

This current series entitled *The Greatest of Civilization* is what we're going to continue with today. This is *Part 4*.

It's truly awesome to see things that God is building that pales into insignificance anything that man has tried to do throughout the centuries. We're struck by the things where we realize that everything man has ever built, ever done, which is generally a reflection of or a bit of a symbolism, if you will, if you look at some of the things that have been built that have lasted for hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of years, they still decay in time. The knowledge of the history of some who were a part of that, it's gone as a whole. Some things are there, but not very much.

So everything that man has ever built, everything he's ever tried to do as far as civilization's concerned, it all decays and turns to ruins. Just like our bodies; they weren't made to last for a long time. It's all temporary.

I've really been struck as we've been going through some of this how incredible it is at the time period we're in just before a final 1,100 years actually, another hundred years beyond that, but of mankind, that we're almost to the end of mankind's existence, and to realize there is basically one more thousand years that's going to follow as far as reproduction and continued growth as far as humanity's concerned, but after that no more. In some ways that's just kind of a stark reality, to realize where we are, to realize this is about God's plan, things that have been going on for 6,000 years, and getting close to an end, in many ways, in regards to that.

There's a lot to do during the next thousand years, but there comes a time when there will just be no more humanity. It's an incredible thing to think about, especially as we looked at last week going through some of the things about the temple. I love it how it says it in Revelation there because it's like God puts this here and says, "This is how big this is," if you want to, you know, get an idea of what I'm talking about here, and it gives something that's hundreds of miles wide, hundreds of miles high, and all the things that you can describe of how the beauty, if you were trying to do it in a physical way, this is what it would appear like. It's like "What have you built, mankind? What have you done? What you've done is so puny and so small. You think you're so great, but you're nothing. Everything that you have, that you build with, I put it there in the first place. I made it possible."

The way we think as human beings is really messed up because it's hard for us to grasp the greatness, the magnitude of Almighty God. Even sometimes in the Church to be in awe of how great He really is. The more we learn, the more we know, the more we realize how small, how puny we really are and how blessed we are that He's given us everything He has in the first place.

What lies ahead, we can't even begin to grasp. We can't even begin to imagine. But there is so much beyond this temporary, physical life that decays, that gets old and dies. It's just a routine, a process, a circle of life that we go through until we get to where we are going, if we'll follow what God offers us.

So anything that we might consider as great in civilization, again, is so short-lived, so puny, so small.

We've been going through parts here of 2 Chronicles 6 talking about some of these aspects of what Solomon had to say during the dedication of the temple and we've been zeroing in on certain aspects of what it says here. I want to read that again beginning in verse 4.

2 Chronicles 6:4—And he (Solomon) said, Blessed be the Eternal, the God of Israel, who by His hands has fulfilled what He has promised by His mouth to my father David, saying... He starts repeating some of these things, saying them, but what he's stating is on a physical plane, and it seems, anyway, evidence that he doesn't really grasp the spiritual. If he does, it's negligible even though he does say some things at certain points here, whether by inspiration or whatever, but which it had to be by inspiration no matter what, but whether or not he grasped that, we don't know. To what degree he grasped it, we don't know.

But again, he went on to say in **verse 5—Since the day that I brought My people out of the land of Egypt, I have not chosen a city from any of the tribes of Israel in which to build a house.** So to that point in time we understand that, we grasp that, we understand what happened to the ark when it went into battle. They took it into battle, it was captured, later brought back, and all the things that took place. So some of this has been addressed in some of the story here.

He's repeating something that's been stated by God. It was never in God's mind, or it never had come to Him in that point or it wasn't for Him at that point in time to choose a city from any of the tribes of Israel in which to build a house. In other words, it really wasn't God's purpose. But because of mankind and because of our limited ability to grasp things He gave something on a physical plane so that we could (when we're called, when we have God's spirit), begin to grasp something that's far greater on a spiritual.

He gave this "type" of Jerusalem, if you will, gave it the name. He is the one who inspired the name. They didn't name it. You know, people think they name certain things. There are times when God just gives names, inspires certain names when it has to do with His plan, and especially the structure here of what's taking place.

Obviously, we understand He gave the name "Israel," but not about a physical people. Even within the Church in times past - I think about back in Worldwide - we had a present truth, but there were things we didn't grasp about that, about the twelve tribes of Israel and the 144,000 and the 12,000 from every tribe. That was taken literally. The reality is that isn't what it was about at all. But we didn't know that at that time and God had to show us in time this is spiritual,

it is not physical. It is not about a literal, physical 12,000 people out of twelve tribes that are going to be a part of the 144,000, but it took us time to get there.

Candidly, there are things in that we couldn't see until, well, God's timing. God's choosing for us was not until after the Apostasy, and then certain things began to strike home in a very powerful way. To have 144,000 means that the Church has to become much, much greater than it was during Philadelphia. It has to become much, much larger than what it was. It never reached that in Philadelphia, that many baptized members, and so if there have to be 144,000 at the end and from only twelve tribes in Israel what about all the others? And then this great innumerable multitude?

Well, God used that to help us to learn that's not what it was. That's not what it was about. He began to help us to see all these things that were taking place were spiritual. The things we went through that we had to learn about the stones of the temple, not one being on top of another. Finally, God blessed us to grasp the sense of it all. But before that it wasn't His time to show us those things and we couldn't see it to the depth that we could later on.

When you've gone through something like an Apostasy and then God begins to show you what you went through things come home in a very powerful way. He drives them home in a very powerful way, and He did.

It is in some of these things here that Solomon was experiencing and talking about and things we're reading about.

It says, **I had not chosen a city from any of the tribes of Israel in which to build a house, so that My name might be there, and I chose no one to be ruler over My people Israel.** We learn as it goes on in time here that it was about a Messiah, it was about one who was going to come from David, but it wasn't about David, and it wasn't even about Solomon, obviously.

But I have chosen Jerusalem, in order that My name might be there. It was never meant to be about a city. It was never meant to be called the holy city. There's nothing holy about it, never has been, in that respect. Something that is holy is because of God's presence. Well, the closest you can have to God's presence was the temple and yet that isn't what it was all about. Those who were called by God, like David, different ones, Solomon, things we don't know for sure, but very few called during that time period. Perhaps some of the priests? Perhaps the high priest? We don't know. It doesn't say. But there are certain ones written about that we recognize by what they wrote, things that David wrote, things that David was inspired to do, that he most assuredly was one who was called by God and given great insight and understanding to God's plan and purpose on a spiritual plane.

What an incredible thing there are certain things you can grasp, but you can't really share it with others. How do you communicate that to others? To whatever level he grasped certain things about a Messiah, things that were to come to pass, for the present truth that he had at that time,

but he wrote a lot. God inspired him to write a lot of the book of Psalms that he never understood fully. But he was inspired, and moved, and motivated by God's spirit to write incredible things. He had to wonder about some of those things, obviously. Incredible. Things we just take for granted, things that hadn't been fully revealed back in his time and yet he was writing them.

Things that Daniel wrote, I can understand Daniel. I hope you can, too. He was inspired to see these things, to write these things, and then its like, "I want to know more. What does all this mean?"

Again, it wasn't about Jerusalem, but it says, **But I have chosen Jerusalem in order that My name might be there.** It wasn't about a physical place. Everything that Solomon was saying here that was given by God was about that which is spiritual. That's what we need to understand.

God was making it clear, "I have chosen Jerusalem. I will make the foundation. I will make the place sound and sure and stable, the place of Salem, the place of peace. I..." Only God can give peace, so that dwelling place that God looks forward to having, because it's only been in part through 6,000 years through a few whom God has called during that period of time. Now very few within a remnant Church if you want to talk about the Church for the past 2,000 years where God has dwelt. That's not the fulfillment of it. That's just a part of the process.

The Church of God is the Kingdom of God in embryo, like Mr. Armstrong gave. Beautiful expression that he gave, Mr. Armstrong gave, in showing that we're not even born yet when we're in the Church in these physical bodies, but we look forward to that time and we keep fighting until that time comes to pass. What a beautiful picture!

I have chosen Jerusalem, in order that My name might be there, and I have chosen David.

"One beloved." And who is that one beloved? It was the one coming out of his loins. Yes, He loved David. He's loved all those whom He's worked with through time. But the one at the pinnacle of it all is the one He determined before He created anything. His own Son, one that would be born from among mankind but be born from Him. Only one to be like that, Joshua. Awesome, what was given to him, the mind.

That's why I love the expressions when it talks about things in John 1, you start reading through that and "The Word made flesh." The only one like him, Joshua the Christ. All others, we become impregnated with the holy spirit in time. But to be born from the beginning in human life knowing and grasping things as you grow up, being able to be 12 years old and dumbfounding the priests during the Feast of Tabernacles, of things that they couldn't grasp what he was saying at that young age, at twelve? Awesome!

But I have chosen David, "one beloved," to be over My people Israel. People can take this physically and feel like, well, sometime David is going to be over all of Israel. But who is Israel? Is

it about physical tribes at that point in time? Is that what it's about? Anyway, incredible how we think as human beings.

So again, we've looked at what God has said concerning not choosing a city, and focusing in on Jerusalem, also about the ruler, about David here and what was being stated here. But today we're going to focus in on this a little bit more about David in Acts 2 and pick up where we left off, as we just started mentioning some of this, starting talking about a little bit of this.

I love these things that happened on the Day of Pentecost in 31 AD, because the things that Peter was inspired to write are the very things that reveal to us in a very powerful way a relationship between God the Father and Christ that we hadn't known until after the Apostasy, candidly, in its fullest power, in its fullest strength when it began to be taught in the Church. To realize that God then gave it to us at this time to grasp and understand because we're close to his coming, we're in a countdown to his coming.

So in **Acts 2:25**, again, things that aren't grasped by a Church that was scattered, things that we did not grasp as a Church before. **For David spoke concerning him...** So again here, Peter is showing here to the Jewish people, "You haven't grasped and understood what was being recorded here. These things written here are not about David." Even within the Church that has still been battled with through time, that certain things written here are not about David. They're about Christ. They're about the Messiah. They're about God the Father. David was inspired to write things in the Psalms about that relationship in their thinking between each other—incredible!—prophetic things that would come to pass.

For David spoke concerning him (the Messiah), I, again, this is the Messiah, **foresaw the Eternal**, (not David), **foresaw the Eternal...** This, if you go back in the Old Testament, it's Yahweh. This helped us to come to understand that Christ has not eternally existed. These are the verses through here in Acts and the rest of Acts that it talks about some of these things that Peter wrote about that are the very things that have helped us to come to understand God Almighty has eternally existed and His Son has not. He had a beginning. This is the proof of it all. Incredible!

I foresaw the Eternal always before my face, For He (God Almighty, Yahweh) is on my right hand... Again, it's about the Messiah not David. **...that I should not be moved. Therefore, did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad** (speaking of Christ). His life, we can't grasp what it was like. I can strive to appreciate some of it, but that relationship between him and his Father and the things that are recorded here, to me are very powerful.

"My heart did rejoice." He knew who he was! He knew as he was growing up who he was, the Messiah. We can't really grasp that to its fullest. We really can't. The knowing that he had in his mind of who he was and as he grew older and those things became more a part of his mind as he matured so that when his ministry began what a relationship! What an incredible relationship.

Therefore, did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad. Moreover, my flesh shall rest in hope. This is about something far more important, obviously, what it's all talking about here, in that respect. **Because You will not leave my life in hell,** in the grave. It wasn't about David and yet it is about David and it's about everyone who becomes a part. But again, this is about one individual here specifically, and yet all will follow suit who become a part of God's Family in time, will not stay in the grave. But here was something unique because of what it says in a moment.

Because you will not leave my soul (or maybe that's just what I wrote in the book and didn't quote it all. We'll get there in a moment), **in the grave; neither will You allow Your Holy One,** here we are, **You will not allow Your Holy One to see corruption.** This is talking about the physical decay of the body. He was going to be in the heart of the earth for three days and three nights and that's what this is about. His body wasn't going to decay like David's did, like Peter made clear to the Jewish people standing around him, "He's dust. He's in a sepulchre to this day. It's not about David." That's what Peter was telling the Jews. "This isn't about David. It's about the Messiah."

They didn't get it. Traditional Christianity hasn't got it. We didn't fully grasp it in the Church until it was God's time to reveal it to us.

...neither will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption. You (God Almighty, Yahweh) **have made known to me the ways of life; You shall make me full of joy with Your countenance.** Again here, it's about that life that he was able to live, that was in him, again, that we only experience in part, things that we're able to grasp. When something new comes along and all of a sudden you see something that you had never seen, because it's of the spirit, it's of the mind that God gives you, this knowing, and you just know it. It's an awesome thing.

I refer oftentimes to when I was first called and all of a sudden I heard about the Sabbath day, some of the holy days, about the migrations of Israel and what happened, who the United States was, and it was like you just know it. You don't have to go to any verse. You don't have to go, as some used to talk about, "You have to prove it to yourself. You have to go in scripture and prove it to yourself." Well, who am I to prove it to myself? How do I know what's true? We don't know!

You know, there used to be that haughtiness and pride within the Church in some people that it was like, "Well, if you do enough studying you can understand certain things. You can prove it to yourself." Bull! You can't prove a thing to yourself. Are you to study? Absolute! But God has to reveal it to your mind. It's God Almighty that opens up the mind and just gives it to you! What an incredible thing. What an incredible thing, you know, that all of a sudden you just know just by hearing.

Most people through time, how they've come into God's Church, is because they heard someone preaching about it, teaching about it. They didn't have anything to read. They didn't have Bibles to read. They couldn't open up the Bible and prove diddly squat to themselves. It was a matter of

the hearing, and when they heard it, when God is there and He opens up the mind, you just know it.

That was Christ's life. Everything out of scripture that he came across, it was there in his mind. God gave it to him. As he grew, as he matured, the more he grew, the more he saw. Incredible.

We experience that from time to time. We have a taste of it from time to time but we don't get to experience to the magnitude and level that he did by any measure. But the portion we're able to receive, how blessed are we? Because the world can't see those things; they can't know those things.

So I get a little worked up sometimes when I think about some of these things and about the haughtiness that existed in some people, and you realize, "You don't know anything unless God gives it to you. You can't prove anything to yourself. You're not an authority." I am not an authority. No one is an authority except God Almighty and if He gives it to you and He places you in authority, that's a different matter. But that's of God; it's not of us. It's not what we do. It's not what we strive for. It's not what's owed to us. What a beautiful thing when you understand that.

So some took that to themselves, to begin to think they had certain understanding as some did, and they began to tell others? I think of so many ministers, long before we ever had an Apostasy, that would preach a little bit different from what they'd heard in college, in Ambassador College, and then what they'd heard from Mr. Armstrong, from what they had heard from the ministry in the Church or whatever it might be and they come up with these different ideas of things they think they see, you know, that they can prove to you, "If you'll just come over and have a Bible study with me we'll study this together," something different from what the Church is teaching.

Sometimes there just wasn't enough fear in people's lives, in their minds, a fear to do other than what God gives in the mind. Because it's God that has to do it.

Verse 29—Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried. In other words, this isn't about him. This isn't about king David. The things that were written by David that are being quoted here were not about him.

So he says, **he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us to this day. Therefore, being a prophet,** David was a prophet, **and knowing that God,** it's the word "Yahweh" if you go back and look at it in Psalms, **had sworn with an oath to him...** To who? To David here. It was sworn to him, given to him, but about Christ, **that of the fruit of his loins...** So again, it was one to come from him and it wasn't Solomon. So you have to be careful, as some through time have taken that, they think it's about Solomon. No it wasn't. It's about one who was to come later, the Messiah.

...according to the flesh, in other words, from his loins, from his lineage, **He (God Almighty, Yahweh) would raise up the Messiah...** So all these things making it so clear. Because there had

been confusion by people in times past of things that most of us now take for granted today because of what's been given since the Apostasy about this relationship between Joshua and Yahweh, that Yahweh has eternal existed. Some believe, obviously, in the scattered Body that Yahweh is Christ. No, he's not. This is about Yahweh and His Son. This is about Yahweh and the one who would come in time from the loins of David, who would be born in a lineage from David. In other words, he had to start life and he didn't have it before.

...that He would raise up Christ (the Messiah), to sit on His throne. He, seeing this before, spoke of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in the grave, neither his flesh did see corruption. Because as it talked about David, he's dead and buried. That was after hundreds and hundreds of years and you know what the shape of the body is at that point in time. What does it mean? Nothing, it's just a body.

That's why it's a difficult thing sometimes for people to deal with. You know, when we're dead we're dead, the body...there's nothing... It's a body. It's physical composition of something that we used to be in. But when we're dead, that spirit, that spirit essence, that's in the mind.

I love how Mr. Armstrong came to understand that and explained that. A lot of those kinds of things we better understand because of computers, because of the ability to store memory. Back then they didn't even give that as an example, you know, back in 1972 when a book was written, *The Incredible Human Potential*.

Some began to say that Mr. Armstrong was teaching that we had an immortal soul. He wasn't saying that at all. He was saying there is a spirit essence—What a revelation that God gave to him!—there is a spirit essence that is in the mind. We have that which is a spirit essence that gives us the ability to think and reason and it's not the holy spirit. But when God gives His holy spirit then that ability to see and understand spiritual things is given, like the Sabbath, the holy days when you're first called and all of a sudden you just know them. It's something that God just gives. What an awesome thing! You have that experience at different times in your life in the Church, especially if we come to a point in time where God all of a sudden reveals something new in that sense...or more that we didn't grasp.

We've understood Pentecost. We just didn't understand that it was supposed to be on Sunday. All of a sudden, it's like wow! Before that I could have sat down with any of you and shown you the scriptures and said, "This is why it's on Monday." We all believed the same thing and that's all we could see. Those of you called now you might think, "Well, how could you have done that? It's so clear!" Yeah, because you're called at a time when the present truth is the truth. The present truth at that time, we couldn't see.

All we could see is Pentecost is there and we had certain understanding of what it meant, but we believed that it was on a Monday until God showed, 1974, finally, no, it's Sunday. Then on that day, maybe even a little before because of what he was writing, but at that time then when it went out to the whole Church it was like, "Yeah! I don't even know how I could have thought it

was Monday before,” but we did, “because it’s so clear it’s always on a Sunday! How could we have read it differently?” God’s spirit. Amazing.

So as we experience things like that you realize we didn’t grasp this by intellect, we didn’t grasp this by proving anything to ourselves; God just had to give it to us in His time. Then all of a sudden it was like, yeah, why couldn’t I see it before? Just like every other truth that has ever come along. Things like we went through in 2008, that Christ doesn’t return on a Feast of Trumpets, he returns on a Pentecost. It’s like, “Wow!” We couldn’t see it before and then it’s so clear, makes so much sense. It fits into a plan in a far more beautiful manner.

That’s how God works with us, a little bit at a time. It’s hard for us to grasp then sometimes how rich we are, how wealthy we are with truth, with God’s word that we didn’t deserve, that we didn’t know on our own, we didn’t figure out on our own.

That’s why sometimes when people would come along in the Church and say, “Well, I understood the Sabbath. I understood this before I heard Mr. Armstrong and I quit going to these Protestant churches out here and I went to this Church because I knew that the Sabbath was supposed to be kept. I proved that to myself.” Well, they take out, so often, if you’re coming to the Church of God it’s because God brought you along the path! You didn’t do anything on your own that you really grasped and understood.

Now, there are certain things that people can prove to themselves on a physical plane, but still a physical thing. It’s not spiritual until God opens the mind. Then you see it, then you know it. That’s a different matter. Hope that makes sense to everyone.

Again here, a beautiful story here of a relationship between Joshua, between the Messiah, and Yahweh, God Almighty, and the ability to foresee these things and to realize how important this was to God that He inspired David to write it all and gave physical examples of something - the temple, David, Jerusalem, and on and on it goes of things that we can see physically in order to learn something spiritually when He opens up the mind to see it and say, “Ah, so much more meaning! Jerusalem! It’s God who gives the foundation of peace. It’s God who sacrificed peace by creating an angelic realm that He knew in time part would turn against Him (incredible), to create human beings who from the get go would have a nature that was enmity against Him.” God knew what He was creating. He knew; He created us this way, that we would resist Him.

You think, “Why do that?” Well, because it’s the only way to create Elohim. Awesome! The more you come to see that and understand that the more in awe you are of God to be able to create His Family.

Acts 2:32—This Joshua has God raised up, whereof we are all witnesses. Therefore, being on the right hand of God exalted... They were hearing these stories about a resurrection. These things were being spread around Jerusalem, that the one who had been put to death, three people who’d been put to death on Passover, late on Passover, that here now the story is going

around about one who's been resurrected and given life again. Amazing! One that they knew of that had resurrected and heard the stories about resurrecting Lazarus, giving him life again, bringing him back from the dead. All the witnesses of those who saw Lazarus dead as dead could be and here he was up and walking. This news spread quickly, like wildfire. That's why so many were looking forward to seeing this person come into Jerusalem in the time he did, and crying out about Hosanna and David and knowing that this is the possibility of the Messiah who's come from God because only God can do these things. Incredible times.

Therefore, being at the right hand of God exalted and having received of the Father the promise of the holy spirit, He has poured out this day which you now see and hear. God the Father, the promise of the holy spirit, that which comes from God Almighty. "That which you see and here today," he's basically saying, "This is not from us. This is from God. This is from the holy spirit."

For David has not ascended into the heavens... Because there were those amongst the Jews, and the Pharisees and Sadducees weren't in agreement on this, of what happens after death, "Some go up to this place in heaven."

Look what that did to traditional Christianity. "After you die the only way you can do this thing is to have an immortal soul and somehow you're automatically going to go up or down. You don't want to go down." So if you can just have someone in the last moment and you're doing your last breath, and someone comes and does that sign of the cross and says, "You're okay. It's all okay. You're going to be up there. You don't have to worry."

These things are so shallow and people have a sense that they're shallow and they're not comforted at death because the depth of their ability to believe that is shallow. It's not strong.

Whereas in the Church we understand it's a body, there's nothing there. That's why I prefer a cremation. I don't even want anybody to look at a body. Just realize, hey, I got there a little quicker - to the dust again. We're from the dust of the earth. We're from the elements. I don't want anybody looking at the body. Just make it dust and then the person looking says, "Yeah, it's dust, waiting for a resurrection." So much easier to deal with.

We don't have the sorrow and the grief that goes with it to the same degree even though there is grief of not being with someone again for a time. We have a hope that is powerful, mighty, that the world just doesn't have. You have to feel for the world because of that because they don't know that. It's not a matter of making fun of the world, because they can't help it, but it's to understand and appreciate what we really grasp and see, how great that is that we don't have to worry like others.

For David has not ascended into the heavens, but he said himself, The Eternal (Yahweh), said unto my, in other words, David's, Lord (the Messiah), Sit on My right hand until I make your foes your footstool. That's God's plan - given all power and authority to His Son and when all

enemies then are brought under him, under his footstool, then the end is there where everything is given back to God Almighty. Awesome, beautiful picture, and it's about what Christ is going to do over the next 1,100 years when he returns.

Therefore, let all the house of Israel know... Not physical! It's not about the twelve tribes of Israel and yet in one way we were kind of imprisoned to that for a time. You're in bondage to certain things until God reveals the truth, until you come to a point in time where God frees you. Our entire calling is one of being freed from Egypt, spiritual Egypt, and one of the last, to me, great things was the name of Christ, Joshua. No longer in bondage to Jesus, because that name, at times because of the affiliation there, it just didn't feel good at all. It didn't feel right until God finally revealed why. "You're free of it because that's not his name." What a beautiful thing.

Let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God (Yahweh) has made that same Joshua, whom you have nailed to a pole, both Lord and Christ, made him the Messiah, the one "anointed to be King." Today, you know, people hear the name Christ, they have no idea what it means. Most don't even know that it means, "Messiah." And most, if they hear and know that it means Messiah, they have no idea of what that means. It means to be "anointed to be the King." That's what the word has to do with. It has to do with an anointing to be the King of Israel - not physical Israel - all Israel, because all become a part of spiritual Israel.

So all these things that God has given by physical things to see, they have that which is spiritual that they represent. Just like the things in the tabernacle, everything in the tabernacle. There are things in the tabernacle we have no idea yet what the meaning of them are, happens to be that God has given.

That's why I love Leviticus 16. On the Day of Atonement you go through there and it talks about this process that was done once a year where the High Priest went into the Holiest of Holies and went through a certain ceremony. That could only be done once a year on the Day of Atonement. You go through that entire story about these two goats, and one the azazel, and the other representing Christ. Beautiful picture, that even there God had to show which was which. It's like us, we don't know who Joshua is until God shows him. Otherwise, we think the other one is. That's the way of the human mind until God shows it. God has to reveal which goat is which. They can't decide on their own. Again, all these things that have something that's pictured in it.

So even the entire function of what took place and the offerings and the type of offerings, they all had meaning. But all the utensils, all the things that were constructed there, the veil of the temple, every bit of it has meaning. There are some things we still don't know what the meaning is and God will reveal that in time. We'll say, "Oh, that's so simple. How come I didn't see that."

Zechariah 6. We reviewed these in *Part 2* but we're going to go through it again.

Zechariah 6:12—Speak unto him, saying, Thus says the Eternal of hosts, saying, Behold, the Man whose name is the BRANCH! Again, means "to spring forth; to bud forth; to grow." For he

shall grow, and the words “out of his place” are just added there. But, **he shall grow and he shall build the temple of the Eternal**. That’s what it’s saying. That’s the proper translation of it.

You know, it’s amazing to me sometimes when people translate things into different languages and because they don’t know God’s plan and they don’t know the most basics of it they come up with different words because they’re trying to translate something word by word from Hebrew, things that have been lost in Hebrew, and then Greek, and whatever else it might be, Aramaic, and then they try to do it with the understanding they have and they can’t do it word by word because there are sometimes it takes a few words to translate a different word. You can’t just do it word by word.

Sometimes there are not words in a particular language that mean the same thing; it may take a few words to do it. But sometimes it’s like they don’t want to do it, they can’t do it because somehow that’s changing things and that’s changing what’s written in the word of God. You think, the word is God, if they understand it (they can’t), it’s spiritual. It comes from God. It’s from God’s spirit, and to go into a different language you have to understand the spirit of a matter, what is being said. There are words there, but if you understand God’s plan, beautiful, it makes perfect sense.

He shall grow... I don’t know why they added “out of his place.” “Out of his place,” what does that mean? Making a little bit of fun there because it takes away from the meaning of what’s really being said here.

And he shall grow, which he did, **and he shall build**, in time, through a process of time, he has been working for 2,000 years. Most who have ever been called to be a part of the 144,000 has been over the last 2,000 years in the Church. **And he shall build the temple of the Eternal**, because it’s a spiritual structure. **He shall even build the temple of the Eternal and he shall bear the glory, and he shall sit and rule upon His throne**, upon God’s throne. **He shall be a priest upon His throne...** That’s why he’s our High Priest. He’s known to be our High Priest. That’s the duty he has, to do a work for God, to represent God in every way. He is of God very powerfully so.

He shall be a priest upon His throne and the counsel of peace. Again, beautiful. Completeness, harmony, purpose of unity **shall be between them both**.

John 12:12 (I’ll just read this to you, you don’t need to turn there.) It says, **On the next day many people who had come to the Feast, when they heard that Joshua was coming to Jerusalem, took branches of palm trees and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna! ...Blessed is the King of Israel!**

So again, it was this that God gave. Not that they grasped it nor understood it fully, but if you remember the story, that if they didn’t cry out the stones would, this was such a momentous occasion, this was so important in God’s plan, of what was being accomplished here. He was

coming in to die as our Passover, and that which they didn't even understand. Even the disciples never understood that. They were shocked that he died. They didn't know what they were going to do. Going back to fishing? Going back to whatever else for a living because he must not have been the Messiah? They didn't understand it. They believed he was. They saw all these things. Then he appeared in the midst of them. Can you imagine being in a room and all of a sudden there he is?

...and cried **Hosanna! Blessed is the King of Israel.** Spiritual, because everyone is going to be a part of this. That's what's so beautiful about this. The King of Israel - it's a spiritual kingdom. It's God's kingdom and everyone will receive of those names because that's God's purpose, it's God's design. It's what He's building. **...blessed is the King of Israel who comes in the name of the Lord.**

Going back here, I don't need to read it all again, but in 2 Chronicles the next part we focused upon was not about David, but the last part it was about Israel. So it goes on to say here, **2 Chronicles 6:6—But I have chosen Jerusalem, in order that My name might be there; and have chosen David,** again, from the lineage of David, **to be over My people Israel.** So again, it's fitting that we look at the word "Israel" now.

So to do that let's turn over to Hebrews 8, because, again, it's spiritual. I am so thankful when God began to reveal that to us. We didn't really grasp all that to a greater depth until after the Apostasy, because it was about the 144,000 that helped to reveal that, that it's a name. It's the name, what the name represents, that it's a spiritual name that God is using or spiritual significance, if you will, in the meaning of the name. So it's not just about a temporary physical fulfillment of something that Solomon was talking about during those days.

Hebrews 8:8—Finding fault with them, and part of this, again, in *Part 2* here, but we're going to read part of this again and continue on. **For finding fault with them he said, Behold, the days come, says the Lord, when I shall make a new covenant with the house of Israel, Jacob,** but it's about the "house of Israel." So they understood the names and the meaning of the names because his name was changed because God had a purpose in the name of what was going to be accomplished later on. Not about the twelve tribes of Israel.

...**a new covenant with the house of Israel.** So again, it's about a new covenant. It seems like these things would be so much easier to understand sometimes, but they really aren't until God gives us the understanding. **...and with the house of Judah.** So it uses two names here because of the meaning of the names. But it's not just about those physical tribes. This covenant, everyone has the opportunity of entering into it with God. It's a new covenant. The first one was to a physical people. The second one is far beyond that. It's to those who will bear those names once they become a part of it, but that's a part of the story.

It goes on in **verse 9** here and says, **Not according to the covenant I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt.** So again, Israel,

yes, but far beyond that, **because they did not continue...** So again, it's always using this physical example of something that happened to a physical people to teach what is spiritual.

He says, **because they did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them, says the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house...** It's not a "house," it's the "dwelling." The word means "dwelling." So again here, if we don't read it properly we're thinking of a physical tribe when God is talking about a dwelling place - which we understand what that means then far more so. **...with the dwelling of Israel.** Again, the word "Israel," "El" meaning God, and the second part of that "to persevere; to contend, to strive."

I think of what God has done for so long. That's why I think about the expression that talks about what God is doing concerning Zion and the controversy of Zion. Because beginning with Satan, it has been. It's been like, "Is God going to be able to do what He has said?" It was in the angelic realm. A third of the angels went off to do their own thing, to fight against God, to resist God, and then God created mankind, and ever since He has, everyone has resisted Him, turned against Him, as a whole, except those that have been specifically called to be worked with to become a part of God's government who have yielded to that. Then even within that there are people who turn against God.

We have seen so much of that in the Church, especially because of the Apostasy, and of people that once they're even called they still turn against God, turn against what He's offering them, resist and fight against that. So again, it's talking about a dwelling place.

God has persevered, God has worked. I think of the incredible patience God has had to bring this about, but He's going to bring it about. We know that. We're convicted of that with all of our being.

I couldn't help but think about in some of this book here, of how Christ's first coming was an incredible threat to the Jewish leaders of that time. That's why they hated him. That's why they wanted to kill him. But I think of this next time. That's a threat to every religion on earth. You talk about the hatred that will exist for a period of time there, whatever that period is going to be, it's going to be there. Thankfully, it's going to be short-lived.

Not only does God do that but we have to do this too. We have to strive. We have to contend. We have to persevere. It's not just a few weeks or a few months. It's from the time you're called to the time you're either changed or you're dead. It's just a way of life and you fight and you fight and you repent and you repent and you see some of the things creeping back up and you fight against them again and you cry out to God for help and you pray that God forgive you, and to thank Him that we're able to continue going, but you have to persevere. You have to keep getting up and keep moving forward.

To me, that's an amazing thing to me that God uses to develop with us character, because every time we repent we're agreeing with God that God is right and we're wrong. That becomes more

powerful in our thinking, or set in our thinking, and that's a beautiful thing, that kind of character, that kind of a mind, that you're going to persevere, you're going to fight, you've chosen God's way of life and nothing is going to change that. No one, no one, nothing, no employer, I don't care what it is out there, no government, it doesn't matter; no one is going to change the way you think. You have chosen something that you hold dear with all of your being and you have to persevere and you have to fight. You have to contend. You have to strive for it.

Sometimes there are some real battles involved in that process and they hit you in different ways. You just keep going, you keep fighting, regardless of what anyone else says. Those are choices along the way, too, because we have seen where many, most have made other choices. So to persevere and to keep fighting, it's an awesome blessing, it truly is.

So again, **For this is the covenant that I will make with the dwelling of Israel after those days, says the Lord; I will put My laws in their mind, and write them in their hearts.** I love this because, again, it's just like the Sabbath. When you see it you see it, the ways of God, the truths of God that are written in our thinking, in our hearts. The longer we live it the more we fight for it, persevere, you know, the more beautiful it becomes, the thinking in our minds, God writing His law in our minds. The longer we continue to fight and resist the pulls of this life, the world that's around us, the more character we're able to grow in, awesome, it's written more deeply in our hearts and minds. We become far more convicted until we finally become set. A better word I like is sealed. That's what you want, to be sealed in God's way of life.

...and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to Me a people. So there are those who are sealed to become a part of 144,000. There are those still waiting to be sealed. Because we know what's going to happen as soon as the last is sealed. It's going to be just like that. God is going to bring it down to that moment in time, that when the sealing is finished it starts in the world around us, whenever that day is, because God is perfect in what He creates, in His timing. He is in control. He's the master of it all, works it all together, and does it all and things that we can't even begin to grasp nor comprehend. So we know when that's going to take place.

But for all who live on into the Millennium, you're going to look for the same thing; you're going to want to be sealed. You're going to want to be sealed while you're in your physical life because it's going to happen at different places along the way in your life, that God in His relationship with you—not that He'll tell you you're sealed—but that's your goal and desire, to be set, to be sealed in God's way of life, that God is able to say to you, "Now I know you. I know you. This will always be your choice. It's who you are." Awesome!

As long as God's spirit is there it'll always be your choice. If you're left on your own, that's a different matter because you won't be able to do it. But if you continue to cry out for God's spirit, continue to be close to Him, continue to desire to dwell in Him and He in you and this is your heart, your desire and you constantly are repenting of your sins and that becomes a part of who you are, and that's who you are with God's spirit in your mind, you become sealed. What a beautiful thing.

So that'll happen throughout the Millennium for people. That's the only way people can be resurrected at the end into God's Family, Elohim. Because people will die through the Millennium, and so if they're sealed, whatever age they are, they'll be resurrected spirit at the end of that period of time.

And I will put My laws in their mind, and write them in their hearts, all who become a part of spiritual Israel. Just like it is today in God's Church, many different backgrounds, many different peoples, people from different places. Whether we have a speck of blood in us that came out of Israel or not, we don't know. Some of you are pretty sure, certain traits you have of certain countries. Mine... I don't want to get into that.

From Deutschland. My son made that very clear to me. I have to tell you a little bit of story, I guess I should. I don't have to, but I will. We have this lineage going back, well, we have papers that go back to the early 1700's. I think it's 1740's when some came over from Europe and settled in the eastern part of the US on my father's side. Anyway, those papers are in German, but my dad had thought that because most of the people who came across on some of those ships, the same ship, that they were from the area of Moravia and Czechoslovakia or the Czech Republic. So there are three different types. There is Bohemia, Czechoslovakia, and Moravian in that particular region.

Well, come to find out there was some kind of a Baron in that particular part of the world on the side of Germany there and in the Czech Republic back in the 1700's that had a lot of land, and he set it aside for a place of religious freedom. Anybody could come there and be there and he actually had a ship built to bring people over. I think they made six trips or seven trips over to the United States. Anyway, but it was primarily for the people in the Czech area. So Jeremy just let me know that you happen to be a German that snuck in on the Czech ship because our papers are clearly German.

Anyway, all that time I thought I was Moravian. My wife knew I was German from the day we got married. Okay, I'm sorry I took that little sideline. The whole point being is lineage isn't important. We all become a part of spiritual Israel. We all came from the period of time of Noah. We all have the same blood through time, if only people could see that and come to learn to appreciate differences in people, differences in nationalities.

Because God uses that in His Family in a very powerful way. It's spoken of in scripture how He's going to use that in His Family because there are just certain things that people learn from different areas and God wants great variety. Look at the world. Look at what He's created. Look at the universe. We can't even begin to grasp the magnitude of such variety that's in the mind of God and that which He desires in His Family. He doesn't want us all to be the same.

So if we come to understand that we can come to learn to appreciate even more deeply the uniqueness and differences of one another rather than feeling we have to be alike or whatever it might be, or have to be a certain way, but to strive to learn to appreciate the differences. That's

why I love how the New Testament states that, about this attitude we should have toward one another of, basically the word means, to appreciate the differences.

It's like different foods. You may not like cilantro but you can appreciate the fact that others do, and on and on it goes. There are all kind of varieties of foods and things in the world.

Anyway, when it comes to relationships with people, though, we should strive to really appreciate one another and to be in awe of what God is creating.

Romans 11. we're now going to focus on an area of scripture that's really unique and very descriptive of the Israel that God is creating, a spiritual Israel. Some of these things that are written like this, sometimes until you begin to see them for what they are we just tend to read through them.

Like that last section we read through in Revelation. We read about this physical building and this wall, as massive as it is that's all the way around it, and we try to think physically about it and we just read through the story quickly. But we're not supposed to.

Romans 11:1. I love the way Paul goes through and explains some of these things because he's trying to reason with, as he does in so many areas of scripture, has a reasoning that he's trying to have with the Corinthians sometimes, or the Hebrews, in this case here the Romans in their culture of the world. He's inspired then to write certain things that, again, are on a spiritual plane. To the depth they grasp all this is doubtful, but he's dealing with something physical here with physical people and yet there is great spiritual meaning in what he has to say.

Romans 11:1—Then I ask, Has God cast away, “pushed away or rejected” His people? So he's going through an explanation here about Israel. Then he's the apostle to the gentiles so he's reasoning to them about these things, about what has taken place as far as the tribes of Israel, as far as specifically Judah has experienced because this is where Christ was killed, and now revealing even more here about something but striving to take them a little bit farther so they can grasp something on a greater plane of what God is doing.

So the question is being asked here, have they been rejected fully? Because Paul is being sent to the gentiles. He said, **Never! For I also am an Israelite.** So it's not about physical tribes. It's not about who you're from, but this is a part of the reasoning dealing with physical minds. You've got to start somewhere. This is where he's starting.

For I am an Israelite of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God has not cast away (rejected) His people whom He foreknew. So, “I am here. I am of the tribe... I'm of Abraham. I'm of the tribe of Benjamin, an Israelite. God hasn't rejected His people so there is more to the story you need to learn.” That's what he's telling them.

God has not cast away (rejected) His people whom He foreknew. Do you not know what the scripture says of Elijah and how he implored God against Israel saying, Lord, they have killed

Your prophets, and torn down Your altars; and I alone am left, and they are seeking my life. But what divine response was given to him? In other words, what did God say to him?

I have reserved to Myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal. So the point being here is they're a part of Israel. They have not bowed the knee to Baal. They're holding on, too. That doesn't mean that they were of spiritual minds and being called into a relationship, a spiritual relationship - perhaps some were, we don't know - but he's showing something very physical here that took place, of what was taking place even in this particular time referring back to the time of Elijah.

Even so then at this present time there is a remnant according to the selection... What does that mean, "according to the selection?" Well, God's the one that does the calling. He does the choosing. The selection is about those who are selected, chosen to be drawn, to be called. He says, **there is this selection (election) of grace.** God's the one who does it, an amazing thing.

We don't know why. Why was I called? Why were you called? We're just thankful that He did. Why not call some other member of the family or some neighbors that I have known that lived a far better life than what I ever did? But that's not what it's about. It's about God choosing and He's going to do something in your life if we'll yield to that until it's finished, until it's complete.

Even so then at this present time there is a remnant according to the selection of grace. A remnant of what? Well, he just said. "I'm of Benjamin. There is a remnant. God is working with Israel." He's showing here as it goes along that it's not all about that which is just physical. But people in the beginning especially of their spiritual growth are hung up on physical.

Even like Peter in the very beginning, he had troubles when gentiles began to be called. He had a difficulty. He had a difficulty in some of his relationship with Paul at times because there were things that Paul was given to see and understand that Peter had to battle with because of how he grew up, because of what he had experienced in his life in the realm of being part of Judah as he was.

Even so then at this present time there is a remnant according to the selection of grace. It's what God does. He starts to give mercy. He starts to give of His love. He calls you to be loved by Him. He calls you to receive forgiveness of your sins. All the words that have to do with this word "grace," of God giving us mercy, of God giving us an opportunity to have a relationship with Him.

And if by grace, then it is no more of works. It's not about works, but you have to have works in your life as far as what you do. Paul explains those things. But it's not because you can earn it, it's because God just called you, He's given you an opportunity, He's opened up your mind whether you be Jew, gentile, Israelite; it doesn't matter, it's a calling of grace. It's something that God does.

...otherwise grace is no more grace. So in other words, God does it. The point being is there is not a thing you can do to earn it. There is no works involved because all of us are filled with sin. We all have to be forgiven. All these things that Paul explains throughout scripture.

But if it be of works, then it is no more grace: otherwise work is no longer work. What then? So again, I've already explained that, what he's saying here. It's just his way of wording it to them.

What then? Israel has not obtained what it was seeking. So the point being of what he's saying here is he says, "Look, Israel hasn't obtained what God gave to it in the sense of what was written in the Old Testament," in the sense of the laws, if you want to look at that, laws being written in the hearts and minds. That's a spiritual thing. When it comes down to Israel, in that respect, it's not about a physical nation of people.

So he says, **Has Israel not obtained what it was seeking?** So if they had certain ones who were faithful as far as priests were concerned or kings. David was a very faithful king, and those who served in the priesthood at that time were faithful in what they were doing. The story then of different ones who were faithful, showing here that there was a desire that people had. It's just like when they came into Israel. They weren't being called of God, but there was that desire to see the Messiah come. Because they could only think on a physical plane, "Someone is going to come and free us from the Roman rule, the Messiah." They were looking forward to the time that God's Kingdom would be established, but they didn't understand fully what it was about. They didn't understand it was something spiritual.

So Israel has not obtained what it was seeking, but the selection has obtained it. "Look," he's saying, "you're called into the Church. You have been selected by God. You have been chosen by God to have a relationship with Him. It's of the calling, regardless of who you are, but if you are a part of Israel then it's by the calling, it's by the selection of grace that you have been drawn to this."

So Israel hasn't obtained it by what they are able to do physically. It's something that God has to do, but the selection has obtained it. In other words, you have to be a part of the calling, of what God does. ...and the rest have remained blind. So if people aren't called, they're blind. The only reason you have what you have is because God has opened your mind. That's what he's saying.

Verse 16, jumping on down here, **For if the first fruits is holy, the lump is holy: and if the root is holy, so are the branches.** So he's still going on and explaining something here, trying to reason with them on a physical plane to help them to grasp something on a spiritual plane. There is a part of this here that I'm still not sure of it being translated correctly, but the one with the branches, and so forth here, we understand obviously.

“If the root is holy, so are the branches.” So it’s showing something here. Whatever you’re supported by, whatever you’re given, whatever feeds you, if it’s holy, then if you’re a part of that you are as well. So this is a part of what he’s saying.

And if some of the branches are broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them... So what is he saying here? He’s saying, “Look, if there is part of the tree here and a part of it gets broken off,” for whatever reasons, “and because it’s not a part of that which is holy, and you’re grafted into it,” this is the explanation of what he’s saying, “You’re a gentile. You’re able to be grafted into something here.”

If you are grafted in among them and with them be partaker of the root and fatness of the olive tree... He’s explaining to them something that probably in the early Church they didn’t really fully grasp as much as they did as time went along here because this is still very early on in the Church.

Candidly, you can understand that when you read the Book of John and what God gave John in 1st John, 2nd John, and 3rd John. You come to realize that God was giving far more on a spiritual plane of understanding to John than what they ever had before. Paul didn’t have those things. Peter didn’t have those things that John grasped and understood. He’s explaining something here in the beginning of the Church that’s very much rooted in (no pun intended) physical nations, physical peoples and how they were consumed with that, with who they were.

Isn’t that amazing how we sometimes think? I’m “this” or I’m “that.” Paul had to address later on who they were baptized by. “I was baptized by so and so.” “No, I was baptized by so and so.” It’s like there’s this contest going on, who is better than somebody else. “If Mr. Armstrong baptized me then I’m better, I’m doing better. I got baptized by him - whoo heee!” I’m sorry but that’s the way we are as human beings sometimes. Maybe you’ve never heard that in the Church, but I have, things like that because of how we tend to think. We tend to think physically. No, that’s all spiritual.

There is nothing about anyone who does the baptizing. The person that baptized me left the Church, and if Mr. Armstrong hadn’t written some of the things he did in the baptism booklet I probably would have had some questions. But he made it very clear it was never a matter of who baptizes you. It’s not a matter of who lays hands upon you. It’s God Almighty. If the hands were laid upon you it’s a matter of the government that’s there and how God worked at that point in time until he was gotten rid of. But as far as God’s spirit and the impregnation, that’s what you received. It came from God. God does it. But we don’t tend to think that way.

I think the one I had that left. I don’t know if he went back to raising Christmas trees, but he came from a family that raised Christmas trees. Left the Church, a minister, been a minister for a long, long time. Went right back into the world like so many have.

I think of the Apostasy. How do you go back to Sunday? How do you go back to Easter? How do you go back to Christmas? That just blows the mind that that can even happen physically.

Do not boast against the branches. Don't think you're better because of who you are. **But if you boast, you do not bear or support the root**—I love the way that's stated there—**but the root you.** The root is supporting you.

So part of this is being shown we don't do these things of ourselves. We are dependent upon being fed and nourished by that which comes up through from the roots. What are we rooted in? What are we grounded in? So that's how he's reasoning with them, and if you're a part of that, one part isn't better than the other. But as human beings we sometimes get in this thing of competition or thinking we're better than someone else in the Body. Don't ever let that get a hold of you.

Because it exists. Maybe it's not a lot compared to what it used to be many years ago, but there is still a measure of that that exists because we're human beings, and if you can see those things in yourself then that's a good thing. Because if you see it then it's a good thing if you're battling it. Let's put it that way. If you see it and you're just allowing it and continuing in it then that will take you away in time. God is not going to bring you through all this. Because this is a major thing, that no one should think themselves better than anyone else, above anyone else. That's not what we are. That's not who we are.

That's why I like some of this, whether it means it by that or not when it says being grafted in and them, **be a partaker of the root, the fatness of the olive tree. Do not boast against the branches. But if you boast you do not bear or support the root.** I like that. If you're a part of the entire tree or vine or whatever else it is being spoken of here and you have the root and that which is supporting you, and if you're a part that isn't, doesn't grasp and helping to bear the root. It's kind of a twist on words here, but it's about supporting or bearing the root - you're all connected together.

We're a part of a Body, the Church, every one of us, every one of us that's a branch or a part of a branch, whatever it is, we're all a part of the same thing, and if we're not doing our part, truly, spiritually we're not supporting what comes to us from the roots, what God has given to us. I love that because either we're a part and we support and we're in unity and we're in oneness, because if we're not then we can't remain a part.

For then you might say, The branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in. So again, it's amazing what he was dealing with here with the Romans and their thinking. But the Jews had certain thinking, there was contention because the world had so changed. That which was known as Judaism and that which is known as the gentile world now and being brought together with that history of the past and they're supposed to become one, there were some battles that took place in the mind toward each other and how they thought about each other, because they

confused the Jewish Old Testament world of the Jews, the Sadducees, the Pharisees and the people they were familiar with and the way gentiles were.

You can't do that in God's Church. When God opens our minds He gives us of His spirit and it's the same mind. There's a unity and a oneness and a way of thinking toward one another that should exist. It should have nothing to do with differences and thinking badly about someone else because of those differences, whatever they are, whether it's what Paul is addressing or something else.

Verse 20. So he says, **Good!** In other words, saying that's good for you. That's good for you if a part's broken off so that you can be grafted in. You might say that **in that the branches were broken off because of unbelief.** So they're broken off because of unbelief. They can't be a part because of unbelief. That's the reality; no one can be a part of this unless they are the same faith, the same belief, the same truth, the same mind.

...they were broken off because of unbelief and you stand by faith. So everyone, doesn't matter who they are, all of us are able to be a part of the same root system, of the same grounding, if you will, in that respect, because of the truth that God gives to us and we live by faith, by what we believe, and we're to believe the same thing.

So do not be high minded, but fear, because we still have that as human beings. Sometimes we can begin to think a little highly of ourselves. Pride, it's an ugly thing. I don't care who you are there is going to be a certain measure of that in your mind that you battle - hopefully, you battle with because there is no one in God's Church who doesn't have that before them. "The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life," are a part of your nature, a part of your human nature. If you don't see them and think, "I don't have that," then you deceive yourself and the truth isn't in you. That's the reality.

So we have to be able to recognize, yes, those things are a part of me. And prayerfully, as we grow we're conquering and overcoming them and becoming more refined. But the reality is there are always those measures of things in us and they will always be there as long as we're in this physical body. So if someone says they don't have pride then they don't grasp things like they should.

Do not be high minded but fear. We should fear that. Fearful. I am fearful of this nature. I know what it can do. I've witnessed it within the Church. I see choices that are made. I don't want those choices. I fear being separated from God. That's why we pray and cry out to God to forgive us and to fill us with His holy spirit. And if we don't do that...?

For if God did not spare the natural branches, in other words, **take heed, perhaps He will not spare you.** Now, wouldn't it be wonderful if all of the Church had always known that. But the reality is then there would have been a lot more than 144,000 and God knows how He works with

people and that there are those within the vast number of calling that the majority are going to reject Him.

Isn't that amazing to think about? God has known from the beginning that of the majority that He will call, of all those He will call, the majority would reject Him even once receiving the impregnation of His holy spirit. That's profound to me. It really is. That should cause us to be fearful, that we don't want that to happen to us. Because this is not over until it's over.

For if God did not spare the natural branches, in other words, take heed lest He not spare you. So consider both the goodness and the severity of God, the grace of God, the mercy of God, and then the severity as well in the sense that if you think you're going to get by with something you're blind as a bat. That's horrible if that kind of thinking can enter the mind. Because the reality is nothing is owed to us and God knows everything in our minds, everything in our thinking. Everything in your thinking. Nothing is hidden from God. God knows your thoughts. It's spirit. It's a spirit essence that's in your mind. It can't be hidden from Him. Isn't that amazing?

So consider both the goodness and the severity of God. The reality is you can't hide anything, and if you try to, if it doesn't come to the surface and God deal with it through the Church, as the majority of things are, He will take care of it in His own time. Because nothing gets by God. That should be a fearful thing.

...for severity was upon those who have fallen; but towards you is goodness, if—if you continue in goodness. So that's the reason we're going through this. Because this is what it's about. We have choices to make. "If you continue in goodness," basically, in God's way, in God's truth because that's the source of everything that's good. **...otherwise you shall be cut off.**

So he was speaking to the Church. The vast majority that have ever come into the Church have all been cut off, the vast majority of all who have been called. Many have been chosen, few have made it through, brethren.

Verse 23—And they, so it's clearly referring to Israel here, **also, if they do not continue in unbelief shall be grafted in.** Beautiful! "So there's coming a time when they won't continue in unbelief, but they're going to be able to believe the truth, the same thing that you've been given as a gentile." They'll be able to be grafted in, because the reality is the only thing that can be a part of this, if you will, a spiritual tree in this case, or spiritual vine or whatever analogy you want to give, it's spiritual, and they were never a part of it, of the spiritual. That's the reality of it all. One day they're going to be able to be grafted in just like gentiles were. That's what he's showing them.

...they shall be able to be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. In other words, to spiritual Israel. They were a part of physical, but that's not what it's about. He's showing them it's about a spiritual Israel and they're going to be able to be grafted in.

For if you were cut out of the olive tree, which is wild by nature, and were grafted contrary to nature into the good olive tree: how much more shall these, who are of the natural be grafted into their own olive tree? So in other words, in part there is an advantage because of the history, because of that which they have known, if they have known it, specifically even of Judah even more so, because they've known about the Old Testament, they know about that history.

Someone who has never known that, it's going to be more difficult for them, if they had a mind that was of some other religion, of some other thinking. It takes time to come out of those things. So, in other words, there is an advantage in that sense that if you've known certain things then you may have that opportunity to more quickly yield to the process, but it doesn't mean you'll stay yielded to it.

Verse 25—For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, unless you should become wise in your own conceits. The whole point of the story here is never become wise with pride, conceited in our own thinking of who we think we are. **...for in part blindness happened to Israel, until the fullness of the gentiles should come in. So that all Israel should be saved.** I love this, the way it's stated here. See, it's about spiritual Israel.

So he's showing here both can have the opportunity, will have the opportunity to become a part of this. **So that all Israel shall be saved.** Because all Israel will not be saved. Do you understand the difference of what he's saying here? Physical Israel, all Israel is not going to be saved. But all of Israel that God is speaking of here will be saved because Israel by its very name, spiritual Israel, is a part of Zion, a part of the Kingdom of God, a part of that which comes through all of this and bears that name. It's a beautiful thing what's written here.

So that all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. For this is My covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. So again, whether you're Jew or gentile, immaterial. Paul is making it very clear here that the goal and the desire and what will be saved in time is Israel, but it's spiritual Israel.