

It is amazing where we are in time, what's taking place, and everyone is excited about the news of last Sabbath although we may not fully understand everything yet; and that bring us to the sermon for today.

Today we're continuing with the new sermon series entitled *God's Witnesses* with this being *Part 2*. I'm going to repeat what was stated early on in the sermon and then pick up a few things here just to set the stage again, to get back in the context of where the sermon is going, and then we're going to slowly go through all this because there's a lot here and as we go along the picture, the context, everything is going to become clearer and clearer. And it's very inspiring, the things God gives to us, the timing we're in, where we are; the unity, the oneness.

As the prayer was taking place here I couldn't help but think about that, the group we have here today, the unity, the oneness through everything that's here, and I think of all the examples in the Bible, especially Hebrews, when it talks about how they lived by faith. That means something totally different to us today in a way that we couldn't have grasped five years ago, three years ago, two years ago, one year ago, to the degree we do now, that which we're living; and we come to a point where we have a greater understanding of those who have gone before us, and that's an awesome thing.

In that particular sermon last week this was what was stated:

This is where the sermon is going. The two witnesses will not be killed in the literal city of Jerusalem and their dead bodies will not lie in the streets of it for 3½ days. God's two witnesses will live right up to the coming of Jesus Christ. This 3½ days spoken of here is about the two witnesses, it is fully about this past nearly 3½ years of Christ's final ministry and those things He is doing in His Body, the Church of God.

...and made the comment then;

This is not good news to Satan.

As I mentioned last Sabbath, Satan is a spiritual being but he cannot understand spiritual things, he cannot grasp the things that are in scripture because God's spirit does not work in him, does not dwell in him and he does not dwell in God. He is a spirit being separated from God in every way spiritually. And unlike us, where we have the ability, the blessing of God dwelling in us, the blessing of God's spirit dwelling in us, as God draws us and begins to dwell in us that we can begin to understand and see those things that are spiritual as God communicates them to us.

Because He has to give them to us; we learn that very early on in the Church, we truly do. That the only thing we can see, the only thing we can grasp, the truths that we do see and grasp, is because God has communicated it, has given it to us in our mind, in our being, and it's an awesome thing to experience. No one else can see it. No one else can understand it. And that being, most assuredly, cannot understand it until things are stated and given, and he can see those things or hear those things on a plane that is, in a sense, very physical, in the sense of how we think, just by knowledge.

So let's have a bit of a recap of part of last week's sermon and then continue where we left off last week.

We began by focusing on the story of the children of Israel being delivered out of Egypt and from under the control of Pharaoh, who is a 'type' of Satan. As we reviewed it, God revealed what He is doing now concerning the deliverance of His Church and how God led His remnant Church in a 'way' that was not obvious to anyone, including Satan.

We read a couple of verses in Exodus that are an *exact 'type'* of what God is doing now as He delivers His Church and entraps Satan in his own schemes. I love that. I truly love how God works. I truly love God's plan and how He has revealed and reveals these things to us and those things that are coming back, coming to an end, in a sense, for what Satan has done for so long.

I want to read again here **Exodus 14:3-4**; we talked about that last Sabbath. It says, **For Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel, They are entangled**, and that word as we looked at it means 'to be confused', they're 'perplexed'. This was his thought. That's how *Satan* looks upon the Church at *this* time and has for the last 3½ years, thinking that the Church was perplexed, confused and has been for a long time, candidly. That's his thinking. And so **Pharaoh saw the children of Israel**, and he said, **They are entangled**, or they're **confused and perplexed in the land, and the wilderness has shut them in**. He says, **And I will harden Pharaoh's heart**; same thing has happened to Satan.

As he sees things develop through time, as he knows his time is ending, as he knows he's fast approaching a period of time when he will no longer be allowed to be around human beings – except for a short season *after* the Millennial period – and as things are revealed to him, as God tells him things that are going to happen to him, like in the Feast at one point here where we talked about Satan's end, *literal end*, and God lets him know that's *exactly* what is written in scripture and that is *exactly* what's going to come to pass, this being becomes worse in his mind, in his being, in his spirit, if you will, in his attitude toward God and toward God's creation, and toward the Church, obviously, which is a major focal point of that creation.

Going on here, He says, **I will harden Pharaoh's heart, that he will follow after them; and I will be honoured upon Pharaoh**, we read what's going to happen toward the end-time and how God's going to deal with Satan, that great spirit being, the greatest in the sense of an angelic realm, in the sense of power and beauty and glory that God created...and then what Lucifer did, how he turned against God and took a third of the angels with him by deception, by his lying, by his spirit, by his attitude toward God and disagreeing with the way God does thing. He didn't *like* God's plan and what God was going to do with mankind.

So He says, **I will be honoured upon Pharaoh**; that's why I said this is an *exact 'type'* of what God is doing toward the end, very much about Satan, very much about God's Church. **I will be honoured upon Pharaoh and upon all his host**; all those who turned against God and have been that way for how ever many millions of years since their rebellion. **...so that the Egyptians may know that I am the Eternal**. So that *all* may know the power of Almighty God; that what He says He will bring to pass exactly in the manner He says.

Last week I skipped over reading some of what was written in the first booklet, 'Time is Running Out'. I guess because of living it, writing some of those things, seeing what God did, some of these things are driven home in such a powerful way – going back and seeing what God started doing with us early on,

how He began to reveal various things to us and then a simple little booklet written. Small, insignificant in many respects as far as size, as far as circulation, as far as the amount of content...just one booklet after a simple little pamphlet had been put out for some time, the 'News Watch...' – finally led up to that little publication being sent out, but it was *powerful*! And candidly, because of the sermon series we're going through right now, I understand now that what was stated then was far more important, far more powerful, far more meaningful than what I've ever known and understood until we've gotten to this point in time. Because God is showing us how important those things were at the very beginning, because *it's all about His Church* and what His own Church did. Thousands and thousands, tens of thousands of people who were baptized, *who had access to God's throne, who had GOD ALMIGHTY living and dwelling in them...*and what every one of us did when we began to fall asleep, began to become lukewarm, did not *watch* as Jesus Christ warned, to be on guard, to be spiritually alert, to *watch* and not allow those kinds of things come upon us that came upon us.

Awesome what we lived through. There's never been a time like it. It's happened to a few people through time in the Church before, but not in a massive way, not in such a powerful way. And God allowed it as a part of His plan to help save billions later, to be a *great witness*, to be a final, if you will, most *powerful* example and warning *to you who have been called since the apostasy, to all who will be called* into the Millennium, to *all who will be resurrected and brought back* in the Great White Throne Judgment.... *that just because you have God's spirit dwelling in you does not mean God OWES anything to you – that you must be on guard and FIGHT YOUR MIND, and FIGHT YOUR SPIRIT, and FIGHT YOUR CARNAL HUMAN NATURE* until the day you die. That you must *want* what God offers you *with all of your being, with all of your might*, that *this* is what you choose, that *this* is what you want – because it's only through that process that you can become a part of the God Family, live into eternity and have God Almighty dwell in you and you in Him for all time. Awesome!

What happened to God's Church is one of the most powerful, greatest examples ever given to mankind through time that's going to be used over and over and over again as a reminder. *Don't think you're better! Don't think it can't happen to you – Laodicea* - that spirit, that mind, that thinking. Anyone at any time who would have lived during Laodicea – *everyone* – if everyone was given opportunity to live during Laodicea – *every human being would have done the exact same thing*, become lukewarm and had to be separated from God and God's presence, would have sinned, would have gone asleep spiritually. There's a powerful lesson in there for time, through time, that God wants us to know deep down in our being – and it's going to be taught again and again and again through the Millennium, and it's going to be taught over and over and *over again* during the Great White Throne! It's going to be one of the *greatest examples in the Bible*, to teach some of the *most important lessons of 6,000 years!* That's *awesome!* It truly is! That you lived during that period of time? That those things are stamped *deeply into your being* – and that you have the opportunity to teach them to others. That's incredible! Because you have lived during one of the most important times of all human history that God is using.

And so this story of Revelation 11 is a *powerful* story because *it's still about the Church of God and the Church that was scattered! IT ISN'T ABOUT THE WORLD!* God will take care of that in His time. It's about His Church, those who have His spirit dwelling in them, or have had that at one time in their life.

So that little booklet is proving to be far more important, far more meaningful now than I ever realized. The blessing of having lived it, the blessing of having learned those lessons, the blessing of having been able to teach those truths that came from Jesus Christ directly, that came from His Father.

So again, last week I skipped over reading some of what was written in the second booklet, 'Time Has Run Out'. It's important to understand what was written there and recognize that is exactly what the timing of Revelation is really all about.

Several of the articles in that booklet were mentioned but toward the end of the booklet there were three articles that I didn't mention. The last one was simply an addition to the booklet that was entitled 'Revelation of God's Plan for Mankind'. It was a summary of the Sabbath, those things that are in Leviticus 23 - the Holy Days, the Passover - and so it kind of wrapped everything up showing that "This is the way; walk you in it. This is God's plan for you which so much of the scattered Church has strayed away from in understanding."

But the two articles before this are the ones that actually ended the theme of the booklet and they parallel perfectly the flow of what we're covering in Revelation 11. Let's notice part of what was said in the 11<sup>th</sup> article entitled 'Opening of the 7<sup>th</sup> Seal' under a section entitled 'Last Warning'.

God has shown that we have reached the end of time for any more warning witness to His people through any publications.

'Time is Running Out' and 'Time Has Run Out': That's all the Church that was scattered needed. Those truths would determine *who* would be measured as part of the Temple and those who had to be left out in the court, the Gentiles, the non-believers, as we went through and talked about the meaning of those words. And so those two booklets – yes, there were two *books* written later on – but the two booklets were directed directly to the Church, and the second one, candidly, was in a very powerful way mentioned as one directed toward the ministry of God's Church.

Time has run out for the scattered Church of God.

The time of God's judgment upon His Church is complete and only a few are going to be called to become a final remnant of all that was scattered earlier.

Didn't know the magnitude of what was written then. Hindsight becomes much clearer.

God will call a tithe from the third that was scattered. All who were scattered received an opportunity to repent of pride and a lukewarm spirit.

Now, I've been looking forward to that tithe. It's not here and it will not share with us what I've wanted to share. But it's not about *my* wants and *my* desires – but it's a right desire that we should have toward brothers and sisters when God says something is going to come to pass; it's just the timing is a matter of something *that's fully in God's hands*.

All who were scattered received an opportunity to repent of pride and a lukewarm spirit. The witness—the testimony is established and judgment set.

Part of a final measuring of the Temple, that's what it's all about. It's about the reed.

By this point, we have either heard His voice and repented and are seeking to become more zealous toward Him or we have stubbornly held onto our own ways of seeing Him and have become more deeply entrenched in hard-hearted pride—resisting God’s grace.

This whole story of Revelation 11 is about a people who were scattered who *resist God’s truth* and are filled with horrible, horrible, destructive pride.

If God calls you out of the scattered era of Laodicea...

Interesting the timing. Interesting what was stated. Interesting what God gave to us later on when He let us know Laodicea is *over*, it has *ended*, we are in a *new period of time!* ...right at the juncture when the sealing took place of all who would be in the Temple and those who cannot enter in as firstfruits. Awesome!

If God calls you out of the scattered era of Laodicea will you hear Him and repent? You may be among a very few who will be given a final opportunity...

A very few, and a very few of you here that have been given that opportunity. Not a third - it’s still going to come - but a few.

You may be among a very few who will be given a final opportunity to become part of a remnant that He is going to call. This is the last published warning given by any means whereby a few may respond to become part of a final remnant of the last era of the Church!

Having to do with the Church that was scattered! Not those of you who are new, not those of you who have been called new since that time – *this is about the Church that was scattered*; still such a focus of God and powerful lessons that He’s still teaching all the way to the end.

God’s word through Joel will now come to pass upon Laodicea. “*And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Eternal shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Eternal hath said, and in the remnant whom the Eternal shall call*” (Joel 2:32).

Whew! Powerful – powerful – powerful, what God gave us to see. Those things written in this article are fully about what is written in the first two verses of Revelation 11 concerning the measuring, with authority, those who would be *in* the Temple and those who would be measured as outside the Temple in the court. That’s *fully* what it’s all about. We’ve understood that for a period of time but we haven’t understood the magnitude of it or the directness of it like we do now.

The article that followed what we just covered, looking back now to me, is the most profound, as it is what God addresses after the instruction He gave concerning the measuring of the Temple in those first two verses. What does Revelation go on to talk about? The next article entitled, ‘A Time for Two Witnesses’ – you can’t *plan* these things, you can’t make up these things, these things come from God. I know you know that, but how *awesome* it is when you go back and you *see* His design, when you see how He’s put it all together for us. I feel inadequate to express how awesome it is, truly.

Now let's turn over once again to Revelation 11. I'm going to do a lot of repeating as we go through this – it helps to drive the point home – although I don't like doing that sometimes, but this is how I've learned through this. Because as this sermon started I didn't know where it was going, not a hundred percent. I had different ideas of what might be happening... It's like I've talked about in times past, it was with the same kind of knowing, the same kind of confidence, the same kind of... well, the word 'knowing' really grabs it, that when the sermons were given during 2005 concerning God and Jesus Christ, that Jesus Christ not having eternally existed, in that last sermon, through the Feast I knew it was to be about Melchizedek but I didn't have the answers to it, but I knew I'd have it by the end of the Feast, and then God gave it, wham-wham-wham. Same thing here. As I have come to different words, not knowing what they're about, same thing in preparation of this sermon, some of these words are dumbfounding and you come to them and it's like this, again, a giant light bulb. It's like, "Duh!" It's always been there but you can't see it unless God lets you see it, and when the timing is there it's unveiled, it's revealed.

**Revelation 11:1 - And there was given to me a reed**, as we spoke of, used for measuring, **like unto/in the form of a rod**: that word meaning 'a staff', 'a sceptre', having to do with authority, rulership, government, God's authority, **and the angel stood, saying, Rise up and measure the Temple of God**, The Church of God! *It's about the Church of God!* It has *nothing* to do with the world! ...fully about the Church who is the Temple. The Temple, where all the stones came crumbling down as Jesus Christ said they would. He said there would not be one stone left upon another. Came to pass, we lived it, I've experienced it. I was one of the stones that fell over. Some of you sitting here, you were one of those stones that was separated, fell over in the Temple.

**Rise up and measure the Temple of God, and the altar, and those who worship therein.** Even the way it's stated is awesome because it reveals those who are *living* this way of life and *using* what God has given to them to remain and be a *part* of the Temple – the altar – *going before the mercy seat of God*, going before the altar with desire and sacrifice and being a living sacrifice and in worship as you worship God, as we understand, in spirit and in truth – meaning that as we go before the altar we're *repenting* of our sins! What a beautiful picture! It becomes clear those who are doing that and those who are not doing that.

**But the court which is without the Temple**, outside the Temple area, **leave out**, in other words that which cannot come within the Temple and cannot be measured as part of the 144,000; **and do not measure it for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy City shall they**, the *Gentiles*, **tread under foot forty-two months**. Last Sabbath we jumped ahead with the definition of some of what this means, but not everyone grasped fully what was being said so we're going to take a little more time to look more deeply at what is being stated here about those referred to as being measured as part of the Temple and those who must remain outside as part of the court, but not of the Temple.

This in turn has everything to do with understanding how the term 'Gentiles' is being used here and the term for 'the holy City'. And some of the understanding here is to recognize that *both* the Temple and the court are *in* Jerusalem, but something happened to Jerusalem.

First let's look at the term 'holy City'. We already know this in part, obviously, in large part, but we need to see the kind of contrast that God makes here in making a clear distinction with this city, because it's different here, part of it in what he leads into. I'm going to read one scripture quickly just to set the stage and then we'll turn to Matthew 27. First **Matthew 4:5 - Then the devil took Him up into**, speaking of Jesus Christ, **the holy city**, speaking of physical Jerusalem, **and set Him on the pinnacle of the temple;**

here 'holy' because God is still there. God isn't there today but He was then. There was still that which God desired to do through the temple service and those things that were there. Jesus Christ went there to worship God. He went there to keep the Holy Days year after year.

It was referred to as a holy city at that time, very physical but still referred to as a holy city because of the temple, a *physical* temple that was there.

Now, **Matthew 27:50** – this is at the time of Jesus' death and it says in verse 50 - **Jesus, when He had cried with a loud voice, yielded up the spirit**, speaking of death, speaking of what happens when anyone dies. It's not something that goes off that is like the world thinks, or like the protestant world believes when all of a sudden something separates from your body and it goes to heaven and there you are in heaven. At a funeral they talk about how you're already up in heaven but they talk about a resurrection too. You think, "What do you need a resurrection for if you're already up in heaven?! Come on...!" But people don't understand those things. They don't understand the contradictions of those things.

What a blessing when God gave to Mr. Armstrong back in the early seventies that there is a spirit essence in the mind of man that makes us different than the animal kingdom, that gives us an ability of something unique in His creation, that has the ability to think and to reason. It's not holy but its spirit essence whereby we can think and reason and remember, and things are stored as in a computer chip. We can understand that today in ways that even in 1972 couldn't be understood to the same degree. But when there's no power to it nothing is there! And when we die and nothing is running through our veins there's nothing there, it's just like a *chip*, except it's a *spirit chip* if you will, it's not physical but it's in the mind of every human being that's born. God places it there, and at death it goes back to God, in storage, if you will, until the time He puts life into a body – either a *spiritual* body or another, a second *physical* body – and that *same* mind, that *same person* there again with life. That's the spirit it's talking about here.

**Jesus, when He cried again with a loud voice yielded up the spirit**, meaning He *died*. **And, behold, the veil of the temple**, the *physical* temple in the holy city, **was ripped in two from the top to the bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks rumbled**; What a beautiful picture! God revealing something so powerful here, talking about a physical temple; the high priest could only go into that area where that curtain ripped, into the Holiest of Holies, once a year on the Day of Atonement to do service, picturing the things of Jesus Christ going to God's very throne for the past 2,000 years, doing a work, serving God, doing God's work. It's incredible! And showing now the way into the Holiest of Holies is *through Him*, not a physical worship any longer but a spiritual one.

**And the graves were opened; or grave, and many bodies of the saints which slept arose**, *I don't know what this means! I don't know who these were!* ...but in less than a month I'll know.

**Verse 53 – And they came out of the graves after His resurrection, and went into the holy city, went into Jerusalem, and appeared unto many**. I believe what it says, I just don't know what it's all about. Some people were resurrected, some people possibly knew them. I don't know!

**Verse 54 - Now when the centurion and they that were with Him watching Jesus saw the earthquake and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God**. Pretty moving what they experienced.

Next, Revelation 21, and again, just focusing on the word and how it's used. We see it's referring to a city, to a temple area, physical, but that it was referred to in those terms because God was still doing a work there. **Revelation 21:2 - And I John saw the holy City, new Jerusalem**, now used as, if you will, *spiritual* Jerusalem, **coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband**. Clearly a reference to the Church becoming Mount Zion, the Kingdom of God. We understand that - it's clear to see it. And so the term here about 'the holy city', 'new Jerusalem', we understand what that means and how it begins. It begins in the Church. We understand those terms and how they're used throughout scripture. We recognize and grasp the beauty of those things that are here, that this indeed is about a Church that is the Kingdom of God in embryo, as Mr. Armstrong described it. Awesome, beautiful way to describe it, the Kingdom of God in embryo, not yet there, and this holy City hasn't yet been born, if you will, or brought on the scene, if you will, completely spiritual in composition and state. But in the Church it's a beginning process as God lives and dwells within us until the 144,000 are changed...that's why we read similar things there when it talks about those as a bride adorned for her husband and the things that take place at the return of Jesus Christ at the first great resurrection.

**Verse 10 - And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high Mountain**, Mount Zion, the Kingdom of God, God's government, a high mountain. We understand mountains are used for governments. And all this picturing, showing, revealing, talking about these things...**a great and a high Mountain**, the Kingdom of God, Mount Zion, **and showed me that great City, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God**, we know when those occasions occur – great resurrections to spirit life.

Finally **Revelation 22:19 - And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy City, and from the things which are written in the book**. So again, all used in a beautiful way, spiritual Jerusalem, a spiritual holy City, not a physical one.

So again, the term for the 'holy city/holy City' as Jerusalem is used both when speaking of the physical city of old and the spiritual city that is to come that begins in our physical lives.

There is another manner in which 'Jerusalem' is spoken of in scripture and it's in reference to the two witnesses in Revelation 11. Let's notice **Revelation 11:8** – and later on we'll come in and fill the rest of it in, but let's just look at this one part - **And their dead bodies**, and the words '*shall lie*' are not in the Greek language there. Are yours in italics? There's a reason for that. It means that it wasn't translated out of the Greek. They thought that's what it meant so they inserted the word.

**And their dead bodies in the street of the great City, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where our Lord was impaled on a pole**, a stake, 'stauros' – the Greek. Not meaning 'the cross', not meaning 'a crucifix' like the world teaches, it means 'a pole' and He was nailed just like that on a pole. Awesome to understand that truth, those of you who are new. I tell it every time I have the opportunity. The reason they broke the two thieves legs beside Him, the criminals beside Him, is so that they could no longer prop themselves up to breathe, and so when they broke their legs they would die quickly. There was a purpose in that, because the Holy Day was coming and the Jews wanted them taken off and buried and disposed of quickly. And so they came around and broke the legs of the other two and they suffocated because they couldn't push themselves up anymore. If your arms are out like this [straight out from the shoulder to the sides] you don't suffocate, you live longer. You're going to die eventually, obviously. Not a great position to be in, but if your hands are directly above you and you're hanging from that one nail stuck between both hands you're going to suffocate pretty quickly. But

when they came to Christ they didn't have to break His legs. God said in scripture not a bone in His body will be broken, and it says earlier in John there, because a soldier had come by and rammed a spear into His side and out came water and blood and He died as our Passover.

**And their dead bodies in the street of the great City which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was impaled on a pole.** It's really the word 'stake' but it's a big stake. Generally when we use the word 'stake' we think of a stake in the ground, small stake you drive in the ground, but this, more accurately for the English language in this case, is a pole. Where was our Lord ~~erucified~~? Everyone knows! Jerusalem. I hate that word - I even wrote it down here... Where was our Lord *impaled*? I hate that word 'crucify'; it's disgusting because it means 'the cross' – sick, sick world! It's hard for us to even get rid of it, it's in your scriptures and sometimes it just slips out!

So, Jerusalem. So *why* is the name of the City being linked to Sodom and Egypt? Now, I've referred to it in times past – we've been there – it's like Sodom and Egypt. God is not there today. It's a physical city today; but on a physical plane if you look at Jerusalem there was a time when God was there in the temple. He's not there today. We've talked about how that it's like Sodom spiritually. That's the way it is today, the confusion of the different religions that are there; Islam, Judaism, protestant world, the Catholic church, and all those. It's all divided up, that old city of Jerusalem, it's divided up into four different groups there; all who know they're right about God, that teach a different God, that teach a different process of how you can become a part of something, whatever it is, generally going to heaven, or going to hell if you don't believe them. ...and all the confusion that's out there, confusion indeed.

Let's turn over to **Jude 4**, because the way this is used in Revelation 11:8 is not about the physical city. **For there are certain men/people who have crept in unawares**, so Jude is telling a story here. He's not talking to the world! The disciples, the different ones, the apostles when they wrote, they didn't write about the world to the world. They *wrote* to the Church of God, they *warned* the Church of God, they *admonished* the Church of God. This was from Jesus Christ as everything written is in the New Testament. It comes from Him, through Him. Everything that is preached if it's by a faithful minister, by one through whom God is working, then God gives it, it's from God. **For there are certain men/people who have crept in unawares**, unnoticed or overlooked. They slipped by, whatever happened. That's always happened. That's always been something that's happened through time, and some who made choices later on to go a different way. At some point here they're in and then they begin to do certain things and they fulfill this as well.

**...who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly people who turn the grace of our God into lasciviousness**, license to sin, teaching something else. That's what the protestant world teaches basically about Jesus Christ, that your sins are all taken care of, you have license to live your own way of life, you don't have to change...should try. Their concept of grace is perverted, sick, disgusting. **...who turn the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.** We understand. We understand. The scattered Church doesn't understand what this means, how you deny God, how you deny Jesus Christ. When you sin and you fail to repent; when you don't respond, when you don't do the things that Jesus Christ with God Almighty has told us we're to do and you don't live by those things and you don't repent, then you deny God to dwell... you deny the very reason Jesus Christ died. *He died so your sins could be forgiven so that God the Father and Jesus Christ can DWELL IN YOU. And if we deny His life to live in us*, we deny the very purpose of why He died and suffered for us. The world doesn't understand that. They get as far as His death but they don't grasp the awesome beauty of how we can change and become something different. How the mind can

be transformed – is by God dwelling in us, by the holy spirit, God actually dwelling in us by the spirit in the mind, a relationship with God and with Jesus Christ.

So, it's talking about the Church and those in time who deny. That's what 1 John is about. All 1 John is about this process, anti-Christ, those who work against Christ, those whom God has called who end up working against Christ because they won't yield and do the things that God says you should do in order for that life to live in you and continue to dwell in you.

**Verse 5 - I will therefore remind you, although you once knew this**, those who have gone astray, those who have gone away, those who deny, **although you one knew this**, and even this Body here, reminding them that you better get your act together, you better repent because this is dangerous ground, of those things that are surrounding you, of those things that have come in amongst you. A little leaven leavens the whole lump.

**I will therefore remind you, although you knew this, how that the LORD/Eternal, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt**, it's using a physical example here, **afterward destroyed those who did not believe**. Judgment – delivering them out of Egypt. We understand what this means for the Church. God starts a process in us; He begins to lead us out of spiritual Egypt. We understand what that means. And as He does so God begins to lead us out of spiritual Egypt and **afterwards**, it says, **destroyed those who did not believe**. So again, for the Church it is about those who go back into Egypt, those who begin to practice the things that they should not practice or live by, they fail to repent, not changing like they should, seeking God's help in their life... in other words don't believe what God says. This is very much about Revelation 11, those who don't believe God, who didn't believe what God had to say when God told them that there was an apostasy, and people wouldn't believe it. They denied it.

There is one organization that believes that they must become much larger than Worldwide ever was, because to have an apostasy and to have take place what must (what they believe) happen - they don't believe it happened yet, that any of these things happened during Mr. Armstrong's time. They even believe in what happened later on as far as the size is concerned and their concepts of 144,000 and so forth. They believe the Church must become much, much, much larger. And so that's why their concept is that "The timing can't be now; this can't be the end-time! We haven't had our apostasy yet!" Really?! How insane! And yet, "We haven't had our apostasy yet, because we haven't become larger than Worldwide so that we can have that great falling away in the Church that hasn't yet happened, that *will* happen in the future! And we're so small now, and at the rate we're going/growing," I think the one guy says, "...maybe a hundred years." One twenty-five years... now, that really stirs up people doesn't it to change their life, to be on guard, to be spiritually alert.

You know, Mr. Armstrong was given a great gift of having a sense of urgency *all the time...all the time!* What a great gift he was given from God to communicate to the Church in co-worker letters, in different 'Personals', in sermons, etcetera, etcetera.

So, if we understand here what Egypt is talking about, when it comes to the Church it shouldn't be so difficult. ...coming out of sin - coming out of Egypt.

Then Sodom should be clear in its usage; also found here in **Jude 6** - it's how these words are being used here. **And the angels who did not keep their first estate but left their own habitation**, speaking of those that rebelled with Lucifer, speaking as God has led us to see, a third of the angelic realm (we don't know how many, God doesn't say how many angelic beings He created), multiple millions who rebelled

with Lucifer, went with Lucifer, did not keep the first habitation, the place to dwell, the things to accomplish and live, the way of life to be lived, the things that they were to do, and instead left it for a different way.

**And the angels who did not keep their first estate but left their own habitation, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the day of judgment/judgment of the great day.** And so their time is coming, their judgment is coming. It's coming upon Lucifer fast.

**Verse 7 - Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth an example,** now the example here is a spiritual one for the Church. Most assuredly the physical things should not be a part of God's Church no matter what, in people's lives, and yet those things *are* as people are called out of the world, because everything that's in the world, the baggage that's in our lives is our battle the rest of our life. It is the way it is, but as we come into God's Church those things are put far behind, or striven to put far behind. There may be some battles in some of those things the rest of your life to a degree, to varying degrees; but it's a spiritual matter, and fornication is a spiritual matter. God uses physical things to teach how hideous it is to do things with other beliefs, other gods, thinking other that what He gives, to flirt with other ideas, to read, to do things that are not healthy spiritually. That's the example that is there spiritually. People who think they can go through the trashcan and somehow escape their minds being polluted and hurt, without them getting some stench and stink all over them?! ...because they think that they are somehow better, they can figure it out in their mind and so they don't obey God. It's spiritual fornication because it gets on you.

To do some other thing, as I've seen in God's Church ever since I've been in it, when people have different ideas or there's another way of doing something that disagrees perhaps with how Mr. Armstrong said it should be done, even administratively if that be the case, or other things in life that they think they can do or beliefs that they have. 14<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> Passover – that's been in the Church a long, long time. There are a lot of ministers who believed and taught for *ages* a 14<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> Passover. They think they can do something... Adultery, spiritual fornication because it's not what God gave, but they think they can do that. And that's why God gives something physical to grasp something spiritual, how wrong it is, that we're to be faithful to *Him*, not *unfaithful* as in marriage. God says to be *faithful* in marriage, that's what it's about, and so we understand these things, that relationship we're to have with God the Father, and the relationship we're to have with Jesus Christ...and to do otherwise is like adultery, fornication. That's why God gives us these examples; that we're not to *do* that to Him; we're to be faithful to Him in *all* that He gives us, in all the truth that He gives to us.

And so again, Sodom is used for a spiritual example. It's not about a physical place.

**...and are set forth for an example suffering the vengeance... 'suffering the vengeance of eternal fire'?** They suffered fire on a physical plane, but the lesson is that all who live a certain way of life must come to repentance because this particular fire, that vengeance, that judgment, if you will, is on those who will not repent; but God's going to offer every human being, in that respect, as a whole, those who can receive it, the opportunity to repent and change, in time, in *their* time, in the time He gives to them. But this is what stands over all human life, the end; what will that end be? Will it be one that is in God's Family and continues on into everlasting life or will it be a literal end never to be resurrected, never to have life again, the one that's referred to as 'eternal fire' - and that's only there when there's not repentance.

So, going back to **Revelation 11:8 - And their dead bodies in the street of the great City which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was impaled on a pole.** So where 'our Lord was impaled on a pole' is speaking of the city of Jerusalem, but in this case it is speaking of Jerusalem in the terms of Sodom and *Egypt* – certainly physical. Jerusalem today, as I mentioned, is like Sodom and Egypt spiritually, but the context of Revelation 11 is not about a *physical* Jerusalem but a *spiritual* one that has to do with God's own Church. This Jerusalem spiritually is speaking of that which is spiritually as Sodom and Egypt, just as the Temple area is separated in distinction from the area of the court, that which happened to the Church, that which was spewed out of God's mouth. Some came back as a result of repentance and change, as God awakened and brought them back and gave them an opportunity, others did not, could not be a part of the Temple, remained outside, *became known* as, especially as time went on as far as God is concerned, *spiritually* like Egypt, *spiritually* as Sodom... God's own scattered Church...who would not receive His testimony, who would not receive what He gave to it, who won't even believe that there was an apostasy or a man of sin, as though they never experienced that, when the testimony screams out that your scattering proves what happened to you. Can you not repent and humble yourself and acknowledge that God's word is true? And if you will not receive Him and you *deny* Him, how *horrible*, how *horrifying* is that spirit that God is still teaching us, how evil, how rebellious, how ugly pride is. That's what He's still showing us; that's what He's still teaching. That's the lesson that's going to go into the future. That's something that's still being fulfilled *right up to the end*.

So, let's read it again, **Revelation 11:1 - And there was given to me a reed, used for measuring, like unto, the form of a rod, a sceptre, a staff: and the angel stood, saying, Rise up and measure the Temple of God, the Church of God, and the altar, and those that worship therein. But the Court which is without the Temple leave out, and do not measure it; for it is given to the Gentiles: and the holy City** – Who is the holy City? The *Church of God*, those! Not Sodom, not Jerusalem that's become as Sodom and Egypt, but the holy City where God's spirit dwells – those who are the remnant, those whom God has brought back, those whom God is living in. That's why it's referred to as the holy City spiritually.

**...and the holy City shall they, the Gentiles, the Jerusalem that spiritually is as Sodom and Egypt, they shall tread under foot,** God's Church, God's people, God's truth, God's answers to them that they refuse, and they'll do it for **forty-two months**. But there's more to the story, more condemnation because it becomes far more powerful than that, it truly does. But that's what it's talking about; it's talking about the Church of God, it's talking about what happened in the Church of God, it's talking about the very things we're experiencing and the very things that continue on to this day, and the attitude and response of many who loathe *us*, who hate, who mock, who ridicule. And I understand that, but they don't know what they're caught up in, they don't know what they're doing, and they don't understand the condemnation.

So again here, understanding that the term 'Gentiles' here is a term used for 'non-believers'. It's sometimes translated 'other nations' because (and this becomes important later on too as we read some of these things); the word Gentiles, other nations, sometimes it's translated different ways, but it's always in a kind of a context of those that God uses to teach a lesson about...whether it be something in Judea, the Jews, if it's on a physical plane. It's talking about others around in the sense that they're non-believers although God and Jesus Christ condemned the Jews. But again, Jesus Christ spoke to them in those terms to give them opportunity, which they could not do, come to repentance, except for those few that God was calling to become a part of the Church later on. Anyway, it's used in those terms.

So again, non-believers who would not believe God's witness against them, like the stones of the Temple that had fallen down, referred to here as being spewed out of God's mouth. [They] don't believe that's happened, there's too much pride! Lukewarm and asleep, refuse to believe that happened. It definitely didn't happen to them. They know some others it's happened to but it *has not happened to them*. Part of the apostasy, etcetera, etcetera.

So there would come the time when those who refused to repent would fully turn against what is true, against God's true Temple, against God's truth, literally against God. So the Gentiles being spoken of here are those spoken of later in verse 8 and in the book of Jude as *spiritual* Sodom and Egypt – Gentiles, non-believers, those who commit spiritual fornication.

So the term here, '**and the holy City shall they tread under foot forty-two months**' – two divisions here in the Church; those measured as part of the Temple and those who must remain in the court, those who are part of spiritual holy City Jerusalem and those who are part of the spiritual Jerusalem that is Sodom and Egypt. All the way through, two specific groups being spoken of here.

The forty-two months? Exactly what God gave a witness to be, 1260 days, same time period; they coincide with each other perfectly in what God is doing.

**Verse 3** – So again, as I've said, the period of forty-two weeks that's done to God's Church is after the measuring of the Temple that's taken place, and it parallels, again, what follows next here in this description. **And I will give unto My two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days**, just perfectly, just the flow goes on, God showing what He's doing, what took place as far as the Church and then this period of time comes, this period of time finally, Laodicea ends and a new period begins – forty-two months, 3½ years, 1260 days. ...**clothed in sackcloth**; it's beautiful! The very opposite of what plagues the other portion of the Church, that which is the Gentiles, that which is the court; clothed in sackcloth, a different spirit, one of humility, needed mightily to live what they're going to live during, especially, the last 3½ years.

There is a manner in which we conduct ourselves, especially, again, that which God said should be of two witnesses who represent a work that God does in the end-time that's a witness to His truth and how the world receives it, and how the scattered Church receives it, like in the 'Time is Running Out' booklets. They didn't receive it. Only a few of you had the opportunity to repent, to come out.

I marvel when I go back and look at some of these things. Petra; you know, to us that's so simple, but in the Church that was scattered there are still those who think they're going to go to a place when the tribulation finally comes, 25, 10 years, whatever it is, 100 years now, there is a place over in the literal land of Jordan called Petra that they're going to be taken to to be protected for 3½ years from great tribulation. God showed us very early on Petra is about our Rock, it's about God Almighty, it's about a relationship with Him, it's not about a physical place and protecting yourself and being protected from the rest of the world and being in that little place over there protected by God while the rest of the world suffers. That's akin to and about as bad as, candidly, spiritually, as a rapture where people are taken away for seven years and look down upon the earth and watch everybody suffering for seven years.

Let's notice Luke 21; notice a little bit of our history as it was prophetically spoken of *by Christ* that it should come to pass. **Luke 21:16 - And you shall be betrayed by parents**, has that happened to any of you? ...**brothers and sisters, relatives and friends; and some of you shall they cause**, or shall they

actually be a part of **putting to death**. Literally. So this has happened for the past 2,000 years in God's Church. Jesus Christ is warning them, "You're going to experience these things." When you begin to change your life, when you begin to accept what you're given through His Church, your life is going to change...and *your* life changed quickly, your relationships oftentimes within your families and friends and how they began to treat you because of your new *beliefs*. It says you'll be betrayed.

**And you shall be hated of/among/by all for My name's sake.** In other words, all with whom, in essence, there would be those that you come in contact with that will hate you or look down upon you or no longer care for you. Some of it will turn into literal hatred; and Jesus Christ was warning about those things. He's saying your relationships are going to change; you are no longer going to be there in a right relationship as far as their affection toward you. It's going to change; it's going to go the other way.

**But there is not a hair on your head that shall perish.** God says He's going to take care of you. You continue to do what you're to do, God has a purpose for why He called you. Yes, you're going to suffer. Yes, it's going to be difficult, it's not going to be easy. And so we begin to tell people almost immediately after they're baptized, "Your life is about to change. There are going to be battles out here that are going to be worse! There are going to be things you see in yourself that you've never seen before, you begin to understand things in your own being that you couldn't see before; God begins to reveal them so you can change so you can repent and become a new creation."

**In your patience you possess your lives.** Boy, that means more to me now, about patience, and patiently waiting (and the scriptures say a lot about those things) now than it did three years ago or five years ago. I understand that much more deeply today. I believe you do too. Patience, wait, follow God, obey God; He'll give to you what you need when you need it.

**And when you shall see Jerusalem encompassed with armies:** Oh, why do we read everything so physical? But we do. And so out there today... and yes, there are going to be things that happen. Some of these things parallel events in the world *to a degree* but it's not primarily about those things – but there's a 'type' of those things that still happen, and some of that's allowed and exists and there are things there that have given encouragement at times to people until God reveals the greater truth, the greater understanding. *This is about the Church.* *This is about the Church -* **And when you shall see Jerusalem encompassed with armies, then know that the,** and the word here isn't just 'desolation', but it's a term in the Greek that means 'making desolate'...sound familiar? **...the making desolate thereof is near.** Too asleep to grasp the importance of it, too sluggish, too lukewarm, didn't like things that were happening, would call Headquarters and ask them, "Is it true what I've heard?" "Oh, no, no, we're not doing that!" "Okay." Lied to, things that were happening, different beliefs that were coming down the pike, different ideas that were coming down the pike, enemies.

It was becoming clear that there were things that were out there but couldn't grasp where it was leading, couldn't see that the desolation thereof was near, the destruction of the Temple, making it desolate, not one stone be left upon another. Yes, Jerusalem here is about the Church! It's not about our *need* to look over to Jerusalem today and say, "Oh man! They're encompassed with armies – it's almost here!" Because that's the way we think physically! You know, that's a powder keg in the world, it always has been; it's *stirred up* over there because that's the focus of everything that's always taken place through time – especially the end-time and things that God said.

Even Armageddon! We look upon it as being a physical location only – well it's *more than that*, it's a *spirit in the world AND THEY DON'T HAVE TO COME TOGETHER THERE*, but we've always read it

physically. “Oh, they’re all going to come there and this is how deep the bloods going to be...” And I looked at those things and thought, “Man, this is horrible and it can happen...” And it could if that were part of God’s purpose. But those things are about a ‘type’ of destruction and people who are involved in it and the part of the world that centers around a lot of this, right there – Iran, Iraq - that’s stirred up the world where people hate us with greater intensity, where things have happened in the world that are against Israel and Israel against them... *not* the nation of Israel over there, but the United States, Canada, Australia, who have sent troops, Great Britain, Europe...and they are *hated* of people! And it’s stirred up nations!

And Russia and China, they have an *attitude* and a *spirit* today toward *this country*, and toward that part of the world, and right now they’re saying about Syria, Russia is, “Don’t you mess with them like you did with Libya! We’re not going to take it!” And they’re ignored. Our politicians ignore them. Our President ignores them. They don’t understand you can’t ignore what they’re saying! They don’t grasp the magnitude of what is coming! That ought to make some people happy won’t it? I’m sorry...got four more weeks – pile it on! Incredible where we are!

But that’s the part of the world; it *is* a great battle that’s coming, and once you read the post that’s coming out probably tomorrow sometime you’re going to have a deeper understanding of the world we live in and what’s coming down the pike and the magnitude of it that’s short-lived, that’s quick, that’s fast – and then Jesus Christ is here and God has to put a stop to it.

And so, yeah, there’s an Armageddon, if you will, Ar-meggido, and it’s about all the nations that are preparing for war. If you look at all the war games right now it’s amazing! Whew! The U.S. and the Philippines area, and China and what they’re saying and sabre-rattling and all the stuff going on between Iran and some of the nations there, the jets flying up in through there and the exercises taking place down through there. The world is a hot spot, and someday very soon now it all starts and it happens so quick, so powerfully.

But this is about the Church...**when you see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation/making desolate thereof is near.** And that’s what happened. We look back and we see what took place. **Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains;** not over there! We’ve understood this from the beginning, almost, of the apostasy, afterwards. God began to reveal these things. This is about the Church and what happened. **...flee to the mountains;** different groups popped up, the government of God was scattered, the Church was scattered, different groups popped up in different places to try to survive, to get out of that environment. If you stay there it’s going to be so hard, so difficult; strive to hold on to what you have, the truth, whatever truth. So we’d go; that was a difficult task.

**...and let them who are in the midst of it depart out; and don’t let the other countries there enter in. For these will be the days of vengeance, that all things that are written may be fulfilled.** The end-time, everything that God says, has prophesied through time that would come to pass is so much still about the Church and what will eventually then happen in the world because God said there would come a time that if He didn’t intervene man would destroy himself, man would annihilate himself. And so all these things happening together at the same time; the apostasy right up to the very end. Was it 6,370 days? Is that the right number? I did the numbers but can’t recall exactly offhand... *Amazing*, after it all began we know when it ends.

**...For there shall be great distress**, it's a word that means, 'to press tight', 'to compress', 'pressure'. You ever felt pressure? You ever felt stress because of the life you're living, because of the beliefs you hold, because of the world around you and how it looks upon you and what it says to you and what happens in families, etcetera, etcetera, etcetera. Do you ever feel too much pressure and stress? I used to deny I had pressure and stress. At some point I came to realize, "Man, that's my life! It's there always!" It's just there. We have to learn to deal with it and look to God to help us in coming through those battles and the stresses that are out there and deal with them His way.

**...for there shall be great distress**, I remember when this all started – absolute horror. God's Church! And what we were hearing in a sermon that was a matter of an apostasy...

I see Terry Wrozek sitting back there, things we've shared together, because it started there for us where God began to work with a group of people there in Toledo and then in Detroit. We were talking about that last night, the first time we came together and had a service... I was sick! I was sick inside, and if I hadn't had my notes written out in great detail I don't know what I gave. When I was through I felt so empty and so sick. I wasn't sure what I'd said except that I know it was in my notes, and if I read them and I got through them and read the scriptures there was something there, but I was sick! I'll never forget that.

I remember talking to a minister – we had such huge phone bills at that time – talking to people, because the stress was so great, the pressure was so great, the things that we were going through were so horrifying in the mind, of what brethren were doing. One day we'd spend hours on a phone with one minister in one area, talked to them about different things and how to deal with some of these things and what were we going to do and how are we going to survive? What are we going to do as God's Church now? How do we deal with some of these things? And you'd talk to them the very next day and truly it was like an old science fiction movie, we started talking about it, 'The Invasion of the Body Snatchers'. I mean, that's what it was like – people I loved, ministers that I've spent a lot of time with talking, because we tended to share about different battles and things in our areas, to know how to cope with them, to seek wisdom and how to best handle things. And you drew very close because of sharing those things in life – and one day you knew them and you were of the same mind and the next day because they had spent 3-4 hours talking to Joe Jr. that night, the next day they were people I didn't know! They thought differently! What we shared together was gone! Power, signs, and lying wonders...I experienced it! Incredible! Pressure – stress – in ways that I have never known since... Oh, maybe I have just on a different plane, because it doesn't end. But that was the start of the worst I'd ever experienced, obviously, and... anyway.

**...for there shall be great distress in the land and the wrath upon His people.** Wrath, for what we did. Thank God for His correction. Thank God or we would have all been destroyed; because it's only through His correction and through His taking us through those things that by His spirit, as He was drawing us and helping us to see a need to address certain things, that we could come to grasp what was actually happening to us and why. *Because we knew it was God's Church so HOW COULD SUCH A THING HAPPEN TO GOD'S CHURCH, THAT ONE DAY WE'RE ALL TOGETHER AND THE NEXT DAY THERE'S MASSIVE CONFUSION AND A THIRD OF THE CHURCH HAD GONE BACK TO THE PROTESTANT WORLD!! HOW COULD SUCH A THING HAPPEN IN GOD'S CHURCH IF THIS IS GOD'S CHURCH?!* But I knew it was God's Church! *But how could this happen to God's Church?!* Duh-duh-duh-duh-duh... so asleep, could not understand that an apostasy and what God prophesied would happen before Jesus Christ could return - had to take place! But so we lived through it. It was *horrifying!* Great tribulation upon God's Church; the opening of the 1<sup>st</sup> Seal was. And we came to understand that later on. We began to

*understand* what happened to us. God began to show us about the stones falling down. I remember being in a basement here in Cincinnati and giving that sermon, the stones of the Temple had fallen down. Incredible!

**And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and they shall be led away captive**, the edge of *what* sword? ...and what kind of a *death* are we talking about? What can happen to people spiritually? What are some of the sermons that began to be taught very early on, about what had happened in God's Church and the condemnation that God gave to His ministry, and the *blood* He said was upon *their hands* for the *death* of so many people? It's spiritual; because of what they did. Now, thankfully God has a plan that we learn later on that can awaken people again, most of them in the Great White Throne, and bring them to repentance.

**...and shall be led away captive**; We know about captivity now. You go back into Egypt – go *back* into Egypt you're taken captive. You don't think you're captive? You think you're going to continue a work that Mr. Armstrong did? ...that he never finished the work? ...and you're going to repeat, do the same thing? ...that you're going to have a telecast, you're going to have a magazine because you're going to continue to do it because *he never finished it, he didn't fulfill anything about the Elijah to come!* Somebody else is going to, so we're going to do it and we're going to print these things and we're going to be on TV, we're going to do this and the apostasy hasn't taken place and we just have to regroup. Incredible! Led away captive. 14<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> came along – oh, incredible damage that was done in God's Church! Things about Pentecost that just *infuriated* me sometimes – things that people would say.

Some things about 14<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup>, I hear somebody's argument and then I listen... somebody else would send me a tape about what another minister was saying. I think I've heard every lie, every *stupid* possibility about this subject...and then all of a sudden someone else would send me another tape. I remember once one being sent down from Washington, from another minister up in that area, and I listened to his reasoning and what he said happened as the children of Israel were coming out of Egypt and some of the things about 14<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> Passover and I wanted to puke. I thought, "You've got to be nuts! You've got to be stark raving mad! How can you be so deluded?" But people can't help how far off base they go.

I'm sorry I'm going into some of these things this way but I hope you get a sense – those of you especially who are newer – and those of you who are older you lived it, you know. But those of you who are newer, shows a traumatic time that happened in God's Church and what happened to *His Temple* that is not over with yet, that so much of what we've been living through *still about His Church*. The world He will take care of, the Church is another matter; that's always of importance to Him because this is their spiritual life, this has to do with their eternal life. Physical life? They can be resurrected again. Spiritual life? That's another matter.

**...and they shall be taken away captive into all...** Oh, there's that word – Gentiles/**nations**, basically saying *non-believers*. You get to a point that after a while you think you can build bridges and you can bring so and so over here because he has this idea about Pentecost, and we'll tolerate him (we don't believe a word he's saying but...), we'll let him come over and teach and preach in this church and we'll bring over a 14<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup>er and he can teach as long - I hope he doesn't teach about that - but he can come over and we can build these nice bridges and everybody can get together like we used to be and we can have these large groups again, we can have this fuzzy feeling that we're getting this back again. So sick! So sick! Captive! Non-believers! Gentiles!

**...and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.**

Only been understood as something physical in the past and something that took place; and there was a time that something was fulfilled. *This* is different. *This* is about the Church. It's about what we're reading in Revelation 11 – *forty-two months, times of the Gentiles, time of the non-believers*, time of that portion of the City, Jerusalem, that has turned against God, that is so set in its ways that it loathes the idea and the concept of anything that's taught by this Church.

So again, this period of time and everything that happens is about what leads up to a final time of something, a witness that God is giving, and so much of it is still a focus on the Church and about His Temple and what is taking place and why it's taking place. **Revelation 11:3 - And I will give power**, the word 'power' isn't even there but it is understood in context as we'll find as we go through this, because it started out that way, the reed that's like unto the sceptre, the power, the authority. It is about power and authority and government.

**And I will give unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before/in the sight of/with**, 'before' it talks about here, **in the sight of** or **'with God to the earth'** is really the correct rendering of this. That's how God works. That's how God has *always* worked in His Church. God worked through Mr. Armstrong that way! God walked through the apostle Peter that way! God worked through Paul that way! *...and they stood in a place of authority for a purpose* before the earth at that time, before the Gentiles – that's where Paul stood, that was his job, that was his responsibility, he was sent to the Gentiles. Different ways of expressing some of these things that God gives. And God says at the end time there would be two who would represent, in essence, everything that the Church of God is about and what we're doing and what God is doing through us, and what He's enabled us to accomplish to this point in time – which is awesome, small as we are, for what He's given. God making it very clear *He did it, He has done it all!* And we've been blessed to serve, to be a part of, to share in what He is doing.

**And if anyone will hurt**, a word that means 'to act wickedly', 'to do wrong toward' in any fashion... **If anyone will hurt them fire proceeds out of their mouth, and devours**, meaning 'to eat up' **their enemies: and if**, again, a word here that means 'so when' or 'even when' **anyone will hurt**, because that's what it's referring back to, in other words 'act', or 'do wickedly' **toward them, they must in this manner be killed**. And we just take things physically all the time, don't we?

In the first sermon we spoke of the example of a 'sword' proceeding out of Christ's mouth. Here the example of 'fire' is being used. We know it's not literal, although some like to mock and make fun, "When's the fire going to come out of your mouth?!" The 'sword' is used as an example of how the word of God, His truth, is powerful in judgment to cut, to destroy, all those who oppose what is true. We understand that; the sword, the two-edged sword. 'Fire' is used in a similar manner because that which 'measured' the Church of God determined what was part of the Temple and what was part of the court, in truth that God gave His Church that measures every person. It's the truth that determines these things. It's through the truth that God gives; the truth that is a two-edged sword, the power that's there, the word of God that's there that has the power in these matters. 'Fire' brings on another aspect similar to the sword, carries it a step farther, if you will, gets more specific, if you will, in that respect because fire is about judgment, trial and judgment, the power to bring these things forward, to bring these things on that happens in people's lives, of things that happen in people's lives if they refuse what God has said, of what comes into their life, of what affects them in their life and keeps them where they are and makes their life even more difficult or worse than what it is. Because they continue to resist

God and the *truth* that God gives, and what they go through is a result of that spiritual process that is still working in them.

Remember when we read earlier in **Jude 7** it says, **Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.** In other words, for those who do not repent it *is* about final judgment, it *is* about fire, very much so, that's where it leads if people don't change, if they don't repent. You can go back and read some of those things in Jude and it helps drive the point home, because it's about, when it talks about Egypt, it says, 'afterward destroyed those who do not believe'. Again, it has to do with those who do not believe and the fire that comes upon them, the judgment that's upon them because they continue to resist and fight against God.

What a horrible state to be in! And then it does something to them. To be ugly toward God? To be hateful toward God? To mock God? But they don't understand that. No, they think they're doing that to me or to you, to make fun of you, to mock you, to ridicule when they speak of you, of what you believe, not understanding *this is from God*, and He doesn't take that lightly, their attack against Him, their attitude, their spirit toward Him. But it shows how far the human mind can go, not just in an apostasy, not just to a point in being scattered, not to even a point of keeping a resemblance, a similar mode of worship in the sense of going to Sabbath services and having some of the same kind of structure.

Maybe a telecast, maybe a magazine, and maybe some of the teachings of things of the past, and still talking about things that are going to happen one day in Europe and 10 nations that will arise, going to the Feast of Tabernacles, and sending in tithes, and all those things that they go through the motions of...but *hate, loathe, ridicule, mock*, God's truth. What a *horrible* thing! But so blind that they don't see it's God. "It can't be God! A man and a woman?! Well, that's convenient! Husband and wife? That's convenient! Ha-Ha-Ha!" I am speechless in such things because they don't understand what they're saying about God and Jesus Christ. They're the ones that have put you where you are. They're the ones that have given you the truth, the unity that you believe, that you hold onto, that you still, four weeks before it happens, *still* you hold onto... May 27<sup>th</sup>! "We've seen a lot of things, but *that's* really out there!" So be it.

Now, there are things that are happening differently, and the posting will help you to put some of that even together in a beautiful way, I feel, to understand things that God is doing that to me are a beautiful thing... that can take you literally *right up to the very end and fulfill everything that's stated in prophecy*. Now, some things God has had mercy upon us in, blessings of things we have done. He's let us focus upon different things, preparing. Preparing for a time when *many* are going to come along. We have geared toward, we have had meetings over it, we have refined things on the website, we have done things in preparing for email and so forth and dealing with things and answering things. None of that has changed, just the timing. ...and some who will not be directly involved in it because they'll be changed by the time that goes into effect.

See, I don't expect anyone to come along in any mass. I don't expect there to be any TV cameras. I don't expect there to be any interviews. I don't expect there to be anything until this is *all over*. But God has let us focus upon certain things to be a help to us for what we could see and what we could understand, to have plans, to prepare, to try to do the best we could with what we knew, with what we could see – and that's how we're judged. It's always been that way and we've been very blessed in it, truly have. We've drawn closer together as a Body because of it.

During the prayer here today and looking out over this group, thinking, “What an awesome blessing! The unity, the oneness this far to the end that we still have in God’s Church, with this Body, wherever everyone is meeting together today. It’s a beautiful thing! Talking before services here to different ones, how that they feel, they know they’re drawing closer together in this Body at a time in a physical world that if God were not in it you’d be so stressed out. Much of that stress we’ve addressed within the past. We’ve had to learn about various things. We’ve had to learn when things did not transpire in the *form* that we thought they would – but still believing that things will come to pass, just the timing is in God’s hands, not ours. And there are things we’re to learn from that. Again, the posting, when that’s put up.

But, I’m moved by seeing all this come together, by how God has led us to see something now at this time in Revelation 11, to better grasp and comprehend what He’s done with us from the beginning – PKG - from the very beginning what He’s been doing with us. We don’t have all the answers but we do have the framework of everything that God is doing prophetically that will come to pass. Still going to happen to the magnitude, to the power that God said...and we will learn from it and we’ll be moved by it and inspired by it.

So, yes we shift as we go along. We do different things at different times as we see exactly where we are and what God is doing, because I have learned long ago there is a great war that will continue until this is over, a war you cannot see, a war you don’t want to see, but a war nevertheless. Because God is still dealing with, all the way through this entire plan, that which has to do with what He created from the outset, speaking of Lucifer and a third of the angelic realm who are demons to this day, on this earth, who harass mankind, who seek to torment people, who seek to thwart God’s plan, who broadcast at you, who try to make your life miserable and unhappy, and they fight against God’s people, and yet that’s almost come to an end now. Very much a part of God’s plan. But the focus of all that is *you*, God’s Church, God’s creation. Everything that’s created is about *you*, what you’re a part of, God’s Church. That’s why so much is written here about God’s Church. The physical things will come to pass. The physical things will take place in God’s time but it’s still about the Church.

**Revelation 11:6 - These have power to shut heaven that it rain not in the days of their prophecy; and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues as often as they will.** Sounds pretty ominous; and we take it all physically...and it isn’t. It isn’t.

**They have power;** It’s that authority again; it’s the same thing that runs through this from the beginning to the end that comes from God, the way God works, how God is working - authority, power to act, which in the beginning, again, was a power of authority and authority to measure by or through the truths that God revealed. It’s still speaking of that power that’s a result of those truths that were revealed, the truth and what God gave to us and what God gave to us very powerfully, those truths that began to be listed in a very powerful way just in ‘Time is Running Out’ are *powerful* and *awesome* for this end-time. It *is* what the scattered Churches have rejected, it *is* what God has used to measure the Temple, it *is* what has strengthened you and given you life and you’ve been able to be blessed, if you will, to build upon those things. We have built mightily upon those things that God has given to us step by step by step, because of what God has given, Him showing the magnitude and the power of it all.

**...to shut heaven,** during the period of 3½ years others cannot be part of this Body, the Church - in power and judgment – unless they repent and accept the truth given from heaven. It’s where it comes from, it comes from Jesus Christ; that power, judgment, and discernment, is fully given to the ministry of God’s Church – first from God’s witnesses – that’s how God works.

**...that it rain not in the days of their prophecy:** I think of those things that God has given in the last period of time here, seven additional truths above and beyond, even those things that led up to finally the last period of 3½ years. So, all who remain in drought and in famine of God's Church, because that's what began when the 1<sup>st</sup> Seal was opened – a prophesied drought – you read about it in the book of Amos. No rain. And all who remain in drought and in famine of God's word, they will remain there unless they repent and accept the 57 Truths God gave His Church.

**...and have power over/on/onto or 'upon'** as it is **waters to turn them to blood**, again, this power is about power given to God's Church through His leadership. There is tremendous power – you may not comprehend, understand that – but there's great power in working with people as they're drawn to the truth and drawn to baptism – decisions, judgment that are made.

**...and have power over waters to turn them to blood...** when looking at the word 'turn', how do you read it? This here; **and have power over waters to turn them to blood...** Your mind goes back to Moses does it not? Do you not look at the word that way when you read it? Do you look upon it in the context of the word 'change' rather than 'turn'; as in 'power to change water to blood'? But it doesn't say they have power to 'change' water to blood. It doesn't say that. The *word* doesn't mean that.

Let's notice; I want to read several of these to you and you'll get the picture as we go along here. There is a word for 'change' in Greek in the following examples.

**Acts 6:14 – For we have heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered us. ... 'change the customs'.**

**Romans 1:26 – For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:**

**Philippians 3:21 – Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body... change.**

**Hebrews 7:12 – For the priesthood being changed**, that's a different word, it means 'transferred'; **there is made of necessity a change also of the law.** Has to do with tithing, how it's received. That's what the context of this one here is about, how it's used in the Church, how it's a matter of the Church of God now, not the priesthood, not the Levites. So the Church early on, if they gave to the Levites they would be making a mistake. There was a change made in the law, the administration through the Church.

So, it's taking about a 'change'.

The word here in Revelation 11 is not about changing water to blood like we tend to read it, because we think of, because it's designed this way to be that part of our mind as we take things physically, to go back to Moses and to think about the time that waters were changed to blood. I will *never* change water to blood.

There is also a very strict way that the word 'turn' is used and it *never* carries with it the meaning of 'change' as in changing from one thing to another; never-never-never-never, although even in 'Strong's Concordance' it tries to say that it carries that...but it never does. You look at all the examples – it never carries that meaning – never-never-never.

I'll read some more scriptures to you now for the word 'turn'. Simple; it's how you use the word 'turn'.

**Matthew 5:39** – ...But whosoever shall strike you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.

**Luke 7:44** – And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Do you see this woman? Simple.

**Luke 9:55** - But He turned, and rebuked them...

**Acts 7:39** - To whom our fathers would not obey, but thrust Him from them, and in their hearts turned back again, turned again here, **into Egypt...** direction, from one direction to another. That's what it's talking about, that's what it means. How do you turn water to blood? Turn?

**Acts 13:46** – Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold and said, it was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you, but seeing you put it from you and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, behold we turn to the Gentiles. Ah, getting a little closer.

There are two other places where a different word is translated now, the same word but it means 'turn' if you understand the context.

**Matthew 18:3** – And said, Truly I say unto you, Except you be converted, 'turn' not 'changed'... and become as little children, not changed to little children, but turned to something, and 'become as' in your attitude, in your spirit, **you shall not enter into the Kingdom of God/Kingdom of heaven.** Converted; and they use that word because there is a term that is talking about turning from your ways to God's ways. That's the context always in scripture; turning from your ways. Unless you turn from your ways to God's ways and with a special attitude of humility and just receive as a little child what God gives to you.

So this one I want to read to you is very closely related to the expression, or the saying in Acts 3:19. It's not the words but this is what it's talking about because this is the process.

**Acts 3:19** – Repent, the word I love means 'to think differently'. When you read that in the Greek it's 'think differently'. We have to learn to think differently, that's why it says about this mind in you has to be transformed – the renewing of your mind, this 'metamorphoo', the transforming of the mind, the way you think. So the word 'repent' means 'to think differently'. **Think differently therefore and be converted...** turned. It's talking about the same thing; it's a different expression here but we understand that's what it's talking about because it's talking about how this is the process you go through when you think differently. You have to turn from your thinking to God's thinking, from your thoughts to His thoughts, from your ways to His ways.

So it says here **...be converted that your sins may be blotted out**; that's the purpose of it, **that when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.** So again here, **and have power over waters to 'turn' them...** 'them'? ...the waters? **...to blood.** *Who* is it talking about here? *What* is being discussed? What would be the purpose of turning water toward blood?

There's an example of how 'water' is used in connection with blood that concerns this context. Let's turn over to Hebrews 9. So simple – so *simple* but not until God gives it to us.

Hebrews 9:11 - But Christ being come an High Priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood He entered into the holy Temple/holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies to the purifying of the flesh: it's a physical thing. How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this cause He is the mediator of a new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first, they who are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.

Verse 16 - For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is in force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator lives.

Verse 18 - Wherefore neither the first covenant was dedicated without blood. For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, the precepts, the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, we know what these things mean on a spiritual plane, and sprinkled both the book, and the people, something physical to picture that which happens to us spiritually. Saying, This is the blood of the covenant which God has enjoined unto you. Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry. And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; for without the shedding of blood, repentance, there is no remission. It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. All these physical things pictured spiritual things, including the water.

It's easier to see how blood is used but it should be evident about water as well.

Ephesians 5:25 - Husbands, love your wives, it's talking about a sacrificing love, even as Christ also loved the Church, to sacrifice, to give of Himself up, His life; and gave Himself for it; That He might sanctify it and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, *by the truth of God*. It is only through acceptance of the truth can one's life begin to be cleansed, washed, purified, made white and *turned* to the blood. *Why* are you turned to it? *Why* do you look at it? *What* does it mean? It's all about repentance and forgiveness of sin; and you embrace the truth and you're cleansed through that process - that's what it's all about.

Notice Hebrews 10:19 - Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, because it's a matter of repentance, a matter of recognizing He is our Passover. When you repent they're *gone*! You're clean before God, the sins are gone. By a new and a living way, which He has consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say His flesh; And having an High Priest over the House of God; Let us draw near with a true heart; God wants us to worship Him in spirit and in truth – *in the truth, receive the truth, hold onto the truth, believe the truth, live by the truth*! That's what *sanctifies* us, that's what *purifies* us, that's what *cleanses* us; in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. But there are those who will not receive it... it's about them. It's about that which God holds for them in time – some to be shaken soon who will be able to do that, who will come to an end when they will no longer fight and resist the truth because they are going to fulfill 'the times of the Gentiles' until something great happens. And they won't see it until the very end and God's going to make it clear powerfully-powerfully-powerfully.

Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for He is faithful who promised;)

Let's just read it again in conclusion here today, Revelation 11:2. All flows together, all fits together so beautifully, a *powerful* story here about Jerusalem, about what happened to the Temple, about how God looks upon it, how He wants us to see it, how He wants them at one time to finally see themselves and what they've done. Some had to come to acknowledge at a particular point in time they were Laodicea, some will have to come to acknowledge they went much, much farther in resisting God and wouldn't accept that – to the point of fighting against God until the very end, until they had the literal evidence of a resurrection and of the coming of the very one they *believe* they're worshipping.

**Revelation 11:2 - But the court which is without the Temple leave out and do not measure it; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy City shall they tread under foot, you, us, the Church, specifically God's truth, for forty-two months. And I will give unto My two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.** Do you wear some sackcloth? You live this way of life you wear some sackcloth around your family, around people you work with, around people who know what you believe, who know if you believe May 27<sup>th</sup> and they've known this for some time and what you've gone through you have to be in some sackcloth. To understand they don't understand. You take it because you know they don't understand. Do you always like it?

I'll tell you what, I am of the great conviction that sackcloth itches like mad! It's not a comfortable thing but God says to do it; because we have that which they don't and they can't help it. But, it itches; I know it itches. Well, I do like wearing it; it's what we're supposed to do all the time. But that has been magnified in our lives by what we're living. The Church has never had to go through this - in this age during Philadelphia? During Laodicea? We didn't go through this; we didn't go through a time like this where people have experienced sackcloth in this manner. You were to live a life of a humble manner, but to go through what you're going through with how everyone speaks of you and talks about you and all the scattered groups and those who know you in those groups and how they speak of you... let alone the world. And most who are enemies are those who've been put out, who loathe anyway what has happened to them, who will not repent of adultery, of fornication, and many other things in their lives; who would rather have things that are forbidden of God and hate those who told them, "You can't come back because of what you've done unless you repent." And if you repent, what happens in God's Church? It's all gone, it's all forgiven, and we love you. But you can't come back until those things are taken care of.

So, in the meantime some are just filled with venom and they're eaten up... *they're eaten up inside*. They're eaten up with that which is worse than a physical cancer. They have such hate. Sad, what's out there. But I'll tell you what, to receive it it's not something that when you hear about it you jump up and down, "Oh, I'm so glad to get this from you...so glad you feel this way toward me..." No, it hurts; it cuts deep sometimes and *it itches like mad*.

**And I will give to My two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before/in the sight of or with, as it is, God to the earth. And if anyone will hurt, act wickedly, do wrong toward them, fire proceeds out of their mouth, the truth with judgment.** It's already there. I don't do it, we don't do it – God does it. It's in *God's* hands. It's *God's* judgment and *God's* time to bring people to repentance, but that's what's over their heads until they repent, until they're brought to that, until they can come to that.

And I look forward to the time and hope that everyone is able to, but I know that not all will – some have gone too far in fighting against God. **...and fire proceeds out of their mouth and devours/eats up**

**their enemies:** some are eaten up. First time I ever said that... oooo wheee...stirred up a firestorm and attitudes and spirit. **...so when anyone will do wrong toward them, they must in this manner die.** They've destroyed themselves. It's the very thing – that's what it's talking about – it's this very thing that they hurt themselves and they don't understand what they're doing to themselves - not about something physical.

**These have power to shut heaven, that it not rain in the days of their prophecy:** Why? Because the truth is spoken and they're told, and people are told, and posts have been written about a scattered Church and what they must do, and what they must accept, and what is true. It's not liked. And so they'll not have rain in their life, they'll not be nourished. They'll stay in drought. That's what it's about. It's about them; it's about their attitude toward God. We just fulfill a role, we're a part of something, we're sharing in something. It's not about me, it's not about us – we're a part of it – it's about God and His relationship with *all* of His people, people who have received the impregnation of His spirit but are separated from the flow of it for a time, whatever that time is. And God can ignite that again someday depending on what people are brought through, that even if by fire, that we read about last week, 1 Corinthians 3... Be careful how you build, what you build upon; wood-hay-stubble – that will burn up. But some, it says, can be saved even if so by fire.

**...and have power over waters to turn them to blood,** the truth, the power 'Time is Running Out' – all the truths that God has given to us, *all the truths* that God has added to His Church – *power, authority* that God has given in the Church! *Awesome things* to where there is a chasm so great... I think of Lazarus and the Rich Man that we used to use for the world, but now it's between the truth and the Church of God – PKG and *all the rest* that was once a part. A great gulf! It's so great because of the power of these truths.

So again here **...power over waters,** the ability to be cleansed. Until you receive that truth you can't be cleansed – that's the authority, that's the power. You can't be here, you cannot come here, you cannot be a part of this again until you repent, until you're turned to the blood of Jesus Christ again; until you truly repent for your sins.

~~~end