

Today we're going to take the beginning of a historical jump, if you will, into the near future; into matters that will begin to unfold with increasing clarity and excitement in the lives of men and women. I first considered the title for this new sermon series to simply be 'Men and Women' but as I began to pray about this new series God was beginning to show me particular matters that needed to be covered and where He was leading us and it became clearer that there were going to be other sermons under that particular overall title. So we're going to have a series of sermons that are going to be under the subject matter of 'Men and Women'. It's going to be about what God is planning for the future, what is going to take place at the very beginning of the Millennium, and candidly, what's beginning in the Church right now; what has already begun in the Church as God begins and continues to reveal things to us about that incredible relationship in life that for 6,000 years got off to a wrong start in a very powerful way because of a being that was right there in the midst of the first two who were given life on this earth.

So we're going to begin a new sermon series that will be covering material that God wants us to grasp quickly and to begin implementing now more zealously, far more zealously than what we have so far; because we've only been given a little bit to think about and to consider. But it hasn't sunk in fully like it needs to with time! It takes time to digest this kind of thing that God has given to us, truly; and continues to give to us. This isn't something that happens overnight. This has been with us for a long, long time in society in the world, and it's moulded and fashioned in the minds of people around the world, how they think, how they reason and so forth. And thank God He's going to begin changing so much of that, because it's wrong, it isn't good, it isn't based upon right principles. And God is giving us the opportunity within the Church to begin to address those things now and a whole lot more once His Kingdom is established on this earth.

So in the next few series of sermons we'll be covering the overall subject of 'Men and Women' and right relationships between the two; but God desires that we begin to make a greater way as far as the change in our behaviour is concerned because that's what it requires, a change in our thinking and a change in our behaviour.

There is so much that we'll eventually cover that has everything to do with removing the curse that exists between men and women, that has existed (as I said) for 6,000 years; and God is bringing us to greater insight and understanding so we can begin to make far greater changes in our lives.

The first subtitle if you will, because the subjects are always going to be about men and women, the relationship that God desires us to have; but this one here is entitled *Reviewing the Curse*. The reason for that is because we're going to go back to when we began to first address this. Nearly a year ago we began to address this subject in a sermon and also in a posting on the website, and in the personal there was a posting on January 15th of this year that was entitled, 'WOMEN & "The CURSE"'. And so we're going to go through much of that again and I am going to comment as we go through it and bring out more scriptures to build upon it; because I'll just tell you right now, we can read through something, we can begin to see something and not understand it fully. And so God gives us more because He desires that we understand it more deeply, far more fully than what we do right now. That is part of a process of building.

As I've been going through even this particular sermon series here I've been in awe and dumbfounded that some of the things we went through at the Feast and some of the things we've been going through before the Feast and after the Feast have much to do with this particular subject matter; that it *will* help us then to be able to grasp more fully what God is doing with the changes involved. And the more we see it the more we can change, the more we hate evil the more we can change to do what is right. And we have to really come to a point where we *hate* the things that are done wrong in relationships. And so God begins with the Church. And that's what's exciting about the Millennium – everything in the future *will be the Church!* There won't be a lot of churches, there'll only be one, there will only be one Government – thank God. There won't be the massive confusion that there is today between countries, between nations, between people. There will be that standard to live by, that standard to govern by, that standard of all relationships, that standard of truth that exists in the world that comes through Jesus Christ to the entire world.

Let's go back to where we began, where some of these things are discussed back in Genesis 3. This is the best place to begin with this subject matter. **Genesis 3:9** - It's good to get the context of all this because there's really much revealed here, there's a lot here that we can gloss over as a little bit of a story; and we're going to read it in the beginning as a little bit of a story here, and then we're going to build upon it and discuss these things in greater depth and detail. **And the Eternal God/Yahweh Elohim called unto Adam, and said to him, Where are you?** Now God knew where he was and it was really more a matter of questioning him, "Where have you been?" Some things aren't translated really well in to English. So this is really what's being stated, what's being said, because He's asking him and getting feedback from him as He's talking to him.

And he said, Adam said, I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; Incredible! Incredible what began to enter into his mind. Here, two people on the earth, Adam and Eve, and all of a sudden something enters into his mind...and so he told God, **I was afraid, because I was naked;** he couldn't come before his Creator, his Maker; **and I hid myself. And He said, Who told you that you were naked?** "Where did you get this?" **Have you eaten of the tree,** now I love the way this is done, because questions are asked but... God *knows*. He knows *exactly* what he did, but it's the feedback.

It's like with us so often, there are things that happen in our life and God brings us to the point where we need to be able to see it. A lot of our prayers are like that. God knows what's inside of us, but are we able to express it, are we able to open up before God; are we able to be honest and truthful with God? That's a hard thing a lot of times, in the beginning when you begin to come into God's Church; to be able to *open up totally* before God. You might as well; He knows *everything*. He knows everything in your mind more than you do. He *knows* your thoughts – He *knows* where everything comes from when you don't even know.

We've read scriptures like that here just recently in Jeremiah, 'The heart is deceitful above all things,' it says, 'and desperately wicked. Who can know it?' And it goes on to explain that God knows the heart; He's the one who reveals the intent, the thought, where it comes from, your *motivations*. It's hard for human beings to understand their motivations. And that's a great mark of growth when you begin to understand, when you can trace something back in your mind; *Why* did I react like that? *Why* did I have this response that isn't right, that isn't good? *Where* did that come from? And if you can go back into your thinking and understanding and ask God to help you to see where that came from, what stirred that feeling and that emotion and those words? *Where* did that come from? It's an awesome thing

because the more you can do that, the more you can begin to understand yourself, your own mind...*your own mind*. It's a powerful thing, the human mind.

He says, **Have you eaten of the tree whereof I commanded you that you should not eat of it? And the man said, The woman whom You gave me/gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.** 6,000 years! Human justification! "I'm not at fault. I'm not responsible! The woman! The woman You gave to me, she gave it to me and I ate – what was I supposed to say? What am I supposed to do? I'm trying to keep happy relations here. I don't want to rock the boat; I don't want her to be upset..." Things that happen sometimes in marriage in life. Are you going to do what's right because it's right before God?

And the Eternal God said unto the woman, What is this that you have done? And the woman said, The serpent deceived me, and I did eat. It's a hard thing! That says a lot about human nature. It's so hard for human nature to accept personal responsibility, to acknowledge our own guilt. *"It's my fault; I shouldn't have done it!"* That's one of the hardest things for people to do, to be able to repent and say, "I did it! I'm wrong!" We won't accept our own responsibility; it's always so much easier blaming someone else or finding something that someone else has done that is worse so we can feel better about ourselves. Human nature is sick, it truly is; it's extremely selfish. And that's a hard thing to understand and to acknowledge. Incredible! To understand the human mind, to understand how we think...and it's a tough thing to do. It's a tough thing!

I think of something going way back into the early part of the Church in Worldwide and going into the ministry and beginning to understand something in families that always irritated me a little bit, troubled me, was the source of 'a thorn in the flesh'; and that was with the matter of parents not being able to acknowledge to their own children, *"I was wrong. I'm wrong"*. To apologize to their child, "I shouldn't have said that. I shouldn't have done that in this way..." to *reinforce* God's way before them, to say that... because *they know when something's wrong, they KNOW when you've said something wrong, when you've done something wrong...* but how many parents I've known who couldn't *acknowledge* that before their children and in the process help their children to become more deeply grounded that there is a right way and a wrong way in life. And what kind of respect is that child going to have toward the parent if they see that they continually justify themselves or will not acknowledge their own responsibilities or their own problems or their own weaknesses in life. The exact opposite is true; that when you acknowledge those things and teach and build upon those things to help them to understand this is human nature, this is the way we are and I was wrong and I apologize. But sometimes people think that they don't have the responsibility to have to do something like that, they're better than that.

You see that in human nature? The distortion of thinking that just isn't healthy, that isn't good? So much better on the job when you've done something wrong to a fellow employee or to a co-worker or whatever it is, or toward your employer; when you've done something wrong to say, "I was wrong." To accept your responsibility, to acknowledge that, to let them know, "I've learned from that lesson – that's not going to happen again." People today justify everything they do as a whole, in society and life and on the job... sad world.

And the Eternal God said unto the serpent, spoke to all three; to the man, to the woman, and to the serpent; and the serpent was always the serpent slithering around, sneaky, conniving ways – depicts who he is, what he is, his mode of working with people, with human beings and others around him, even in the angelic realm, how he slithered around to turn angelic beings against God. That's the way he worked; that's the way human beings work so often to turn people against others. It's this behind the

scenes chatter, chatter, chatter, chatter... starting to tear something down. Little bit of truth and a lot of error; something that's true, and a lot of error, a lot of deceit, a lot of lies. Incredible!

And the Eternal God said unto the serpent, Because you have done this, you are cursed above all, unfortunate translation – **cattle(?)** – duh! That ought to be a great clue somebody in the King James that was translating some of this... I don't know if they had weed back then, but they must have been smoking it. I mean seriously?! How insane is that to translate a word like this? "You are cursed above all cattle." Is that what it says in your Bible? Does anybody have a different word? I didn't take time to look at some other translations. Livestock?! Isn't that horrible? This word is widely translated many places as 'cattle' due to the context, but it's used far more widely; it's sometimes translated as 'beast' or 'wild beast' because of some of the context; but it ought to give them a little bit of clue here when it's speaking of this being, it's not talking about cattle.

In Biblical context God refers to, if you go back and look at some of the places these things are used, He refers to all living creatures of the earth in three basic categories:

1. Land creatures
2. Creatures of the water
3. Creatures that fly, the fowl

So if you go back, especially in the beginning in Genesis, a lot of things are covered that way when it talks about different living creatures. There's a very specific one that's being used here.

So again, in **verse 14 – And the Eternal God said unto the serpent, Because you have done this, you are cursed above all...**and the word has to do with...**creatures of the land**. It's about, in context, in other places throughout the Bible, it's about 'creatures on the land' as opposed to 'creatures in the air' or 'creatures in the water'. That's the context. Not always about, specifically, cattle, unless the context is about cattle – then obviously it's talking about 'creatures on the land' that are cattle!

Biblical definition, in this particular case here, just separating one of three different kinds of creatures; and there's a reason for this, for what He says. So He says here, **The Eternal God said to the serpent, Because you have done this, you are cursed above all**, as it should be translated, better translated in English, **above all creatures of the land, on the land, and above every...** and the word **beast** here is 'live or live thing', **living thing of the field; upon your belly you shall go**, see, there's a *difference* here about whether you have the ability, or whether something is a matter of the air with the fowl, or in the water because it lives in the water.

...upon your belly you shall go, and dust/dry earth shall you eat all the days of your life: Now, he is a spirit being, he's not a physical being; so there are things here, as there are other things to do with Adam and Eve, that some of it may well be prophetic – which appears to be the case. And God will bring that in His own time. But there's a distinction here of something that *changes* with Satan; either changed with him at that point in time or has something to do with the future and a change and something that God told him, of something that would happen, that would take place. And so He's telling what will happen to Satan, He's telling what will happen to woman and He's telling what will happen to man for what they did from the very beginning. Interesting!

But the point in all this again is God made a great *distinction* about a word He chose, very carefully so, that distinguishes between something that is able to be in the air, something that is able to be in the

water or something that has to be on the earth and has mobility only on the earth – other power and ability and form taken away from him.

Verse 15 - And I will put enmity between you, speaking of Satan, **and the Woman**, which is about the Church prophetically. These are prophetic things that God is pronouncing here, things that would take place in time, through time; **and between your seed and her Seed; and it shall bruise**, meaning ‘to bruise, to crush, to break’ **your head, and you shall bruise His heel**. Interesting words, interesting prophecy here: always been understood by the Church what this is all about, totally, completely.

This, in that respect, is the first recorded prophecy about the coming Messiah: first recorded prophecy in the Bible about the Messiah, about Jesus Christ. The primary meaning of this is that Christ, born of a woman, would crush/would destroy Satan’s power over mankind; and Satan bruised Christ’s heel (this is what it’s about) meaning that he caused Him to be put to death (didn’t destroy Him). Unique phrase, ‘His heel’: weakened Him, brought about something here that took place in time but there was far more power, far more glory that followed. This is a prophecy about bruising Christ’s heel, meaning that he caused Him to be put to death which was a fulfillment of God’s purpose anyway of Christ being our Passover.

It’s amazing! Satan has always been there, not even *knowing* what he’s doing; always a part of God’s plan and purpose, always there...a *pawn* because of his distortion, because of his rebellion against God. He thinks he’s mocking God; God’s mocking him through time, always has, that being that’s going to be destroyed that we talked about during the Feast of Tabernacles this year. He’s not a happy being because all these things are coming down upon him sooner and sooner, quicker and quicker.

Then, as a result of the resurrection of Jesus Christ and the formation of the Body of Christ; because the woman is about the formation then about the Body of Christ from physical woman to that which God intends for us to understand and learn about the woman, the mother of us all, the Church of God, the Body of Christ that through the Church, that Christ, in that respect, is going to begin the process of destroying the power of Satan over mankind; a part of bruising the serpent’s head, the serpent’s most vulnerable place, if you will. That is a matter of what is going to happen – total destruction. It goes along with the Feast. It’s going to be in the head.

I don’t know about you, but I’m excited, and I’m excited by the blessings that God has given to be able to even talk about such things because talking about such things, being able to preach such things to me is good news. It’s part of the gospel message, the end of Satan and what’s going to happen to Satan. That being has caused so much damage through time within the angelic realm, so much damage for 6,000 years upon this earth for all of mankind; and it started right here, right here in the human family, right here in the very place where God, when it’s done right, when you live life right, that everything is designed to be beautiful and exciting and inspiring. But because of that being and because of what was done from the very beginning and because of what we had to go through to get to where we’re going... That being, though, was right there from the very beginning, pushing the buttons all the way, stirring things up. And again, it goes along with what we discussed at the Feast about why we’re made the way we are, why we have to go through the suffering and the pain on this earth that we have to go through; because it’s about the mind and the transformation that has to take place in the mind. It’s an awesome thing to understand.

Romans 16 – let’s notice what it says here as Paul is addressing some of this. I want to back up here a little bit, we’ll start at **verse 17**, and get some of the context of what he’s discussing. **Now I beseech you**

brethren, mark them who cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which you have learned, which you have been taught. That's a tough thing. It's something that's been with the Church from the beginning, that had to take place, that Paul wrote about in different places, about people that had to be put out of the Church, that people had to be *dis-fellowshipped*, put away from fellowship, couldn't participate in fellowship because of the problems they were causing within the Church and within the Body and the example then that was given by Christ. You think about different examples, different proverbs, different things that were given there about how that it's better to cut off the arm, it's better to pluck out the eye than the whole body should be destroyed; and that even escaped the Church for a long time, what those things were about. It's about the Church. It's better that a part of the Body that's there be cut off from the Body, not having any ability to be a part of the Body anymore. It's not about something physical, it's not about a physical arm, it's not about a physical eye in your own body, it's not about you and your eye; that you're supposed to literally pluck out an eye. How insane is that? That's going to change anything? No, you'll still use the other eye in the wrong way; you'll be plucking them both out; you're going to be cutting off both your arms. It's not what it's about. It's a *spiritual* thing! It's about the Church! It's about the Body of Christ! ...and it's far better that a part be put aside, not be able to be a part of it, than that the *whole* should be cast into a lake of fire.

Over and over again through scripture it talks about things that are unpleasant, things that are horrible to have to go through; and yet I've mentioned them over and over again, about how *every year* there are people who go by the wayside, by their own choice anyway, but sometimes we have to follow through with a formality to let them know, "Yes you are out of fellowship, you are not invited back." The Church of God is by invitation and if someone causes division and causes problems within the Body, unlike some things in the world, it has to be stopped; over and over again in scripture.

So this is what the word 'mark' has to do with; 'mark' them. It's an unpleasant thing to do. A lot of people find fault with that. Tough cookie! Tough, tough, tough! I'm going to obey God. And I've seen the fruit and the blessings of doing it God's way. It rips you up inside because you don't want to see anyone go by the wayside; but if someone makes that choice, the choice like Satan made to destroy, to speak against God, to tear down what is true, to *lie* about what is true...then it's better they not be a part of that fellowship. Go someplace else! Go someplace else where they believe what you believe. There are all kinds of choices out there – thousands and thousands of choices. Surely you can find one? And if you can't... start your own?!

I hate division. I hate what it causes. I hate the lack of unity. I hate the fact when there's not harmony, because it destroys. It's the story of life, it's the story of what's happened for 6,000 years with humanity, it's the story of what happened before that in the angelic realm.

Now I beseech you brethren, mark them who cause division and offenses, what kind of offenses? ...**contrary to the doctrine**. Like the one that Paul addressed in Corinth. What was Corinth's big problem? Their very name carried with it a bit of a stigma in time because of the perversions of some of the things that were happening in the Gentile world at that particular time in that part of the world, in Corinth; and some of the temple worship that involved prostitution, and people's minds were *fouled up*. It was just a way of life at that time; and they mixed it with religion as something that was okay. And so when people were called into the Church they had to change their thinking and their lifestyle and their mindset in how they thought about things. And so if it's a matter of causing division here, or offenses that a man should take his father's wife... it was his step-mom in other words, that's what it was talking about there...and having sexual relationship, to live together... Paul was inflamed by that! That the Church would tolerate such a thing! He wasn't there at the time to deal with it or he

would have dealt with it swiftly; that this is not *allowed in God's Church!* *How could you begin to think that something like that would be allowed in God's Church!* So that's an offense where they had to be 'marked' and be put away.

Later on Paul wrote about how that one of them was repentant and that they shouldn't be kept out when they've come to a point of repentance and *he* should be allowed to come back and they should treat him in love; a brother toward a brother. It's an awesome story of forgiveness, of when you repent before God that you're brought back, that you're at one...and *all that past* is put away and *no one* in the Body will hold it against you. We all have sin in our lives and we're all here because God forgives us and helps us to conquer and fight and overcome what we are. And it doesn't change just because you come into God's Church – you still have battles to fight; and slowly but surely you conquer them and you fight them and you keep fighting them and you overcome them and you become stronger. It's a part of a process.

Something I had to learn when I was 19 years old when I came into the Church, I was 20 at the point in time when it happened. I thought everybody was perfect, I really did. I truly thought when I came into God's Church that everybody was perfect. I thought once you come into God's Church and you're baptized... there is just no sin anymore in people's lives. I don't know what kind of glasses I was looking through but they weren't good. It took me six months before I got to a point where I realized how wrong that was. I was in a Church of about 600 people in Wichita, Kansas; moved into that particular area, Hutchinson, for a while to get away from the college town I was in. Because I knew that if I stayed there I wouldn't make it. I knew if I stayed around the same friends I couldn't make it. I knew that the pull would be too great, I had to get away, I had to flee. That's what God says, 'flee idolatry, flee fornication, flee sin,' in other words, that's what the principles are, to get away from a lifestyle. And I was in a lifestyle in a college town of party, party, party, party. It's the way we lived – college. It's the way a lot of colleges and universities. 3:00 on Friday... people were already at a bar, dance hall, club, all the various names they have for these kinds of places. We'd go and we'd drink and we'd dance for as long as we could dance.

I had to get out of that lifestyle. I had to get away from it. 600 people in a congregation and I thought they were perfect until one night I was invited over to this family's house. Now if somebody had invited me sooner I could have learned it sooner; but I lived about 50 miles away and after services certain friends and I went out together. I joined what we called 'Spokesman's Club' where we learned how to... we gave speeches and so forth. We had thirty maximum people in a particular club and we started giving speeches and a friend of mine got me in there and the first speech I ever gave in the 'Spokesman's Club' I barely made it. You have to give a speech for about seven minutes; first one's called an 'Icebreaker'. People who've been here for a long time, they've been through these clubs, they know what they're about, when you learn how to speak in the Church and the training we received.

Anyway, before I even started my speech my mouth was dry. My tongue stuck to the top of my mouth, I could barely speak. Have you ever had that feeling? You're scared to death? I was so filled with vanity... that was my problem...I was so filled with vanity I was scared to death. That's what it boiled down to – getting up in front of people, in front of men and different people that here I was this young whippersnapper and my tongue is sticking to my mouth I was so scared. Anyway, today I can do it without sticking to my mouth...so it can be accomplished in time.

But somebody finally invited me over and I heard a husband and wife get into a fight where I was invited to eat. Blew my mind! It did! I couldn't believe what I was hearing! They were raising their voices at

each other and hollering at each other and not even trying to hide it to well! I learned. I started learning then; to be real, to be honest, we have problems and we have things to overcome and we fight sin, we strive to conquer and overcome and we learn those things through time.

So again, different offenses, going back to what it was talking about here in Romans and the things that Paul had to deal with, things we learn in time that we don't always understand in the beginning and we mature slowly and grow and learn tough lessons in life – always growing if we yield ourselves to God.

Now I beseech you brethren, and mark them who cause division and offences contrary to the doctrine which you have learned, which you have been taught, in other words, and avoid them. And avoid them... I've known people in the Church that this has tested them. This has *tested* them; are they going to obey God and put God first? And I've known of some who wouldn't avoid, who wouldn't sever a relationship. It's like, "I'm strong enough, I can keep a hold of this relationship." And I've seen them destroyed and leave the Church. Sad. Or become so spiritually weak they weren't a part of the Church.

Verse 18 – For they who are such do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ: if we're not seeking to be of the same mind in everything we do *and* our behaviour by what we're living; if we're living a *lie* then we're cut off from God's spirit anyway. If we're not seeking to change and overcome God knows and He'll not give His spirit, He'll not *live in and dwell in* sin. So it's such a basic thing. He will not dwell in us. And to have God's spirit means that God the Father and Jesus Christ must be dwelling, continually living, abiding in us; as we've talked about in so many different sermons.

...and avoid them. For they are such who do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; their own selfish pursuits. It isn't about God; it's about themselves. They have something they want that they're not supposed to have. They're seeking to have something they're *not supposed to have*; perhaps a wrong relationship. I'm dumbfounded by people who will leave the Church because of a physical relationship, one that's wrong, one that isn't right – adultery or fornication or whatever it might be. I've known numbers of people who have had to leave God's Church, who've been put out of God's Church for those very things. It's a lie. How can you live a lie?

I knew an individual one time not too long ago who came back to a relationship in the Church, who himself had been around the Church as he grew up, and found out later on after he came back and was baptized in the Church that he'd been living with a woman outside of wedlock. How can you do something like that? How can you think in any fashion or form that you can have a relationship, come to Sabbath services, worship God and be living a lie?! And the reality was he couldn't; as soon as I found out he was out of the Church. He's living a lie and hurting; hurting himself, hurting others through time if it continued on for a long period of time.

And so we have battles we fight. We have our past we have to fight and we have to change. And what we're discussing in the sermon series is about a big change that God wants us to grow in and see and to understand and make even bigger changes so we can become more at one with Him, more in unity and harmony with Him.

So it says here that, **they don't serve Jesus Christ, but their own belly;** which is a matter of scripturally speaking here, their own selfish pursuits. There's something else they want that they're not supposed to have. I've known many people who wanted to be, before time, before God was going to grant it, or would grant it, or even determine to grant it... We're all called to be a part of the Body, to serve in some... God is moulding and fashioning everyone to fit someplace in the Body. It's a basic thing. He

knows what's best for us. He knows where we will be the most fulfilled in ways that we can't even begin to comprehend in life: if we yield ourselves to the process of being moulded and fashioned you have *no idea what it's like to be in the God Family!* You have *no comprehension* – *none of us do* fully by any measure. The more we grow the more exciting that prospect becomes, the more intriguing it becomes, the more meaningful and the more fulfilling it becomes. But to grasp that? We don't grasp it. I don't grasp what it's like to be there! I haven't been there yet! I can't! I've never experienced it. I can be told about it; but I don't understand it yet.

And so none of us understand what it's like to have that kind of fullness and fulfillment in our life; but I believe it by faith. I believe it because God tells us what He's doing with our lives and in our lives; and if we yield ourselves to the process of how exciting and how fulfilling... There's *nothing* to be more fulfilling in our lives than what He's planning for us. Our mind; the way we are... if you can comprehend, if we can begin to comprehend in a greater way that everything that's in the universe is by design – every star! Every galaxy! The mind has a hard time grasping it! How many solar systems are there in the Milky Way Galaxy? Don't they guesstimate 100,000,000,000? Something like that? I can't understand that. And then possibly *billions* of galaxies? Who can understand such a thing? But none of them are out there by accident; they're all planned, they're perfectly placed where they're supposed to be, perfectly interact. None of them are running into each other colliding. Nothing in the Milky Way is ... well a few asteroids, but that goes back to Satan... there are things that take place out here that we're able to see and understand.

What about human life and the *billions* through time that will in time be able to be a part of something that God has designed and purposed a *long time ago*; that we get to become a part of, to fulfill.

Its like (and not a very good example in a physical way), every galaxy out here by design and purpose, beauty of its own, uniqueness of its own, its own glory; and Paul talks about those things. And we're the same thing: a glory that's going to be unique individually in each one of us in the God Family, in the Family of God, and where we're going to be placed. And it's just like the 144,000; if you can begin to understand what the structure of God's Government that's coming with Jesus Christ... *all planned out before anything was ever created*...and far, far beyond that one into the billions – by design. God is just that great, just that powerful; only we tend to limit God in our minds because we can't grasp something so awesome, so great, so mighty; and yet it is just that mighty.

And so all the 144,000 who are going to work together like clockwork; everyone unique, everyone... How can you describe such a thing? If we just yield ourselves to God instead of our own selfish pursuits... getting back to what I was saying. How many people I've known through time who weren't satisfied with what God was granting them. What an awesome thing to be able to be a part of the Church of God at any age, whether it was in the time of Ephesus or Thyatira or Pergamus or even Sardis, because the world was in darkness, and yet there were a few who came even through Sardis. And how blessed were they? How blessed were those in Philadelphia to have lived and died? And how about all those who were part of Philadelphia who will not be a part of the 144,000 – how blessed are they?

You know God had a plan and a purpose for an apostasy. It was by design, it was for a purpose; it's how we learn, it's how we grow – how incredible is that? That God knew through time and prophesied through time things that would happen even to the Church! And so 2,000 years before it ever happened a book was written, the book of Revelation that talked about seven eras of His Church, and He talked about what would happen at the very last era. And in other places He revealed things through Paul – II Thessalonians 2, talking about the man of sin, the son of perdition. Prophecies of things that were to

happen in time! What a horrible thing though to live through that... and yet how blessed was every person who was ever a part of the Church... until *they* sinned, until... and we all have to come to that, where we accept our own responsibility that "I fell asleep!" But how blessed are those individuals that are going to be resurrected in the Great White Throne who lived ten years in the Church of God with God's spirit in them? Twenty years in the Church of God with God's spirit in them? Because you see, the vast billions who are resurrected at that time – they don't have that! And those individuals are going to have incredible opportunities for teaching, incredible opportunities, a *great head start!*

What if the last thing you remember is you're in a Roman war somewhere, a chariot is coming at you; the last thing you remember is this chariot, "That's the last thing I remember..." and you're brought back to life – what do you have? All you ever knew was war, fighting, killing. You've got a lot to conquer and overcome, a lot to learn, a lot to be taught. What about someone who was in the Church of God for 20 years, 25 years, 40 years...? And how could any one of them ever say, "God, you're *not fair!* You're *not fair that this happened to me!* You knew this was going to happen to the world... You... oh, I fell asleep; my fault." Accept your own responsibility.

And so again, this thing of selfish pursuits. I've known of people who wanted to be teachers because they weren't *satisfied* that they were in the Church of God, *they weren't satisfied that they were blessed to be a part of the Body of Jesus Christ!* They weren't satisfied... *instead they thought they had a special calling to be able to explain,* "Oh, I've learned about a scripture here that you...you need to hear this. I see something that Mr. Armstrong hasn't taught us yet that you really need to think about." It happened this year at the Feast of Tabernacles.

Do you understand what I'm saying? Those of you who are older, you understand because you've been around the Church, you've seen these things where people who were what I call 'wannabe's' because they weren't satisfied. How sick is it to not be thankful and satisfied with whatever God... to be *thankful* for what God gives us. When we think we are owed something more or we deserve something more, something is *wrong* in the human mind. Wait on God! *Wait on God!* Humble yourself before God. You know what He says? 'And *He* will lift you up.' Don't ever try to lift yourself up, let God lift you up, because then you're going to receive things, have things, be placed in things that your wildest imagination cannot begin to conceive of into the future.

So, **these do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly**; their own selfish pursuits; **and by good words**, this word means 'smooth', **smooth words and fair speeches**; I like the way it says this. The word means 'flattering'; a kind of 'a praising' kind of speech and talk. It's like someone representing themselves as being a close friend. "I'm coming to you because I'm really concerned about you." How many times I've seen email like that, or conversations I've heard about someone coming to someone else because, "I'm really concerned about you, that you're going to go astray here with what he's saying." (I've received this recently. I get it a lot.) "You're listening to him and what he's saying but be careful... *This* is the truth. I'm really concerned that if you do this that..." So they make it like they have your best interest at heart. No they don't, they're serving their own belly, their own motivations in life.

Human nature is a deceitful thing, it truly is, and we all have to stand before God and determine how we're going to serve Him. But this is how people come around others. This is how Lucifer came around. He was out for their best interest... "Did you hear what God's going to do? Did you hear?" That's exactly what he did; and a little bit of chirping back here took place... Little did he know God knew everything that came out of him. Little did he know... just like with us; God knows the number of hairs on your head because He knows everything, every molecule, everything that exists, because He sustains

every bit of it. And sometimes that's just too much for us to believe, as we're going to get back and read about some things about Adam and Eve; it's just a little bit too much to believe that God is indeed all *powerful* in life, and He is.

It says, **such people deceive the hearts of the simple**; you never want to be simple, you want to be close to God. You want to be able to see through it when someone comes up and tells you; it's like they're presenting themselves as your best friend, or your close friend, or they have your best interest at heart; and then they throw out something false to you, some false doctrine, some false idea, some false belief, something you haven't been taught, something you haven't heard, something that's coming through some other means; because that's how things happen.

It's one thing I've been excited about over the past three years or so, to see that people are *sharp* and people are staying close to God, they see those things quickly and they're not deceived. *Hasn't always* been that way in God's Church.

Verse 19 – For your obedience has come abroad unto all. I am glad therefore on your behalf: your obedience. What does it mean? Because they're doing it God's way; they're doing it the way God said to do it. So he's complimenting them on this, on some of these very things here of how they've had to deal with some unpleasant things. These things are not pleasant in life, they're heart-rending. When you walk to God's House side by side with someone and your council blended sweet and they turn against God, and they turn against others in the Body, in the Church, because that's what happens. It's like ripping part of your heart out, it truly is. It hurts. You hurt for them and they don't even hurt for themselves because they don't understand what they've done to themselves.

I am glad therefore on your behalf; but yet I would have you to be wise unto that which is good and simple; this word means 'innocent' in this case, **concerning evil**. That was Paul's desire; obviously a right desire we should have for one another and that a teacher, a minister would have for those whom he's teaching.

And the God of peace, isn't that amazing how often this word jumps out at you now in a more powerful way than it did before? **The God of peace**; that's what God is all about, about bringing us to Jerusalem, to peace, to what He's building, to what He's giving, to His rest, learning to be *obedient* unto His rest, as we talked about last Sabbath. **And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly**; it's what it's talking about back in Genesis, under the feet of the Church in that respect; in other words speaking of the Church, of the Woman; that's the woman that's being spoken of there – it's about the Church. Starts with a physical woman, leads in time to a birth in life of the Messiah; it's about the Messiah and what He would do through the Body of Christ to Satan in time. And that's what it's saying here, **shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly**. Beautiful! Referring back to Genesis 3 of what we just read, **The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.**

So let's go back to Genesis 3 again here. **(Genesis 3: 16) And unto the woman He said, I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; in sorrow you shall bring forth children; and your desire shall be to your husband, and he shall rule over you.** This is a curse, it's not a blessing. What God is addressing here is not something that's positive and good.

Verse 17 - And unto Adam He said, Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten of the tree, of which I commanded you, saying, You shall not eat of it: cursed is the ground for your sake; in sorrow shall you eat of it all the days of your life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring

forth to you; and you shall eat the produce of the field; In the sweat of your face shall you eat bread, until you return unto the ground; for out of it were you taken: for dust you are, and to dust you shall return.

So there's a lot being shown in a very few verses here about God's plan, about what God's purpose was – on and on it goes here, about what God was offering to mankind; but knowing what mankind would do because we were made subject to vanity; we were made to be able, very easily so, 'lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life'; and God knew exactly what Adam and Eve were going to do. It wasn't a surprise. But there's much to learn through this process of 6,000 years of human life and human suffering.

So in this sermon series of 'Reviewing the Curse', we've gone back to the scriptures in Genesis at the very beginning of human life with Adam and Eve to see some of the context of where God begins to speak of the curses upon mankind. And we'll come back to these verses later; but I want to make sure I get all this stated here. But now we need to look at some of the context of what God began to reveal nearly a year ago; because to me it's exciting seeing how God... I get a unique perspective because I live through it. I don't know what's coming three weeks from now. I know a general direction that we're heading towards, but I don't know all those scriptures, I don't know everything that's going to be said; it's like the second book when it was written. I didn't know where it was going until I was sitting there writing it and then God would give the things that were to be there; and so it's been time and time again. And so it is when sermons have been given through time here. I look back at history and I see where God has led and I'm in awe of it because it continually leads to build upon something. It's like building a structure and you can't get up to the higher areas until you've built some of the lower levels first. It's like laying blocks on a building and it just gets bigger and bigger and you see how that you couldn't have this section up here until this was laid. One thing leads to another. It's an awesome process. I hope you see that more and more as time goes along and learn from that process and to be in awe of God, of how God leads, guides, directs, moulds and fashions us; how one truth so often leads to another; and one to another as happened in this last Feast of Tabernacles.

So again, some of this began to be addressed in a big way in a sermon entitled 'Restoring All Things' that was given last December 26th. Then on January 15th this section here on the personal website about 'Women & "The Curse"' was given. It was entitled, 'Women & "The Curse"'. I'm going to read some of that so we can grasp more fully the context of the subjects being addressed and the timing for God's Church at that particular time and what's happened between now and then; because it's exciting. It's exciting where God's leading us. It's *exciting* what's happened in a year's time in God's Church. It's really quite dumbfounding. It's incredible the door that God has opened up and what's taken place. And sadly not everyone believed it, or agrees with it. Thankfully that's been very few.

So I'm going to read from some of that posting and add to it as we go along here. Starting out here...

WOMEN & "The CURSE"

Written on January 15, 2010

The last posting on this site addressed God's current revelation to the Church about His "Elijah to come" at this end-time. As was stated, that commission has been given to me to fulfill in its completeness and not as a "type," which was partially fulfilled in John the Baptist and in Herbert W. Armstrong. God is now going to bring both roles of these previous "types" into a

complete and final fulfillment that ushers in the second coming of His Son as the Messiah (the Christ-the ordained ruler) over all mankind.

This posting cannot cover all of the exciting revelation that God is giving concerning what His purpose is and what is meant by the expression of “restoring all things” in the commission of the end-time Elijah. It is about a “work” that God is doing in and through His human instruments, primarily through His Church.

And to me a part of restoring all things and what we’re covering right now is *exciting* and *inspiring* and I hope it is to you. Going on...

In order to receive a far greater understanding of the inspiration, plain truth, and excitement of what God is now revealing, I am encouraging every one of you (if you have not already done so) to listen to some of this new truth as it is covered far more thoroughly in the sermon on Dec. 26, 2009, entitled, “Restoring All Things,” and in the current sermon series entitled, “Ordinations & Baptisms.”

Why did God begin to reveal these things? Look at the timing, look at what’s taken place in the Church, look at the ordinations that have taken place. I go back and look at the numbers and I’m deeply inspired by it. It’s an exciting thing to see this take place, and *6,000 years* to get to this point in time, to get to where we’re just about ready to enter into something far greater above and beyond all this, far greater. So everything being covered was in the context of discussing changes being made in the structure of the Church and being revealed as the ‘work’.

Mr. Armstrong spoke of ‘a work’ and the work that was given to him was unique. He knew what it was. He turned to it so often in Matthew 24. How often he would read this, how often he referred to it, and he didn’t follow with the next verse at all because it wasn’t for him and it wasn’t for his time.

Matthew 24:14 – And this gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness to all nations and then shall the end come; to the degree, to the extent that God wanted it to be. I think of the television. I think of the radio broadcasts. I think of the massive way, the largest in the world, of a religious leader going out in the world like that in a powerful way, ‘The Plain Truth’ magazine, up to 8 million in circulation month by month. There are all kinds of people we continually run into, people who are being drawn into the Church who remember their parents listening, or they themselves listened when they were younger, or they read a ‘Plain Truth’ magazine and now finally it’s come together for them because they remember those things that were done back then; especially in the 1980’s through 1986 until he died.

He knew this was his commission; he talked about it being ‘the work’. And that’s why, for those of you who’ve been around a long time, you remember a period of time when the Church was struggling with ‘doing the work’, and they didn’t realize it was changing, what God was going to have the Church do in time was totally different because what Mr. Armstrong did was for Mr. Armstrong... until the next verse; **when you therefore shall see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet stand in the holy place...** speaking of the man of sin and the son of perdition and what took place to the Church, the great falling away that was prophesied. Incredible! That wasn’t for him; it was for us, it was for me, it was for many of you to live through, to see, to be a part of; but it wasn’t for him, it wasn’t for his time. So he spoke of a work oftentimes.

Our work is different, it's totally different. The work of Ephesus was totally different from Mr. Armstrong's - even the focus at that time. You know what the primary focus was in the time of Ephesus in God's Church? You know what the primary message was? Jesus Christ, the Messiah. He came as our Passover, He died and He was resurrected. Today the world's heard a lot about that. They're confused, they don't understand it, they think He was hanging up there like this [arms extended to the sides on a t-bar type construction] when He was really hanging there like this instead [arms extended above the head together on a stake/pole] like I've mentioned so many times. They think it was a cross; no it wasn't. It was a stake, it was a *pole*. His hands were nailed with one nail in between His hands and His ankles or His feet area, one nail there. And that's why they came around (I mention this in area after area because new people need to understand this – something so simple and so basic), that's why they came around and broke the legs of the ones who were with Him. Because if you hang out like this [arms stretched to sides] you can breathe; but if you hang like this [arms outstretched above your head and together] and that's how you're hanging and you have your legs broken you no longer breathe and you suffocate. And that's what happened to the two who were beside Him, they suffocated. Prophecy of Jesus Christ was His blood had to pour out to the earth to be our Passover; that's why it said a soldier (in John) came up and rammed a spear into His side. That's why when they came around they saw that He was already dead because out came water and blood, it said, spilled on the earth. He had to spill His blood to the earth to be our Passover; He couldn't suffocate on a stake. Amazing; the world is so deceived.

And so today the world has heard about Him; and that isn't the primary message. And they have a basic belief, in those who do have any kind of basic belief at all about Jesus Christ and the story in the Bible. At least they understand that there was someone who came and died and was resurrected and they believe that, they just have it all messed up; they think it was Sunday morning when it was Saturday, 7th day, the end of the day; not on the first day of the week. He was already resurrected by the first day of the week. Incredible! Things that people don't understand and misread and read things into scripture.

We have a work that's unique to us. Ephesus had a work that was unique to them. And our work is getting closer, where we're headed, where God has been leading us, what He's been preparing us for – and it's exciting and inspiring and it has everything to do with what's prophesied about an Elijah; it has everything to do with what was pictured by the first, as far as what took place with baptisms and the first coming of Christ, a baptism unto repentance. *This* baptism is into the Body of Christ, into the Church of God. To think of the thousands upon thousands upon thousands who are going to have the opportunity of being a part of that Body before Jesus Christ ever returns. And God is doing it to glorify His Son. It's a powerful thing, it's an awesome thing. That's why we're structuring everything the way we are, that's why everything is geared the way it is.

Those things being covered that we've talked about here were in the context that I've just been reading about; are in a context of a greater fulfillment of prophecies concerning the Elijah to come. And so in the context of all of this God was revealing that a curse upon the family... because that's what it is...it's been a curse on the family. I hope we understand what that curse is and why a curse exists. *It isn't because God came down and said, "Now I'm going to CURSE you!"* That's the way the world looks at it so often, you know, *"I'm going to CURSE you!! ...make life miserable for you now because..."* God didn't do that. He's explaining something to them that's a natural consequence of *choices* that they brought upon themselves. It's a natural consequence of not obeying God, of not following God. And so people, when they read this, to hear the word 'curse', it's almost like this mystic type of thing where, *"I'm going to curse you!"* Retarded, ridiculous, foolish, ignorant.

And so there has been a curse upon the family; 6,000 years. It's been pretty tough what's taken place in human life, the scars in people's lives, the things that happen to you in your life as you grow up, that you become who you are and you have to try to deal with certain things in your mind from that point on. It's been that way generation after generation after generation; things that are passed down in family to family to family to family in society, through society; because societies are different and some curses are different in nature because of disobedience to God; but all about curses upon the family that's existed for 6,000 years because of what happened to women and because of what happened with man from the very beginning.

Going on back in this section here...

A Curse On Women:

As talked about in recent sermons, which I referred to earlier,

This is under the section in that particular posting entitled 'A Curse on Women':

As talked about in recent sermons, which I referred to earlier, one of the first things to be revealed that God is now beginning to address to His Church is the need to restore a far better and more correct mindset toward the role of women in society, especially within the Church and the family.

That's where it begins; society is a matter of the family unit and if everybody in society is living as they should before God that will be the standard. And we get to start in it ahead of time because this is the beginning of the process of lifting what's taken place over 6,000 years, something that God has worked with the Church for nearly 2,000 years on but hasn't been understood to the degree that it is now, with the excitement that it should have now. Going on...

From the beginning, Satan led the first two humans into sin...

He just speeded up the process. It would have happened anyway, as we talked about at the Feast this year. Satan - how long did it take him? We don't know. Could have taken millions upon millions and millions of years before he ever sinned. We don't know; but it took a long time. God has speeded up the process; that's why we have a short lifespan, that's why we live as we do as physical human beings, so we can go through this process more quickly in a mind that has physical essence to it. It's composed of that which is physical, a brain that God has put a spirit essence in, not the holy spirit, that gives us the ability to think and reason that's different from the animal world around us, and we have the ability to think, reason and so forth, make our own decisions, make choices and so forth.

And what an *awesome miracle* that God, by the power of His holy spirit can mould and fashion this mind to become something that He can give eternal life to, that this mind is what's saved, it's not the body. That's why when we're changed from mortal to immortal it's the mind, it's what's in here, it's the essence and the spirit with the essence of the human spirit and the power of God's holy spirit in the mind that God works with and transforms.

That's why it's a beautiful thing when you go back to Romans 12 and it talks about the transforming of the mind, the renewing of the mind, the changing of the way we think – to be in unity and oneness with

God *by choice*. That's a marvellous miracle of something that God's doing. He can't just *put that* in your mind, that's what makes us unique. *Everything else in the universe He commanded and it came into existence, but He can't give you, can't put in your mind perfect righteous character*; it's something that has to come through *choice*. It's an *awesome* thing to understand; this process. Going on here...

From the beginning, Satan led the first two humans into sin in his effort to begin his work of seeking to destroy God's plan for His Family—Elohim—and did so by striking out at the first human family.

He didn't know he was helping the process. Isn't that an amazing thing to understand? He was actually aiding in the process of something God was doing in human life, what He's granting us. You can't say, "Well God, that's unfair to make me physical and make me so I have to go through human suffering and so forth..." Well, if He didn't you couldn't become a part of Elohim, you might as well have not been born. It is by design of a struggle you have to go through by choice, to fight against what is in this natural carnal mind; to come to a point in time where you realize and say, "God, I don't like selfishness. I understand selfishness is like a black hole that sucks in rather than that which gives."

There is the give and get way as Mr. Armstrong used to tell world leaders; there's the give and get way and man lives by the get way and those world leaders understood that and they *grasped* it. And then people would criticize him for not teaching the Bible. That *is* the Bible! That *is* from God. There is the give and get way and man lives the get way. And what an awesome thing when God brings us to the point in time when we learn about His kind of love that's give, outward, outgoing, not selfish, not selfishly motivated.

Satan's success in leading these two people to sin...

Because sin is the issue here. Sin is the *choice they made*. They can't blame anyone else; they chose it. *They* chose it; and sin has repercussions, sin has penalties, sin carries a curse - not blessings. Sin carries with it hurt, pain and suffering; and it all started back then on all humanity; and all humanity chose the same because that's the way we are. It just got worse and worse and so imbedded in us that we don't grasp sometimes how imbedded it's been in us in societies; things that are passed down from generation.

Hatred, ways of thinking are passed down from the moment a child is born and as they grow up and they learn. You know what they learn? They learn from the mind of their parents and society around them. People in different countries; they learn, they pass down hatreds about other countries. Something I was a little dumbfounded by when we visited Greece one time, they weren't too happy with Italy and they weren't too happy across the water over there with Turkey. They openly said, "They are our enemy." Been passed down from generation to generation to generation through time.

There are certain ways that different nationalities and people think in different parts of the world. Ireland; that's why it can't be stopped. Shiite and Sunni; they don't get along, they don't love each other, they kill each other. Where's that come from? From their teachings, their mind, how they think; passed down generation to generation to generation. Christian and Muslim – don't get along, never have. They can't. And now it's causing great problems in Europe; it's going to be the cause of much that comes up in WWII. It's not going to be a pretty sight. And a lot of it's going to be between Christian and Muslim; that's what's coming because they can't live in peace. It's a big problem in The Netherlands; it's a big problem in Germany; it's a big problem in Switzerland; it's a big problem in

France; it's a big problem in Belgium; it's a big *problem* in Eastern Europe. They don't get along. It's a big problem in Great Britain. It's amazing what's coming and why it's coming. Generation to generation to generation – how people think, how they think amongst themselves, how they think toward other people, how different people in different parts of the world... it doesn't even matter where it is.

Sometimes it's a matter of race, sometimes it's a matter of people living across one area... the Mason-Dixon line; whether you're south or whether you're north and how people think and whether brother will shoot and kill brother. They take up sides; over what principles and so forth. Niagara Falls – used to attend the Feast up there and I'd hear ministers who still had some feelings about the war of 1812. It came out of them! Difference between Canadians and Americans and some of them didn't get along. Believe it or not, in the Church of God, ministers on two sides didn't get along because of some of these things that are rooted in the mind, that are passed down generation to generation to generation *in the Church of God!* You think, "How can that be?" Because they had human nature and because they learned certain things from their parents and from society in the world around them and how they think toward others. Something happens, we have a blackout, we blame Canada. And come to find out, no, it's our fault, but do we accept the blame? No. Mad Cow... it came from Canada. We can laugh at some of those kinds of things but you know what? There's a lot of truth to those things of how people think about each other, how people think about different nationalities and different people from different areas and how people get along or don't get along.

And so it is with men and women! Far *deeper* than most of us can grasp and comprehend! *...of the prejudices in our minds!* Just had a ministerial meeting of senior elders and evangelists, and trying to help them understand that even *within the ministry we don't grasp that yet!* ...to the degree we need to! And if we don't within the ministry, which is the *heart of God's Church today*, how on *earth* can the rest of the Church grasp and see and understand it? We have *much to do...* is the point. We have much *growth* to make because of where we are in time and what God is telling us, that we have to change in our thinking; men toward women and women toward men, and women toward women and men toward men...if that makes sense to you. It will in time because God's taking us that way, He's helping us to learn. And so we can't sit back and think, "Yeah, I see how this applies to so and so, but not to me." Yes it does! Take it in, drink it in, because we need to make changes, we truly do.

So again, all is a matter of sin.

Satan's success in leading these two people to sin (due to the selfishness and pride of human nature) led to consequences. It resulted in that which *all sin* leads, the opposite of being blessed for obedience, but instead reaping curses for disobedience. Curses are the result of not being blessed and given favor by God. It is a matter of natural physical consequences that God has imposed upon nature when His sustaining power of preservation and favor is removed.

There are things as a part of life that regulates aspects in our lives; and if we break certain laws, we become broken. We sin, we do things against God, we will pay a consequence. We will hurt as a result. Some people can get by with some things because of some certain physical conditions or health or whatever it is in foods we eat, or [sucking on a cigarette] and as I mentioned recently, here I'm in this hospital room with three other men who have trachea's and learning how to talk again; one who couldn't yet talk, he barely got out a little bit of utterance – all because of smoking. People with emphysema who will have a trachea put in [sucking on a cigarette]... people would do that, so

imprisoned to something that they can't control, destroying their life, consequences of something that God never designed the body to go through! And on and on it goes, just simple things like that that we should be able to learn from.

People who do smoke something called a weed, marijuana, pot. People come into God's Church and sometimes they pay penalties of what they've done; they've smoked so much pot it affects the brain [sucks on a phantom smoking implement]; your eyes are kind of glazed over... it takes time for your body to hopefully in time get a lot of that out of your system because there are things that physically happen to the body. I have seen it over and over again, yet people say, "Oh, smoking pot, smoking weed doesn't hurt you?! It can't hurt you! ...it helps, at times, to relieve pressures, stress of life." And then you meet people and they're... [looks doopy, spaced out]. It does! Now some people get by, but a lot of people don't because it *affects their brain, it affects their eyes, it affects their response to things* and if that carries on to something farther into drugs... we've had many people come into God's Church who have those battles because that's their life in the past. God calls us out of every kind of background on earth. Thank God we're called out of it. Thank God we can begin to make the changes and begin to get our bodies and our minds worked with and changed, because these things do a number on your mind and also in the way you think about them.

What an incredible thing to understand; that much of your thinking toward women, men... and men, much of your thinking toward women is more distorted than that, because it's spiritual. It's in the mind, far deeper than smoking, far deeper than many other... there are things of society and nature and family that are so deeply imbedded in our minds that it's very difficult sometimes for us to begin to grasp it and to comprehend it. But God is giving us the opportunity to see and understand those things and to make changes because we're entering a new world and that's what God desires for a new world. Let's go on...

There are a lot of scriptures that plainly show what will happen when people disobey God, when people sin. Let's go back to some simple ones here. Deuteronomy 28; most of you know, or a lot of you know exactly what's discussed there, so basic, so sound. But this is what was taking place in the very beginning, that Adam and Eve were told various things in the very beginning and told about the blessings of life and God's plan and purpose for them to a degree, to a point. But they didn't understand, they didn't grasp, they didn't know.

Deuteronomy 28:1 - And it shall come to pass, if you shall diligently listen unto the voice of the Eternal your God, isn't it amazing how it's stated here, I love it. **If you will diligently listen,** hearken, listen. It's like striving to receive what God has, that's what he says. And that's not ho-hum-ho and sitting back in a recliner on the Sabbath and kind of dozing off once in a while – that's not diligently listening to what God has for us. It's being alert to what God is saying, *seeking* to receive what we can, *hungry* for what God has. All these things that God gives us as examples of things we have to fight against our own human nature sometimes in order to receive what God has for us. And the more that grows within us, the more that burns within us the more God will grant us. The more we pray about preparing for the Sabbath and coming into the Sabbath, "Father, help me to receive today spiritually what you have prepared for us. I know I need it. Help me to see it, help me to receive it, help me to drink in of it!" If we don't ask for those things why... to what degree are we... how much do we really want it, what God has for us Sabbath by Sabbath? And so he's saying if God says it, *listen diligently*, put *work* into it, put *effort* into it.

...**diligently listen to the voice of the Eternal your God, to observe**, so it's not just a matter of listening to what's being said, but it's a matter of applying it then, to live it, to do it. What'd we read last week? 'Not the hearers of the law are just before God but the doers...' It's not enough just to listen and to hear it if we don't act upon it, put it into practice, strive to live by it, ask God for help to do it, to change certain things in our life. You know, we're not going to do something unless we change something else in our life. So it's a desire to observe it, to do it.

...**to observe and to do all His commandments which I command you this day, that the Eternal your God will set you on high above all nations of the earth: blessings** that God will grant and give! And God knew exactly what they would do. But blessed them at different times and gave them great blessings under different leadership and so forth. I think of King David, some of the different kings that came along at different times; when he moved the nation to worship God, to restore the temple, to do various things of that nature, to strengthen the Levitical priesthood in order to teach the ways of God. The nation was blessed mightily in times like that from war and from different things; and God gave them favour. Blessed them! Blessed them in crops that they had! Blessed them in the plenty they had! Blessed them in riches they had! And then they'd go and disobey God and all of a sudden some nation would come in, God didn't give them blessings anymore, some other nation said, "I want a piece of that... Look at the wealth they have." And so the Assyrians or different ones would come in like that and conquer and overcome and battle and so forth.

So God is telling them if you do these things I'll lift you up. **And all these blessings shall come on you, and overtake you...** well, bring it on! Don't you want that kind of thing to overtake you? Blessings? Good crops? You know, we're not much of an agrarian society today, unless you live in certain parts of the country. People have amassed into cities for jobs and that's just a normal process of the kind of world we live in today with technology and so forth. But very much everything was agrarian back then. You go back in time, don't have to go too far back, and more of life centered around agrarian societies and so, obviously, it did at this time here. And this is saying these are the things... the crops, the plenty, the herds – you'll be blessed! **All these blessings shall come on you, and overtake you if you will listen unto the voice of the Eternal your God. You will be blessed in the city;** look around today, look at the cities, look at the problems, look at the crime...

I remember the first time we ever visited Israel. At that time there, there weren't people coming into the area because this was the time of 2001; a lot of the bombings and so forth that started taking place. Passover season is an incredible time for Israel, for tourism and so forth because Jews are coming in because of Passover, Traditional Christianity; they're coming in because of Easter. And so you have all these masses of people coming in and taking all these tours. The Jews are going off in one direction with certain kinds of tours and those of Traditional Christianity are taking different tours because of their beliefs and ideas and so forth. And here we had a hard time finding anybody to give a tour. They were closed down; they weren't offering tours. We finally found a bus to take us up to Ciceria/Philippi and some other areas. We had to see some areas there to learn about the region and the history. When you see the sites with your own eyes then things in the Bible come alive in ways that they otherwise couldn't.

So I think of a time when we started to leave the country and we went through security; we were there an hour and a half, two hours. It's not that way today, but back then it was because of all the bombings that were taking place around Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and around Israel. They were questioning us back and

forth and here we'd rented a car. We were travelling all over just looking at the map. And they said, "Weren't you afraid to travel over here?"

And I said, "No." I said, "I had a map and it just told me what areas weren't safe to go into and we stayed out of them."

So they were asking these different questions like that and, "Well, weren't you afraid because of all the bombings and all the killings taking place over here?"

And I said, "Well, we didn't go into those bad areas as a whole and we were basically watchful." I said, "If you go back...and I know a lot of this is sensationalized by the news, but if you go back to the States there are some cities over there that far more people are killed in a year's time than there are over here in Israel."

And after that answer it was like they let us through, they quit, because they knew we understood. And so much of the hype that is there and the few numbers... we have cities over here, far more people are killed, but what is made a big to-do about in certain things that are happening over there are because of prejudices, because of hatreds and so forth that have gone on generation after generation after generation, that people have. You don't have to watch too much news to understand that there are horrible prejudices people have about other people.

You will be blessed in the city...what a wonderful thing if we could be blessed in the cities where you felt safe at night to walk down any street. We don't have many places like that in the cities. That's why I wasn't real nuts about when someone said we'd walk tonight, "Thank you, I'll drive." Take me by car. It's the kind of world we live in. That's why when we first went to Europe it was hard for us to go down certain areas of certain cities thinking it was safe; and some of them were really dark. Somebody took us into one area one time just to show us and it was like, "Man, I don't want to go in there." But we did... and because it's safe compared to here, far safer. They deal with crime in a different way as a whole.

What an incredible thing to be blessed in the cities where it was safe, where you didn't have to lock your doors, where you didn't have to worry about going out to your car in a parking lot and your wheels are going to be gone. A lot of people don't know this; it's special to this area here because that's what happened at the Feast of Tabernacles. One individual (what a horrible thing), right here, at this hotel, to go outside one morning and see your car and no wheels on it. And there was a second car too out there in the lot – right? Had the wheels taken off of it. What a wonderful world! ...during the Feast of Tabernacles.

...and blessed in the field, blessed in the field in what you plant. I remember vaguely back in the 50's when (I'm trying to think of the particular years there... had to be...), I don't know the exact years, but I think there were three years in a row that my Father was working on different land to try to raise crops and so forth and we had three years (if I remember rightly now the story here), of drought. And we had quite a struggle for some time after that because of the hardship because the land didn't produce. I have a special affection, feeling, toward farmers and the farming community because of the things they go through that society doesn't even begin to understand, where they're often times looked down upon and people don't understand they deal with thousands and thousands and multiple thousands of dollars of machinery and upkeep and things that they have to take care of and the work that goes into... and all for the desire of having a good crop. And you don't necessarily have it. What a blessing if year by year

rain comes in its proper season, you don't get hailed out; you don't have things that happen because of disobeying God's laws; instead you're blessed by things even in nature.

...blessed in the field, the fruit of your children and of your crops will be blessed; in *their* lives. Isn't that what all parents want for their children? To see their children be able to grow up, to be able to have abundant lives, happy lives, fulfilling lives? To be able to see them go out there and produce in life as well, and see what they put their hand to, that it produces and that they're blessed? To do better than what I did! Isn't that what every parent should desire for their children? Hasn't happened as a whole with life because of not obeying God. It's where it comes from, from disobedience.

...the fruit of your children and of your crops will be blessed, if you obey God, **and the fruit of your cattle and the increase of your herds and flocks of your sheep;** your job, your work, your company? I am convinced that there are people in God's Church that I've seen in different situations, that the very place they are working, or the very area of the place of their business has been blessed because they're in the Church, because of their relationship with God. I have seen it over and over and over again. That doesn't mean we don't have times of a dry spell too, that there aren't times we go through struggles; because we learn through those. It's like everything I have said in my life that I've gone through, I wouldn't trade for anything because of what's been moulded and fashioned into me – the struggles, the hardships as well.

...your storehouse and abundance of good food will be blessed. You'll be blessed when you come in and you'll be blessed when you go out. And the opposite of that?

Verse 15 – But it shall come to pass if you will not listen unto the voice of the Eternal your God...it all goes back to Adam and Eve, and to the way mankind is. Man hasn't listened to God; man hasn't wanted God's ways. People don't want God! They don't want that authority in their life! That's why God has to call us and draw us and work with us in a unique way for a special purpose. Those that were in the first 4,000 years; and there aren't very many of them, whom God worked with individually to draw, to bring to Him, to prepare... just like king David. He worked with him at the very beginning to train him, to prepare him for a job later on because He had a plan for him to fulfill as a king and as a prophet...and on and on it goes. Different one with whom God worked – Noah, Abraham, Sarah...incredible stories of the Bible. And then the beginning of the Church and how God worked with people and in their lives.

But it shall come to pass if you will not listen unto the Eternal your God, to observe to do all His commandments and His statutes which I command you this day, that all these curses shall come upon you and overtake you. Because of sin, because of a choice, because of disobedience. I think of what happened to the Church. We were cursed! That means because of disobedience, because of not being *zealous* toward God, because of not being on fire, because of not *holding fast* to what God had given us through Mr. Armstrong, because of not keeping *focused* on those things, because of not standing up to certain things when they came down the pike...and we didn't take a firm stand and say, "No! That's not what I was taught!" ...and because we didn't take that firm stand, and slowly began to fall asleep within God's Church, we suffered. Oh, we suffered mightily! Horribly! What we went through spiritually in God's Church because we didn't obey God, we didn't *zealously*, we didn't *diligently listen* and *do* what God had given to us. In time we let it get weaker and weaker as we became weaker and weaker until we couldn't hold on anymore, until finally the whole Church came to a state where God said, 'Because you are lukewarm, because you're not on fire, because you're not stirred up with zeal for My way of life, I'm going to spew you out of My mouth!' Means *vomit*! That God would have to tell His *Church*, His

people, “You can’t be a part with Me. I won’t dwell in you and you cannot dwell in Me.” Why? Because of sin. And so we had suffering, curses.

You will be cursed in the city and cursed in the field. You will be cursed in your storehouse and lack of good food to eat. The fruit of your children will be cursed and the fruit of your land and the increase of your cattle and the flocks of your sheep. It’s the history of man. We have destroyed the earth. The Sahara desert hasn’t always been there. We made it. Man made it. Man *raped* the earth! Weather patterns have changed because of what man has done to the earth. We have been greedy and *raped the earth* and moved on to a different section.

We visited Ephesus, written about in the Bible; it was a port city. They took us down to where the port was – there’s no water for 8 miles. You have to go eight miles to find water at the ocean, to the sea. Used to be it came *all* the way up to the city of Ephesus in the area of Turkey; but the Romans came in and stripped the earth of all the trees that were in the region. And the rains came and it flooded in dirt and silt, destroyed the region – because the Roman’s raped the earth. That’s what they did; they took advantage. Their civilization and what people did in different regions of the earth – destroyed areas, took what they wanted and left and never did anything. God says, ‘dress it and keep it.’ Keep it up, conserve, like they’re learning to do today with different areas when they take certain areas of trees out and they come in right away. What do they do? They plant immediately because otherwise the rains come and it’ll wash away the topsoil and destroy the land.

We, mankind, for 6,000 years have been destroying this earth. That’s why when we learn to begin to build it up... I’ve seen some incredible stories on TV of recent time on Discovery Channel and some other areas, where they’ve taken certain regions of the earth, where they’ve started to nurture it once again and take care of it; and to see the restoration of things that begin to take place, water, water that will stay, plants that will begin to grow, things that begin to take place. And we’re going to learn how to do that all over this earth. It’s going to be an awesome time when we learn to take care of, obey God; take care of what He’s given to us.

We are the cause for so much human suffering on the earth – mankind; because man is greedy. What man did, what the Roman Empire did at one time is what Corporations do today to the earth. BP in the Gulf? We don’t even begin to know the damage that’s been done out there. “Oh, it’s cleaned up, it’s disappeared. We put the stuff out there and it made it all.... (snap) it’s gone! Awesome! It just disappeared! Aren’t we intelligent, intellectual?!” Pshew... we’re going to pay for that for a long time to come. It’s going to be part of the clean up in the world tomorrow. On and on it goes...

We obey God, we’re blessed. We disobey God and we bring upon ourselves curses that are part of life, a part of something that’s already set in motion – not because God’s trying to hurt anyone, but there are laws that regulate things in life. There are laws about our own human body and what we put into it and what will happen if we don’t do it right. There are laws that regulate human health and the human mind and even the health of the mind; that if we don’t do things properly we can destroy something so precious, something so awesome that God gave to us. And we’ve done that today with so many things that it’s hard to turn the tide.

So all these things very much about what began with Adam and Eve; mankind chose to disobey God and we’ve lived the consequences ever since. Not because of them, but because we’ve all chosen to do the same things. It’s the way of human nature. II Peter 2 - We are getting the context of things here as we

go into this and discuss some of these things that will help us to better understand what God is doing and why God is doing it and what we've been going through for so long as far as life is concerned and where God is taking us and what has to change and *how* it's to change.

II Peter 2:1 – getting the context here of what's being said. It says, **But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you who privately shall bring in damnable heresies;** it's the way it's *always* been. It's always been that way through time with God's people. It's been that way, if you want to go back in history and look at the Israelites; it's been that way for the last 2,000 years in God's Church. It began right away in the very beginning; that's where Traditional Christianity came from. Simon; not Simon Peter. They call him Simon Peter... Simon who wanted to pay for the holy spirit. It's basically *his* statue that they've almost kissed the toe off in Rome. He's the Simon. People read about Simon Peter and they think it's about the one in here [Bible]. No, no, no...a little bit of history and you'll learn there were two of them and they taught different things, they believed in different ways. And one of them became a huge Church; and one just continued on the same way it always has been, a small Church, a small flock, a small people; and they always did the same thing – they obeyed God's Sabbath, they obeyed the Holy Days, they believed the truths that God gave to them.

But it says here; **but there were false prophets, even as there will be false teachers among you who privately shall bring in damnable heresies;** something *different*...and this is to the Church. It's always been that way in God's Church. It was that way when I came into the Church in 1969 in Worldwide; it's been that way ever since I've been in God's Church; that people, inevitably, there'll be those who bring in different ideas, different thinking than what we were taught.

You know when God opens up your mind and He shows you the Sabbath, He shows you the truth about the Holy Days...there are just things of that nature that never change. They are what they are! Powerful! And they teach about an awesome plan. And yet people came along and tried to break down, and tear down things about Passover; they began to bring in Judaism and ideas about when Passover should be observed... "Surely the Jews don't have it wrong?! So somewhere in the Old Testament..." and they start reading into things that happened in the Old Testament and they start misunderstanding what was said and they read their own ideas because they believe that the Jews... "The Jews can't be wrong!" They were wrong when Christ came 2,000 years ago – where'd they all of a sudden get right? And people don't understand they've become worse! And so there were foolish people and foolish teachers – even in Ambassador College; even Mr. Armstrong's own son who began to teach a 14th/15th Passover and began to tear down a very basic truth of God.

Our history; it's incredible what we've gone through, what we've had to learn and how we have to hold fast to the truth that God gives to us. And if something else comes along that's different from what you were taught when your mind was opened, when you were brought into the truth? God says beware of it, run from it.

...even denying the Lord who bought them, and shall bring upon themselves swift destruction. It's happened over and over again. [snap] Gone quickly! They lose what they have; they lose the truth that was in their mind. One day believing the Sabbath, the next day believing Sunday. I was friends with different ministers that that happened to; that I could talk to on one day and the next day I didn't know who they were. "Who are you?! What happened to you?" That's why we always have to learn and understand it can happen. It can happen; don't think it can't happen to you, don't think you're *better*

than those who've gone before because none of us are. You have to hold fast to what God gives to you and be thankful for what He's given to you.

And many shall follow their pernicious ways/their permissive/liberal ways, as it's talking about here; liberal, different ideas – 14th/15th Passover. You know what happened? Many began to be more liberal; in other things he began to teach and do in his own life. Incredible.

...by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. It's amazing what happens to the human mind within the realm of the Church of God, what's happened in our history. Great things to learn from here, to understand what can happen to a mind that has even received the impregnation of God's holy spirit; because Peter is talking to the Church. He's *not* talking to the world, they couldn't understand these things. So, **the way of truth is evil spoken of**, today? Just as it was back then? Absolutely! People who don't understand, don't comprehend, don't see.

And through covetousness shall they with feign words make, not genuine, not true, pretentious – yes, false – yes; **will make merchandise of you whose judgement now is as a long time lingers not and their damnations slumber not.** That's true now more than ever, and Peter wrote this 2,000 years ago nearly. **For if God spared not the angels who sinned, but cast them down to...**and the word is 'tartaroo', 'the place of restraint'; there are different words for ...the word is translated 'hell' in English as four different words that are in the Greek language; just as one of the words is 'tartaroo', having to do with a condition of restraint. They were restrained; they didn't have the same power and might that they had before. They were restrained, they were cast down to this earth to be prisoner, if you will, on this earth – demons, ever how many there are, that third of the angelic realm that rebelled along with Lucifer who became Satan the devil, **and cast them down to tartaroo and delivered them into chains of darkness to be reserved unto judgement.** Judgement! Judgement; it's upon those angelic beings who are demons. We already talked about what Lucifer's is, that's already been given; God already gave his judgement, what it's going to be, it's written throughout scripture over and over again as we read at the Feast of Tabernacles this year. God is going to destroy him; no more life. There's no purpose of him living on into thousands and millions and billions of years; but his life will come to an end.

Verse 5 – And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, Amazing! All those generations and here... come to Noah – the eighth. There weren't very many. There weren't very many from the time of Adam and Eve; and how long did they live? And what did they see? And what *suffering* did Eve see in her children as she grew up and saw the lives they lived and *Cain*, her own son who killed her other son Abel; the *sorrow* because of *disobedience* to God! Cursed! Your children... 'your sorrow is going to be multiplied'... you're going to see the result of sin. She did in a very powerful way; and so did her husband. They lived a long time back then and they saw generation after generation. They saw the world become horribly ugly. They didn't live to see it destroyed at that point in time by the flood, but they lived a long time and they saw incredible human suffering in their children and their children's children and their children's children and their children's children and on down it goes several generations of children through time...that all started with them, the parents of all mankind.

And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the ungodly. The world became so vile, so evil. Man was so professional, so sick, and so perverted because he lived for so long. God shorted the lifespan of man after that to teach us, to show us how sick the human mind is. And the longer we live, how much worse it is.

And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an example unto those that after should live ungodly. To fear God, and yet man doesn't fear very long. I think of Noah's sons – that one there *blows my mind*; Noah's own sons who after the flood didn't worship God, never turned to God, turned against God; but they helped build the ark, they saw their friends and others destroyed... and they didn't love God and they were not thankful to God that their lives were saved at all. Took several generations; you have to go ten deep to get to one with whom God began to work, that Noah taught. Abram was around 53-55 when Noah finally died. It took that long before someone came along.

And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conduct of the wicked: he hated what he saw day after day; it talks about what he saw. And you know what? He was hurt inside because he saw what his family was doing, he saw what his children were doing, the choices they were making in life and what was happening in his part of the world; and he hated what he saw. **(For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds.)** He was witness of what was taking place and he loathed what he saw was happening in his own family, in society at that time because it was so bad. And God came along and destroyed it all. **The Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptation and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgement to be punished.**

Let's drop on down here, read **verse 14** – it's where we're headed, speaking of society, speaking of the world, speaking of the way man is and so forth. **Having eyes full of adultery who cannot cease to sin,** the way of man, the way man has been. People have always sinned. People don't want God! People think... it's a tough thing, especially in the south, the more you get into what's called the Bible belt and people who *believe* with all their being that they're living right before God and that they love Jesus Christ and they love God. And it's a hard thing when you tell them about the Sabbath. They don't come to see it unless they're called... but you see it, and we witness it. They don't love God, they don't love the Sabbath, they don't believe there's a God that requires the keeping of the Sabbath or the Holy Days, or the observance of a Passover; and that you should *loathe* Easter and what it teaches, that you should *loathe* 'the mass of Christ' on December 25 that came from the Catholic church. And they don't understand those things and they hate you for it because they don't understand, they can't comprehend.

And so the world, physically and spiritually, **having eyes full of adultery and who cannot cease from sin;** it's the way of man, **beguiling, unstable souls: with a heart that they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children...** that was the message for Adam and Eve; it's a message Peter was still teaching; still teaching 4,000 years later... that this is the result of mankind, this is the way of man and this is the life of man; not to be blessed, but to suffer because of choices to disobey God.

And all of this, in a very powerful way, works into what God wants us to grasp and understand about a relationship that begins at home. It begins when two people, God says, and tells them, '*You are to become one; you leave father and mother.*' And there's so much said by that on a spiritual plane that people in the world don't grasp and don't comprehend that's beautiful, that's exciting. And it all has to do, if it's done properly and done right and the way God says it should be, in how a man thinks toward a woman and how a woman thinks toward a man. And we haven't been doing it right for 6,000 years as a whole; until we're brought into God's Church. And only because of that have there been blessings and conquering of many of those things that were wrong; because it's not in the world.

~~~end