. We have the thinking of God. We're contrary to the world. We're contrary to physical Israel because we're spiritual Israel. We're different. Physical Israel was physical Israel. They could only hear the law on a physical level not on a spiritual level. We can hear the law on a spiritual level, and therefore, we can live a better example.

Now, Israel failed in living a physical example. They were a disaster. It just proves that without God's spirit you can't obey God, you can't keep God's law. They couldn't even implement the basic things of the laws. When it came to sexual immorality they were absolutely useless. They gave in very quickly to everything.

Well, it's no different today than physical Israel had given up. It's useless. It's hopeless. Without God it's useless, it's hopeless. Mankind just can't do anything. Mankind can't. The twelve tribes of Israel can't. The gentiles can't. Nobody can. The only way to keep God's law is they have to be called or awakened to be given God's holy spirit. We have to be given God's holy spirit and with God's spirit we can keep the law because it's about the intent. And

therefore, as lively stones, as living stones, we have the opportunity to live the law, to live the law as an example not only to our family but to everybody, because it is about the way we live. Words are cheap, people in governments, and all these different things, and people promise things. Words are cheap. They really are because their intent is not that. They'll say, "Ah, yes. We're going to do 'this.' We're going to do 'that.'" Deep down they know they've got no intentions of doing it because their intent is wrong.

For us it's different. It's more complicated and it's more difficult, and it's harder to do because we have to watch every word that comes out of our mouth because it's about the intent. Why did we say it that way? So we want to be very careful as individuals, "Take heed to your self," about what we say to anybody about anything. Because what's the motive and intent? Why did we say that? And we all fail in that. I personally know I do often fail in those things, because I'm natural and I need to take more heed to my self, to my selfishness, to my self-reliance, and I need to work harder on my self so that I do and am a better example for not only members of the Body, but also to people in the world, my family, my extended family, those around me, those that I know will be given the opportunity one day (God willing) at a point in time to "see" the truth just as I do now.

Verse 14—The LORD commanded me at that time to teach you statutes and judgments that you might observe them in the land which you cross over to possess. This is something that we're going to do in the future, that there is coming a time where we're going to be able to teach these statutes and judgments to others when we cross over, when we go into the Millennium, one form or the other, spirit being or physical. It's an opportunity that what we have been commanded now in the Church, that at a time we'll be able to teach these things to others because we've been observing them and we're going to be observing them in the Millennium. So when we "cross over to possess," when we enter Elohim or we go into the Millennium we are going to be able to teach these things to others by the way we live, by example.

Verse 15—Take careful heed to yourselves. This is a wonderful warning, really. It's spiritual in nature because Israel was going to fail, as we read previously in Judges, where as soon as a leader of God left, where God was working with somebody like Gideon and he died, the children of Israel "played the harlot with the baals." They just went straight away and went away to falsehood. They didn't believe the truth.

The warning here from Moses from God is: **Take careful heed to yourselves**, because there's a problem within us. It's natural, the problem within us. We now have the holy spirit, but we still have to be careful about ourselves. Take heed. "Take careful heed of your self," not worrying about others. Don't worry about others, worry about yourself. And you know what I'm saying there on a spiritual level. It's not about selfishness where you just worry about yourself

on a physical level, because we understand we have to sacrifice ourselves for the benefit of others. We have to give up on our selfish desires. This is saying, you want to be careful about the way you think. You want to be careful about the way we act.

Take careful heed to yourselves; for you saw no form when the Eternal spoke to you at Horeb out of the midst of the fire. So they didn't see anything. Well, we now "see" things. We "see" the truth. We don't see a shape or a form of God or Jesus Christ, but we see spiritually. So we have a great blessing! We have a greater blessing than these people. These people saw things, which is a wonderful blessing for them, an opportunity, to see something physical, but to see something spiritual is much greater because the history is that when a man or a woman sees something physical they forget. They forget. Imagine, you think, well, if somebody went across the Red Sea and the water went up both sides and all the chariots were following and then all of a sudden all the water collapses and kills everybody, including Pharaoh (they all die), surely they would remember that and fear God.

Well, Israel's history reveals the carnal mind. People forget physical things. People forget physical things whereas we, brethren, have an opportunity much greater. We see spiritual things. We haven't seen God. We haven't seen the Red Sea. We haven't seen the Law given, but we have seen things. I know personally that I see things differently because of my calling. I remember my calling. I remember what I was like before my calling. I remember my calling and I remember what I was like during the first ten years of my calling, the things that I did wrong, the things that I had to learn, the things I had to change, that still hasn't changed. I'm still learning and still having to fight all those things. That's all wonderful stuff, really. It's great to know what these things are, but we have to take careful heed to ourselves not to forget God, not to forget our calling and why we are in the Body of Christ. It's an exciting time. It's an exciting thing. We have to stand. We have to endure. We've got to continue on so that we can inherit something that God wants to give us.

Verse 16. So they didn't "see" anything. **Verse 16—Lest you act corruptly and make for yourselves a carved image in the form of any figure, and the likeness of male and female, the likeness of any beast that is on the earth, or the likeness of any winged bird that flies in the air, the likeness of anything that creeps on the ground, or the likeness of any fish that is in the water beneath the earth.**

Verse 19. This is about placing anything before God. What's an idol really? Well, an idol is anything we place before God. Now, that can be work. Generally it's selfishness, that we put ourselves first because that's our idol. Our biggest idol that we have to worry about isn't necessarily false doctrine, its selfishness. Because when we are workaholics, what is that really? Go back to the spirit of it. What is a workaholic, really? It's an idol. It's an idol because we think that we need to be that way for a reason. We think it's going to get us more or we

think it's going to get us favor with our boss. The problem is we think. It's self-reliance. We haven't put God first. We don't think, "Well, this is not right. I'm neglecting my family. I'm putting myself ahead of my family. I'm putting myself first before God even. I'm not balanced in this." So it becomes an idol, and an idol is what we trust in. Because whenever people turn to things, for example when they went to baal worship, what they really were doing, they were turning to something else which was they were trusting in something else. They would go to eat and pray and ask requests. Star signs, it's the same thing. It's trusting in something else, therefore, it's idolatry, witchcraft, the same thing. It's trusting in something else.

Placing something before God and trusting in something else before God, well, we do it to ourselves. We do it. When we turn to something else other than God, and put our trust in it, which is self-reliance, what do we do is we forget God. Self-reliance is forgetting God. God is the Creator. God is Almighty. God is all powerful. God can do anything! God can do anything for us. The problem is we neglect God. We rely on ourselves. This is just natural. This is the way man is. This is the way Israel was. It's the way we are, spiritual Israel. We have a tendency to trust in ourselves.

Now, trusting in ourselves, in our views and opinions, is actually idolatry. It's putting something before God, putting our views, our opinions before God, before God's view or opinion, because God's opinion is you need to guard your self, watch your self, look after your self, in the sense of you better guard it and protect it. We are to give. We're to be subject to all authority, good or bad. That's what God says. Well, when we don't what are we doing? We're going against God. We're disagreeing with God. We do that by nature.

God is saying here, "Don't put anything before Me." What we put before God is our biggest idol. Now, it can be doctrine. We can go out on false doctrine or we can go out in bitterness. Well, it's still something we're putting before God because God says we're not to get bitter. We're not to go down that path. We're to examine ourselves and take heed to ourselves.

So we are now not to create any image of God, what we think God's like. An example is the world where they see God as an angry, bitter God that is revengeful. That's the way they see Him. And Jesus Christ came along and he was full of love and mercy and you're not to put people to death because Jesus Christ says you're to love everybody. Whereas God the Father, well, He got out and He stoned people and He killed women and children and babies, and those poor little kids in these other countries. So God is seen as being hard-hearted, an evil God almost. That's the way people go to see the "God of the Old Testament." You have a conversation with certain people; they will turn around and say, "What do you believe?" "Well, we believe in God's word, which is in the New and Old Testament." And as soon as you mention the word "Old Testament" you automatically know what they're thinking because their view of a God of the Old Testament, Yahweh Elohim, is that He is hard and He's cruel...

and those things have all been done away. That's their thinking. They don't understand God. They don't understand the purpose of Jesus Christ and who Jesus Christ really was. Well, therefore, they're going to have a wrong impression about everything.

They do see our example of what we do. And one day, their time of visitation, they will turn around and understand that God did it. It wasn't us; it was God that did all these things. It's God working with us. We don't take any credit to self. It wasn't anything we did special, that we're a special people. It's just that God chose us. How great is that? How merciful is God! How wonderful a blessing we have received!

Verse 19, again, and take heed lest you lift your eyes to heaven and when you see the sun, and the moon, and the stars, and all the host of heaven, which is talking about, really, about anything above God, people trying to turn to astrology or looking for star guidance and other things, or anything, really. Now, the first part of this is anything on the earth, and now it's going anything up in the heavens ...**and the stars and the host of heaven and you feel driven,** which is natural, carnal, forgetting God, forgetting their Creator, not remembering God and going to self-reliance. That self-reliance is putting something else up before God. ... **and feel driven to worship them, and serve them, which the LORD your God has given to all the people's under the whole heaven as a heritage.** A very interesting scripture.

Don't turn to serve other things. Remember God, your Creator because God has given all of this out here, the stars under the whole heaven, the whole universe out there, as a heritage. This is actually what man's purpose is. Man's purpose is to inherit something God has created. God wants to give these things, physical things out there to us as a matter of rulership and authority over them. Isn't this incredible?

So why would we turn around and look up at them and say, "Oh, wonderful sun," and start worshipping sun, sun worship, Sunday worship, baal worship, moon and stars and planets, Pluto and all these things? Its insane thinking! And it's only with God's holy spirit that you can "see" these things, that reading a star sign is just stupidity and looking at tarot cards and things is just stupidity. It's just carnal, selfish thinking. It's naught to do with God because God created all that out there for a purpose. That purpose is here, "as a heritage." It's something we are going to be given. It's our future. So why would we want to worship something that's going to be given to us if we endure to the end, if we take heed to ourselves?

Verse 20—But the Eternal has taken you and brought you out of the iron furnace, out of Egypt. This is also something that we can look at on a spiritual level. Yes, they were taken out of a very harsh environment: "The iron furnace." They were in slavery: "Out of Egypt," which is out of this bondage, **to be His people,** which is physical Israel. They were brought out on a particular day after the Passover. They left on the first day of Unleavened Bread. ...**His**

inheritance, as you are this day. It's talking physically here. Wonderful blessing! How incredible is that?

What about us? "But the Eternal has taken you," you and me, "and brought you out of the iron furnace," out of this world's system, out of the harshness of it, "out of Egypt," out of spiritual Egypt, out of the bondage and the slavery to a way of thinking, "to be His people." We are the people of God, begotten sons of God. Beautiful scripture. "To be His people." We are the people of God. Not that we did anything special, it's just that God called us out of this bondage, out of this captivity of a way of thinking. "His inheritance." We have the potential to inherit what God is offering. "As you are this day." That's what's happening today. Those that are members of the Body of Christ alive today have the potential to inherit life everlasting.

Verse 21—Furthermore, the Eternal was angry with me for your sake, and swore that I would not cross over the Jordan. There's a reason for this, which we'll look at quickly. ...**and that I would not enter the good land, which the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance.** This was to do with something physical. We understand Moses will inherit life everlasting, whereas here he was not going to cross over to go into the promised land into a period of time because of something that he did. **But I must die in this land; I must not cross over the Jordan. But you will cross over and possess that good land.**

Continuing on, **verse 23**, before we go and have a look at that event. **Take heed to yourselves, lest you forget the covenant of the Eternal your God, which He made with you, and make yourselves a carved image in the form of anything, which the LORD your God has forbidden you.** Now, this really comes back to a very particular point - not to forget our calling. We've entered into an agreement; He's made an agreement with us, and we're not to make up anything of another image, which means we're not to leave God. We're to remember God.

Now, God has forbidden certain things, and one thing is we're not to add to or take away from is God's word. When truth enters the Church we're to believe God. We're not to add to it or take away. We're not to leave fellowship or leave God. We're to take heed to ourselves and guard self and guard self-thinking, guard self-reliance and turn to God for greater understanding. This is your wisdom. This is your understanding. What is it? The word of God. The word of God is our wisdom and our understanding. Well, if we turn to God and ask for this wisdom and understanding of any particular matter that God is placing in the Church, God in His love will give it. We have to be patient. We have to wait on God and learn to trust in God. We don't want to set up something else as an idol. What's that something else? Self-reliance, our opinion, our view, it's an idol. Self is an idol. We have to be on guard.

We're not going to get very far with this sermon as I had planned, but we're going to backtrack a little and look at two events that took place which involve Moses. We'll start at Exodus 17:1. We're going to look at two particular events about Moses and God and following instructions, about not being self-reliant or taking things to self.

Exodus 17:1—Then all the congregation of Israel set out on their journey from the wilderness of Sin, according to the commandment of the Eternal. So they're now following where God is leading them through the pillar of cloud and pillar of fire. ...**and camped at Rephidim. But there was no water for the people to drink.** So they've arrived at this particular place, wilderness of Sin, which means "clay" and it's in Arabia. We see now there's no water for the people to drink. So they're in a place of rest, which is what Rephidim actually means, and they now have no water. Now, this is physical people who now are becoming thirsty and they've got women and children and animals, so you can understand that they would work themselves up in their thinking. They haven't taken heed to their thinking. They haven't taken heed to themselves at all.

Verse 2—Therefore, the people contended with Moses. So they're now complaining to Moses, **and said, Give us water that we may drink. And Moses said to them, Why do you contend with me?** Because now they're complaining to Moses. They're really saying, "Why are you picking on me? Why are you complaining to me?" The truth is, the spirit of the matter is, they're complaining to God. They're complaining with God. They're contending with God. **Why do you test the Eternal?** So why do you now test the Eternal? You're not having a humble and meek attitude. You're not waiting on God to provide. You're now complaining and bitterness and you're not happy, and now you're testing God because God's in control of all things. God is all-powerful. If God had wanted to provide them water He would have provided it. So why do you want to take it to your own understanding, have your own view and your own opinion, and now you're voicing it.

And the people thirsted there for water. And the people murmured against Moses and said, Why is it that you have brought us out of Egypt to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst? This is an emotional reaction to physical things. We have to be careful, not to have an emotional reaction to spiritual things.

Verse 4—So Moses cried out to the Eternal, saying, What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me. "They want to kill me because of this." They're frustrated. The people are frustrated; they're angry. Moses is actually frustrated at the people because of their now testing God, because of their attitude towards God because Moses would have understood that God's in control. He's done all these wonderful miracles and now they haven't got water and now they're whinging already.

Verse 5—The Eternal spoke to Moses, Go on before the people and take you some of the elders of Israel. Also, take in your hand your rod with which you struck the river, and go. This is during the plagues where Moses was instructed to take his rod, the rod that he had, and to strike the river, and of course, one of the plagues came into play. So it was his rod that he was to take. **Behold, I (God) will stand before you there on the rock in Horeb, which is in the wilderness, and you shall strike the rock.** So he had to strike the rock. ...**and water will come out of it that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel.** He did what he was told. He followed the instructions. He was told to strike the rock and water would come out. There was clear instructions. He wasn't to do anything else, just strike the rock and water would come out.

The "type" there is of Christ, where Christ, the rock, is struck and he's killed by man and water comes out, which is enabling the flow of God's holy spirit from Pentecost.

Verse 7—So he named the place Massah, and Meribah, because of the contention of the children of Israel, and because they tested the Eternal, saying, Is the LORD among us, or not? This is interesting in some areas because there's two areas here. One, Moses followed the instructions exactly as he was told. He didn't take anything to himself. He wasn't presumptuous in any way. He struck the rock and the water came out. He did as he was told and everything was fine. Nothing is wrong there.

This, of course, is also about the second part, which is where people are saying, "Is the Eternal among us or not?" This can happen in the Church. "Is the Eternal, Yahweh Elohim, and Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church, among us now or not?" It's a question. Now, if we can't answer that question, we have spiritual problems because as truth enters the Church this answer has to be provided within a person's thinking. It's within a person. "Take heed to yourselves," that we know the answer to this. The answer is simple: This is God's Church and God is among His people! God's spirit is available. The rock has been struck and the water flows. We cut off the flow of the water (spiritual food, spiritual water). We cut it off if we sin and we refuse to repent. It's cut off.

So is the Eternal among us or not? We'd best have the answer, because if we're not we're testing God. We're denying God. We're refusing to listen to God. We're not taking heed to our thoughts and we're not living the truth because if we're living the truth this is all straightforward. God is among us; this is God's true Church, and we're striving to overcome self. We're taking heed to self. We're judging self. We're measuring self. We're repenting.

We're now heading to which is what was referred to in Deuteronomy 4, which is Numbers 20:1. This is the reason that Moses was not allowed to enter the promised land. He would have to die before they went over the Jordan into the promised land.

Numbers 20:1—Then the children of Israel, and the whole congregation, came to the wilderness of Zin in the first month. And the people stayed in Kadesh; and Miriam died there, and was buried there, and she was 130 years old because they had been here before. They had been in Kadesh before.

Now, there was no water for the congregation... So we're back to the same issue again, about whether the people would really test God or not in this matter because God is in control. They have been following God all this time in the pillar of cloud and the pillar of fire, one or the other, so they do know God's in control and they know who Moses is. And they would have known who Miriam was in as far as the leadership is concerned. **So they gathered together against Moses and Aaron.** Same old thing, human nature at work. **And the people contended with Moses and spoke, saying, If only we had died when our brethren died before the Eternal!** In other words, "We're better off dead."

Verse 4—Why have you brought up the congregation of the Eternal... Isn't this interesting? "Why have you brought up the congregation of Yahweh Elohim..." because they consider themselves the congregation of God, but Moses is now being blamed for it. It's incredible thinking! **...into the wilderness, that we and our animals should die here?** So you're the problem, Moses. "You and Aaron, you're the ones who have done this. We are God's people," of course, "as the congregation of the Eternal." We have to be very careful. There is the same principle in the Church. We can say that we're the congregation of the Eternal. Yes, we are God's true Church. "But why are you," looking at the leadership, "why have you done this? What have you done? You're destroying us because of what you're doing." It's the same type of attitude that can come up if we're not careful.

Why have you brought up the congregation of the Eternal into the wilderness, that we and our animals should die here? And why have you, Moses, made us come up out of Egypt, incredible thinking, **to bring us to this evil place?** "So you're now leading us into this bad area. This is not good! And it's your fault, Moses! We'd been better off back in Egypt, really. You brought us out of this." Well, we understand God called us out of Egypt and God has brought us to this place in time. We are here because God has led us to this. It's got nothing to do with the leadership of God's Church, in one way, because they follow God. And God was leading Israel, and Moses followed, and the people followed Moses. This here, the people, the attitude they've got, is they're now blaming an individual for where God is leading them, because God has brought them to this place; it wasn't Moses.

Verse 5, continuing on in the middle of it, it is not a place of grain, or figs, or wine, or pomegranates; nor is there any water to drink. In other words, there's nothing much here. There's no food or water in this environment.

So Moses and Aaron went from the presence of the assembly to the door of the tabernacle of meeting. In other words, they remembered God. God is in control. They remembered God. They took heed to themselves and went to God, where God knows all things; God's leading them. It wasn't Moses and Aaron. ...and they fell on their face. They turned to God for the answer. **And the glory of the Eternal appeared to them. Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, Take the rod and your brother Aaron, gather the assembly together. Speak to the rock.** This is different than last time. Last time he was to strike the rock and water came out. This time He says, "Speak to the rock." Now, this all boils down to where the credit goes for things. The credit should always go to God. As you know, within God's Church now all the credit and glory goes to God. It's God's Church. It's God leading His Church. It's God that provides the spirit. It's God that provides truth. It's not an individual; it comes from God.

So here the instruction is clear, **Speak to the rock before their eyes.** The glory will be given to God because of what's happening, **and it will yield its water. Thus you shall bring water for them out of the rock and give drink to the congregation and their animals.** We can look at this on a spiritual level. Water is going to be given. The flow of God's holy spirit is going to happen if a certain instruction is followed. God will provide for His people.

Verse 9—So Moses took the rod from before the children, as He commanded him. So God has commanded him to take it and go and do it.

Verse 10—And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock, and he spoke to them, he spoke to Israel, **Hear now, you rebels...** So he's accusing them of again rebelling against God, complaining and murmuring to Moses like they had done before, like they've done many times. He's called them, **You rebels! Must we,** now this is pride getting in the way, taking to self, **Must we bring water for you out of this rock?** So he's talking about Moses and Aaron. "Must we?" "We're going to do it for you?" They've left God out of the picture, which is something that we have to be very, very careful not to do, leaving God out of the picture.

The title of the sermon is *Remember Me*, because what's happened here is Moses has forgotten God. He's taking credit to himself. He's lifted himself up with pride. After all these years and all that he's seen human nature can get in the way. "Take heed to your self." Well, Moses hasn't taken heed to himself here.

It's a lesson for us. There is no excuse for rebellion. There is no excuse for us lifting ourselves up against God and against God's truth. None! Because we're being rebellious. We're taking things to ourselves. We're not following instructions. We're not taking heed to ourselves. We're relying on self. We're putting our self in the way, our view, our opinion of things.

Verse 11—Then Moses lifted his hand, and struck the rock twice with his rod. Well, that was disobedience because he wasn't told to strike the rock. He was told to speak to the rock. We can learn from this not to lift ourselves up. We should follow the instructions of God precisely. Don't be presumptuous and go outside of what we're told. We should be told certain things. We're to implement those changes and do as we are told. Whether we agree or not is irrelevant. We're to do as we are told. We're not to be rebellious. So when we become presumptuous and do things outside of what we're told we're acting presumptuously. We're acting rebelliously. We're being self-reliant. We're implementing our self-opinion, the opinion of what we think is right or wrong.

Moses here has lifted himself up in pride. He hasn't given the glory to God. So when **he struck the rock twice and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation and their animals drank.**

And the Eternal spoke to Moses and Aaron, Because you did not believe Me, "You did not obey what I said you're to do. You refused to follow my instructions exactly as I said." **You did not believe Me, to hallow Me,** to give Me the honor and the glory, the respect because it was God that brought the water out; Moses and Aaron didn't. They can't. They're human. It's impossible. Only God could do what had happened. Well, the glory didn't go to God; it wasn't given to God. Moses took credit to self, and Aaron. They took credit to themselves because of this.

So He's saying **Now, because you didn't respect Me and give me the honor in the eyes of the children of Israel...** In the Church, the glory is always to God. When we look at this, everything that comes into the Church, the glory is given to God. It's not the man or the woman that's doing the thing, it's God doing it through that person. So we have to be very careful about the way we think of things. We're not to lift others up in our eyes and give them glory or credit other than the respect of the authority of the role or the position they have. But they as individuals, we're all the same. I know my background. I know who I really am. I know what I was like before I was called. And I know that if I wasn't called where I would have ended up and what would have happened in my life, because I know myself.

All the glory for anything always goes to God, that we can only yield to God's instructions. We yield to God. If we do, the glory will always go to God. This is God's Church and God feeds His Church. Just like God was feeding the children of Israel with manna, He's also providing them water, the flow of God's spirit (symbolically) to His people. It's the same today. God is the one who provides the holy spirit. All wisdom and understanding, all knowledge comes from God. It's God's Church. We only have the spiritual knowledge and understanding of a matter because God is giving it. Well, we have our role in the sense that we have to learn to be humble. We have to learn to be meek. We have to follow the instructions that God is giving.

We're not to lift ourselves up and become self-reliant. We're to remember God all the time, that it's His Church, it's His work.

Continuing on in **verse 12...therefore, you shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them.** So there was a penalty to be paid. This is a judgment that's going to be implemented. Afterwards, I know he would have regretted this. Just like all of us after we sin, we regret and go, "Oh, how stupid was I to do that?!" Moses would have felt the same, and Aaron would have felt the same.

So we can see from that, up to verse 12, that it was God that needs to be given the glory for all things, that God would honor His promise and give the children of Israel the promised land, but Moses was going to have to now come unto a judgment. In other words, an outcome for a decision that he made. We should take heed to ourselves not to lift ourselves up in any way but to follow the instructions of God.

One of the greatest sins that we can do, and that mankind has done and is still doing today, is not to remember God...not to remember God in every aspect of our life. That's reflected in our prayer life, not remembering God, and to become self-reliant, or self-opinionated about things and not follow the instructions that God is giving to His Church. We are to remain humble and teachable and always remember God. "Remember Me."