

I've been meaning to read a couple of letters, one in particular here that I meant to even a couple of weeks ago but I thought I'd wait until last week, but with the ministerial meetings going on for whatever reason I just missed them; so I'm going to read this one today. This is about a video that's been sent out to different ones, especially amongst a lot of new people and so forth. I received a copy of it, a couple of them I guess actually of this as well, but I just wanted to read something here that's a matter of wisdom, a matter of caution and a matter of why we tell the ministry to do some of the things they do as well. But anyway, I just want to read this as this person gave it because I thought it was very well done.

Some of you maybe haven't seen it but there are a lot of people who put together different videos out there from our past and so forth, things even about Mr. Armstrong and the like, and that's what this one was about. But I want to read this to you from an individual that had a very sharp and very balanced perspective on this. Individual says:

I received this video from a member in (I'll just say North America – keep everyone guessing). I suspect it's circulating around the Church... (which it has, because I've received it from different areas as well). It's very spot on about knowing that Mr. Armstrong fulfilled the preaching of the gospel into all the world, but that's where it ends (speaking of that video) as the person does not understand what followed and how God has worked since. This person states a lot of truth (in other words, the one who put together that particular video) but there seems to be a big teacheritis spirit to it as well.

And I'll just say that's very sharp, very astute, because that's exactly what happens out here a lot of times. People want to do – using things of Mr. Armstrong especially – to give their own twist or their own interpretation, or to what they're doing, a push to what they're doing. But again here, I want to read the rest of this.

This person obviously seems to have been a part of the scattering and it seems like someone who is off on their own. I enjoyed watching the history of the Church and the footage of Mr. Armstrong visiting world leaders as well as the footage of him telling the Church they weren't ready for Christ's return.

So much of that history when you see some of those things is so inspiring, so good, especially when you understand what he was dealing with, and basically that's what this individual is saying here.

However, because it's (speaking of the video) sorely lacking in so much that has happened since I found it very frustrating to watch. It also bothered me because it kept telling about the sign of Christ's coming being the fulfillment of Matthew 24:14; and the reality is that was not the sign.

Who is going to decide that sign? Let me read **Matthew 24:14 – And the gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness until all nations and then shall the end come.** The reality is people in scattered groups look at that in a different way, and some believe they're still doing that, they

don't believe Mr. Armstrong fulfilled that so they don't even see that the end has come in any fashion or form. But anyway, let me read the rest of this.

Though we know this was indeed fulfilled, knowing what followed in 2 Thessalonians about the apostasy was more accurately the sign to the Church that Christ was now returning.

It's just like the following verse – that's what happened. **Matthew 24:15 - When you therefore shall see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet stand in the holy place**, speaking of the Church, **(whoso reads, let him understand.)** So we came to understand that in time, indeed, being about 2 Thessalonians and that indeed was a sign to God's Church. But people out here don't accept all of that and in this here it's clear that they don't either, the one who put this together.

And the reason I'm reading this is because of what the conclusion is of some of this, of what this individual has to say. Again, a matter of wisdom.

Basically the video also bothers me because it is misleading, indicating that God has not raised up anyone else after Mr. Armstrong; of course we all know better. But I wonder if this video could hurt someone new.

Well, I just didn't know what to think about this whole thing, and especially it being circulated from among newer brethren, so I'm forwarding it to you.

Overall, there is just amazing footage and video of Mr. Armstrong, yet only half the story being told.

And I guess the lesson in part of this, and an admonition in all this is that's the danger. I know of one minister, one evangelist in God's Church who left probably around 1982... no, it was before that, left before that even...and a lot of his sermons, if you listened to them, were right down the line, wham-wham-wham. I remember one sermon in particular that this individual gave. It was true all the way through until the last 5-10 minutes, and the danger is that with so much that's true it's like a fish hook; it's the bait at the end. And by that time you've taken enough of it that you get caught. And that's what happened to a lot of people; people swallow then that last part because they have heard everything that's true, they've been pulled into it because they are listening to it rather than coming to a point of realization, by having proven it to themselves, that what this individual has said at other times is false, or whatever it might be, and therefore not listening to it. The danger was in listening to it and in the last 5 or 10 minutes to get caught. And so again, there's great wisdom in being careful, making sure that everything is true.

The individual who sent this to me goes on to say here...

I continue to be so grateful for all the truth God has given and am truly in awe and just incredibly grateful for how many truths God has given us. Considering if it had only been two truths, as mentioned last Sabbath, has caused me to think and meditate on this all the more and to be so grateful that God has given us so much more than two.

So again here, that is why in sermons and especially to the ministry in some of the lectures and so forth that have been given, that there is a reason why this would never be done, it would never be sent from a minister in the Church to anyone else in the Church. I don't believe there's one person who's been ordained who would consider doing something like this, and there's a reason for that. It's because, first of all, they've been told not to...and that's a matter of government, it's a matter of respecting how God works. And the second is that we recognize the need within the Church to have oneness and unity of spirit, and the ministry has been told over and over again – that's why they do what they do – that everything we need is in one place, everything that God wants us to have access to as far as the truth is concerned, that we would share with each other...which we don't need to send to each other, because it's already there, it's on the Church websites.

We have more than what we need, things of Mr. Armstrong and so forth, perhaps I've sent out a couple of things in the past, some of Mr. Armstrong's videos and so forth that were done well. And so if it comes through the Church to everyone then you can have a kind of a comfort zone in that to realize there's a reason *why* it was sent out to the Church or made available to the Church, perhaps on the personal site as I've done, where I've made certain things available and given reference to it. But everything is on the Church website; things about Mr. Armstrong, things about his writings, things that will help everyone at every stage of their life.

So again here, *we need to be at one* and that's going to work into a Feast sermon later on. It's so important to be of the same mind with God. And the closer we get in things the more we need to do that – and especially think about newer or younger people within the Body, within the Church, and for them to take the same admonitions as those things that are actually given to the ministry. So there are reasons why those things are taught and reasons why they wouldn't do that. Enough said. A matter of wisdom; a matter of protecting others - you don't want to be responsible for hurting someone else. And the reason I mention that, too, because another individual sent it to me who was bothered by it as well a little more deeply because of new individuals that were seeing it and so forth and not understanding some of the things being said there.

With that we'll launch into the sermon. We are continuing with the sermon series entitled *Between the Two Evenings* with this being *Part 5* today. I don't believe I stated what was given in the first three parts of this series; I think last Sabbath I skipped over that as I just jumped right into the sermon since we had all the ministers in here for the meetings, just launched right into the sermon and wanted to get as far into it as I could last Sabbath. But it needs to be stated again, that which was stated in the first three parts as a very important part of the context of this series, and that is this, what was said:

“Anticipating May 27th was a most incredible experience for God's Church to live. May 27th has revealed what is inside of you. It was, is, and will continue to be a spiritual mirror in your life.”

And we may not fully grasp that yet but you're going to grasp it more as we go forward, even through the Feast of Tabernacles this year, if we're able to keep it together, and if we're not you'll still have the opportunity, hopefully, to hear those sermons.

And it was further stated that:

“This 'day of the Lord' that's 'between the two evenings' will be the most meaningful period of time in your life and it will *define* your life.”

And with that I want to read another letter I was going to read last week, because this letter captures the purpose and so much of the thrust of what this series is all about. This individual says:

We have been strengthened and rejuvenated with the sermons lately; really feel personally more responsible and accountable to everything that God has wanted us to uphold all along but now it's empowering. God is right that there was much coasting in this last year, waiting out the time for Him to *solve all our problems, personal challenges*, and even struggles of living in this sinful world that were just *easier to put off* until He took away the environment which caused them.

It's still not fun living in Satan's world but since the 27th the purpose has been greatly amplified and the development has been more personal. I find myself noticing "I don't want to be defined or set as what I just did, thought, and said." I feel like whatever it is that I stand for in this day will be who I will *become* for much of the rest of my life – both with the oneness in truths and doctrines as well as my character. Sobering enough to take seriously this huge opportunity to face many of those personal flaws and offenses that get in the way in every relationship and hold self and others in bondage.

Right to the point. Very much what this series is all about and what we're to glean from it, and so I wanted to read that at this point here in the sermon.

So as we continue now today with this series we're not going to do any review of what we covered last Sabbath except to say that we had just covered the story of when the Israelites had lusted after meat and so much so that they were ready to return into Egypt, and God sent the quail, and they were to eat so much of it, God said, that for a whole month He'd give them enough for that whole period of time and God told them that it would begin to be even repulsive to them by the end of that period of time.

After I read this I thought, "Oh, it couldn't be that much!" You write something down and you think, "Did I type in some wrong letter or number or something?" I mentioned last Sabbath the quail were so plentiful that it said in scripture there that no one gathered less than 10 homers, and I said that was around 50 bushels. Well, if you do quite a bit of study on some of this as far as the internet is concerned and some of the biblical helps that are out there, and there's nothing that's absolutely in agreement in all these things, but the one that is most consistent and the one that seems to be used the most often is 62 bushels.

That is awesome! ...to think there were that many quail that the least – and we don't know if that means that was accountable for every person, or does that mean the head of the home? I don't know. We don't know that, but that's still a lot any way you look at it.

After addressing this account we went on to Psalm 78, that's where we quit last Sabbath, and this recounts this event and adds a little more to the story – that's why we're going through Psalm 78, because it adds a little bit more to this same story I just mentioned here. We were about half way through Psalm 78, we were in the midst of the story of God bringing them out of Egypt and leading up to the story here of the quail. So let's pick it up again just reading those last couple of verses again where we left off last week.

Psalm 78:26 - He caused an east wind to blow in the heaven: and by His power He brought in the south wind. He rained flesh also upon them as dust, and feathered fowls like as the sand of the sea:

Verse 28 - And He let it fall in the midst of the camp, all around their dwelling places.

Verse 29 - So they ate and they were filled: for He gave them their own desire; Lessons from that. God doesn't prevent us from doing foolish things. God doesn't prevent us from making mistakes. God doesn't prevent us from sinning. He lets us do those things. He lets us do what we desire and then we suffer for it if it's against what He gave to us. That can be taken away.

Verse 30 - They were no longer separated from their lust, but while their meat was yet in their mouths the wrath of God came upon them and slew the fattest of them, so again, we read that last week, in other words, those who gorged themselves the most, **and struck down of the chosen of Israel.**

Verse 32 – Even after all this they still sinned and didn't believe: You know, it's amazing; I love this example that hits us over and over and over again, because we understand they didn't have God's spirit, they didn't have the ability to repent like we do and change and grow and continue to grow in God's spirit, in the sense of having the impregnation of God in us and that mind in us, working in us. Through repentance we can change and we grow and we learn from our mistakes and there are lessons in that manner and are able to continue to go forward in a different way than what they did. But what is repeated, that happened to them, shows the physical weakness that we have so often in our lives as well, and that's a part of the story flow, is that for them over and over again, how many times did God perform awesome things? And you think of how great some of that was!

We had some discussions here last Sabbath about a couple of places in that Red Sea area that are the most logical that they could have crossed, that a lot of research has gone into some of those things and people have scoured the depths of some of those regions in through there - there have been artifacts found of Egypt and so forth - but no matter what happened, to consider how awesome it was that God separated the Red Sea and they went across on dry ground, and then to see the Egyptians come in there and them to be destroyed, when they were in fear of their lives because they thought they were going to all be destroyed by the Egyptians. They feared the Egyptians! And you think that would be so momentous of an event physically in your life, of your witnessing something like that, just being a physical carnal people without God's spirit, that that would be so impressed upon your mind that you would have no doubts of the power of God and the might of God to deliver you, that God is there on your side delivering you from the Egyptians and saying He is leading you to a promised land that He promised to your ancestors in times past, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And yet over and over again it says they didn't believe! They didn't believe. He performed miracle after miracle before them – here the quail came in like this, and such an incredible... they'd never witnessed anything, there had never been anything heard of like that before nor since...and yet God did it and they still didn't believe.

So all these things that happened again and again and again – and I can't help but equate that with lessons we have to learn, that we have been learning as a whole in the Body, of things we have gone through, of truths that God has given to us, and then we're tried. Do we *believe* it? God tries us! He is going to try us until we are in total and absolute unity and agreement with all 57 truths, with all of our being. And sometimes if there's anything that is lacking there in us there are things that happen to bring something to the surface we haven't yet been able to address, or we haven't yet seen in ourselves, and it's because we address those things, like May 26/27th, because of that period of time, we're tried – what do we believe?

Are we *convicted* by this time that no matter what happens God is going to continue to lead us, or do we falter and have doubts because of things that happen around us and begin to judge accordingly out of

fear and so forth. Or do we have a bold confidence that God has led us out of Egypt, to lead us into a promised land, and He's not going to quit until it's accomplished – and we have confidence and boldness in that, to know where He is, to know how He works in our life.

So those are the kinds of lessons we're to learn from these things because, again, it brought out over and over again they didn't believe.

Verse 32 – Even after all this they still sinned and didn't believed for, or in other words, as a result of His wondrous works...and for us, for His miraculous truths. That's why I mentioned what I did about those two truths – what if we only had two? God knows what we need and He feeds us and He takes care of us and He nurtures us.

Verse 33 - Therefore their days were consume in vanity, and their years in trouble. When He slew, in other words, **brought death upon them,** it means what it says, **then they sought after Him:** What an incredible thing about human life, about human beings, that sometimes we have to get to that point and those things happen around us before we'll be sobered. I think of this world and what this world has to come to before it will really repent. It's so frustrating watching it sometimes. Last week we see a day of bad news about unemployment and yet others take hope in another part of that, things coming out of Europe, and what happens? The stock market goes up?! It's insane, absolutely insane, the pride and the haughtiness of what's taking place out there. And before people will repent a lot has to be taken away – a lot!

And so it says, **He slew them and brought death upon them then they sought after Him and they returned and enquired early,** in other words, would seek early once these things happened, **seek early after God. And then would remember that God was their Rock:** What does it take sometimes to help us to remember, to help us get back on track, to help us to get jarred enough that we don't have to keep going through various things - in other words, that we are confident and bold about what we're doing and where we are and we go forward. And so those lessons are good for us but the repentance and the making sure that we're more solid than ever before is what counts, that we don't do and make any kind of mistakes that were repeated, or that were done last year – that we don't repeat any of those things – not letting down, not letting up, not letting Laodicea's spirit, that even though we're past that era of time is still a tremendous power in the human mind for those in God's Church, to pull away, to pull in a particular direction, to let down, to coast.

And then would remember that God was their Rock; and the High God, their Redeemer. Nevertheless they did flatter, and the word in Hebrew means, **to deceive Him with their mouth,** we can say one thing and something else be deep inside of us and we not even know it until God brings it to the surface and then we have to face it. **...and they lied to Him with their tongues. For their heart was not right with Him;** and so that's just the carnal human mind. That's our battle! We have to acknowledge those things, what our human battle is like – like Paul talked about, there's this human part of us, and so depending on where we are in our growth, whether we're brand new, a week old, a month old, a year old, two years old, three years old, thirty years old, or whatever, we're all in different places here as far as the Body is concerned. But to understand this about our human nature is something that it is expedient that we do, it's wise that we do, it's needful that we do so that we understand what the battle is. If we don't know what the battle is then it can get the best of us.

For their heart was not right with Him; neither were they steadfast, meaning to stand fast, to stand firm. That's why we had one of the sermons we did earlier on here, that we're to stand fast. God wants

us to *know* in our own heart and being that we're standing fast, we're standing firm in this way – for Him to make us stand in the sense of the rest of this world around us... **to be steadfast in His covenant.**

But He, being full of compassion, a word that means 'merciful', **filled with mercy**. The longer we're in God's Church, the more we go through in life, the more we mature, the more we come to understand about God's mercy and the more we're able to be merciful to others. If we haven't come to that point where we're merciful to others as a part of judgment, first and foremost at the forefront of our mind and our being, then we still have to go through more to learn about God's mercy, there's more that we have to grasp in our own lives, how merciful... When you *know* how merciful God is to you that is powerful in helping you to be merciful to others, because how could you live anything else...otherwise to be hypocritical, that's what it comes down to.

So He, being full of compassion/full of mercy forgave their iniquity, and did not destroy them. Yes, there were many times He turned His anger away and did not stir up all of His wrath. For He remembered that they were but flesh; a wind that passes away and does not come again. Now, for us in the Church, as a matter of wisdom, we know this about God and how He sees us but we can't misuse that either. We can't say, "Well, He knows what I'm like and therefore..." somehow to justify error. No, we have to repent of the error and strive with all of our being to change.

How often did they provoke Him in the wilderness and grieve Him in the desert! Yes, they turned back, in other words, back away from God is what it means here, backed away from God **and tempted/tested God, and limited the Holy One of Israel.** It says so much; to limit God, to come up to the 26th and to limit God? That's a mistake. We Go Forward. God brought us all this distance He'll not forsake us. We *know* where He is! And so again, lessons to be learned or to be strengthened in.

Verse 42 - They didn't remember His hand, meaning the power that He revealed to them. Sometimes we forget. That's why so often we're told, go back, look at the 57, be grounded in them, start at the beginning if you have to but be reminded of all that God has given you – the power. That's why I marvel at what it said there, when we went through Revelation not too long ago and talking about the witnesses and so forth and talking about that power, and that power coming out over and over again through Revelation and other places, it's the truth we have. That's the power God's given to us - truly is!

They didn't remember His hand, in other words, the power that He revealed to them, **nor the day when He delivered them from the enemy**, I think about us, this 'day', **and how He had worked His signs in Egypt, and wonders in the field of Zoan:** A word that means 'a place of departure'. How often for us do we need to remember, do we need to go back and remember where we departed, where God called us and what we departed from, the change that took place, how God worked with us when He revealed the truth to us, what we can see because He just gave it to us and what we tried to share with others that they couldn't see and the lessons we learn from all that, that when God calls you and gives it to you then you have choices to make and you can't give it to anyone else, it's a personal decision. And so we remember the place of our departure. That's why this is mentioned so many times talking about Egypt, and you find this expression here about the 'fields of Zoan' over and over again. To remember the place of your departure; how, when, and where God called us when we departed from this world and began our journey...the lessons and the gratitude and all that goes with that.

Let's go back to the story flow here in Numbers of God bringing the children of Israel out of Egypt and working with them in the region of Sinai for nearly a year, giving His law, giving His law to Moses, giving

things about the Levitical system, all the sacrificial system, all the things that were given to them during that period of time to be able to help them so that they could be grounded in a way of life that would be given to them through time – because they couldn't drink it all in right then – and leading them into the promised land. So about a year there before proceeding forward to the promised land. And after they had murmured before God and He gave them such abundance of the quail to feed that we just read about concerning their lusts and the attitude of mind that went with it, because they were ready to go back to Egypt, ready to give themselves a captain, choose themselves a captain, a leader to send them back.

We come to **Numbers 12:1** – Powerful, powerful lessons, one after another, wham-wham-wham. Things that I've seen in the Church, different lessons here that you can take, and this journey, and see things that happened in Worldwide and on into Laodicea, things we experience as we grow in God's way of life. **And Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses**, amazing – family... in the government here that God was using and they began to find some fault. Now, there's more to the story here that isn't here, that isn't given here, but there's more to the story – there always is – in things that happen like this. There's something going on that causes this kind of response that would *lead* to an individual being able to do something like this.

So sometimes, even training we give in the ministry to help people to be able to look at various things and to realize when something happens so often it didn't just happen there, depending on what it is, there is something that led up to it. And so often that's missing in some of the story...and there's some missing from this story here. How on earth could they come to a point that they could speak against Moses? But they were justified... *they* were justified in their minds for what they did...but there's more to the story of why they would feel inclined to do this in the first place.

But notice what it says; **They spoke again Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he married: for he had married an Ethiopian woman.** Now, this scripture has been *abused mightily* by religious groups; and in our history it's been abused. It's like coming out of the trinity; you don't come out of everything overnight. You don't come out of the past overnight – it takes time! And so we have a religious world that Mr. Armstrong was being drawn out of, and we didn't make it out of everything and we're still not out of everything yet. There are still things that we have to come out of that we're still held in captivity to, that we don't even know about yet, however refined it might be, because we've come a long way through time in what God has given because of all the truths that God has given, and getting rid of the ideas and the thoughts and the teachings of Egypt and a false religious system that engulfs this world.

But these kinds of things have happened to us as well. We came part way out of the trinity but not all the way because it was to be at another time, in God's time. And so here a person of different skin colour, they found fault with that, an Ethiopian woman that Moses... and I want you to notice something here from the very beginning: Did God ever once show agreement with Aaron and Miriam, that Moses was wrong in what he did? You can't find it because there was no wrong in what he did.

And they said, Has the Eternal spoken only by/through Moses? So this is what it led to; this is an attitude of mind, of judgment, of harsh judgment of something that was taking place here...and again, more to the story. And the reason I mention that is because of what it says here – because this has been used as a scripture to, by some in the world, to show that there are certain things as far as relationships that shouldn't be. That is so sick! To me that is so repulsive, it truly is, of things we have gone through and hadn't fully made it out of...but it's a part of life and things that people have to address.

It goes on to say...so this is what it led to, there's more to the story here and this is more the crux of the matter. There is a human tendency to raise oneself up in importance and to want more. That's why when you go back and look at the history of the Church, that's why I mention sometimes of things I do going back to the late 70's and why Mr. Armstrong had to bring in Mr. Leroy Neff to be the treasurer of the Church. I didn't know fully at the time why. I understand now because of what we've gone through and the history of things that have come out since that time about individuals and what they were doing and what they were teaching, knowing full well even by that time there were some who were fully cut off from God, who were evangelists. And the reason was very clear – Mr. Armstrong couldn't entrust that job to anyone else. He had to bring in an outsider and train him and work with him. That's how Mr. Radar grew in Mr. Armstrong relying upon him as he did. Mistake? Well, that's what he had to do, that's what he felt he had to do, and he was there for a purpose, for a time, and there are lessons to be learned from some of those things that happened later on.

But the *problem* was people struggling for power – even with God's spirit! That is an awesome thing to understand, what can happen to us as human beings, what we can do! It is the *history* of our Church; it is a *history* of what we went through! Now, things during the times of the early apostles didn't happen in the same manner as they do now because of travel being so difficult and regions divided up the way they were – just like Paul may be able to stay in an area six months and then travel to another area for a period of time. And then we come to a modern world with fast communication – but the Church grew! It became so great, for God's Church, because there's never been a time that God's Church has been very great in numbers; it's always been a little flock – even was during then in comparison to what the world population was and what other people would call as churches into the millions. And here we were into the tens of thousands – and that was great as far as size for God's Church.

But there are some awesome lessons to be learned through all this and probably some more that will come out through the Feast that we can grow in and understand a little bit more deeply. But I have to stay away from some of those things.... by the way, I'm working on Feast sermons so please be praying about that because to the degree you pray and what you pray about is to the degree you're going to be fed – what you're able to receive. That's how it works.

Anyway, looking at our history and some of those things that took place, we can learn from that, we can learn what it's like. We can learn what God expects of us, of how we are to be, of what should have been. A lot of my training was looking at, seeing various things that God gave and God showing this isn't the way it's supposed to be done, it's supposed to be done differently, it's a misuse of power, it's maybe a lust for power, because that's the tendency of the human mind. And those are the things that God works with us in to understand the importance of humility, of understanding the importance of fighting against pride and not letting that get in the way and doing the best we can with where God places us, to do what we can within that realm, because that's what counts. Nothing else matters, because that's where God is working then. In other places He doesn't work. He didn't work within all that friction and all that fighting and infighting that was going on and Mr. Armstrong talking about how "They're like vultures just waiting for me to die." I remember that! Do you remember hearing... how many in here heard that? ...him ever mentioning that? Almost everyone who has been a part of the past, okay? I think everyone who is part of the past heard Him make those comments, "They're like vultures waiting for me to die." They want power! They want to take over! What a horrible position... I can't even comprehend that one. Going back to the late 40's, the very men he taught first, that started Ambassador College - the very men, when you get into the 50's, the very men that began to serve in the Church, and to see where it went, what happened because it grew so large. Powerful lesson there,

powerful, powerful lesson that I'm going to reserve for the Feast that we've already mentioned in times past. It's hard to stay out of some of this.

But this is an awesome story – attitudes of mind that we have to see, that are a part of human nature. And so all these things came out with the children of Israel, and now we go to another phase of human nature – government. Government! Of the most important thing that God wants us to grasp is *how He works*. I can hear Mr. Armstrong talk about it. Nearly every Feast when I heard him speak he would start out talking about Satan. *Every Feast* talking about government – because it's something God wants us to grasp – what went wrong from the very beginning. What has been man's struggle ever since? All through time! And it's a matter of comprehending *how God works*, and the order of things, and the importance of being *at one*. And once we're all at one, once we have the mind of God, once we all have that agape fully within us and we are spirit, you know that won't even be an issue anymore? It's just the way everything works. It's just the way it functions.

But for us we have to look at it in terms of a word, government, because we're undisciplined. We have to learn that discipline. It's a matter of growing in character and becoming more at one with God so that we can understand more the mind of God and why it's wrong to go in a different direction and why it's important to go in His direction, because it's through those choices that this mind is transformed! That's how we get there! We have to go through this and make choices so that our mind becomes different than what it is. And that's what these lessons are about over and over again that God blesses us to live within the Church, and we can do it through repentance, and we have God's spirit, and a mind can be transformed. This is *awesome* – it truly is - to understand.

And so Miriam and Aaron at the very top here found fault with Moses. They had to find something that they could say was wrong to justify what they really wanted. That's the story. Now, what all happened, I don't know, but this is the crux of it all. There is something they wanted more of and so they had to find something else in order to raise themselves up to that level to be able to do that, but they had to have something to justify it. It's like what happens *every time* anyone ever leaves the Church, there has to be a justification of something they found wrong with, first of all me. That's how it works! That's how it works! ...or something that I've taught, and that's finding fault with me because God's not in the picture. They have convinced themselves that God's not in that...and that's what happens, that's been the history of God's Church! They have to find some doctrine, but it didn't happen then.

I think of one person that was from this region who left in 2005 over the matter of God eternally existing, being the only one true Eternal God and His Son who had a beginning and *didn't* eternally exist...but there were things going on in their life before that – but this was their reason, they said, for leaving. But there were spiritual things going on before that. And that's what happens.

And this is what happened here in part – things going on that they desired, that they wanted, so they had to find something wrong to find fault with. And you know what happens when this takes place? They cause dissention, they start talking about it. I can guarantee you; this here was not a matter of something that just was spoken once. It started being spoken of, being stated... But God dealt with it quickly nevertheless, He didn't let it go very far.

And they said, Has the Eternal indeed spoken only by/through Moses? Hasn't He also spoken by/through us? And the Eternal heard it. He hears everything anyway - but a unique way of this being written for us to learn from. **The Eternal heard it.** It says, **(Now the man Moses was very meek,** which means he was of a humble spirit, not haughty and lifted up about who he was. It just was a matter of

fact, it was a matter of life, it was a matter of what God did. It says... **above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.**) That's why God was using him.

God moulded and fashioned him. *God* moulded and fashioned him into this. Moses didn't just grow up with this. God moulded and fashioned this in him, even as a youngster in Egypt and the things he experienced later on in Egypt, and what he did that separated him from Egypt, and then while he lived in the forty years that followed until God sent him back into Egypt. So God moulded all these things in him for this job. Isn't that an awesome thing to understand? *God moulded Moses for this job*, for these things to be written. That's why I marvel when I go through stories like this and I think of the power of Almighty God.

The more we come to understand the power of God... Think about being an author – big deal, somebody writes something, writes a book or writes articles or whatever it might be. God wrote a book and He brought it to pass, He's bringing it to pass! He's writing everything that's in it. He writes it and then He causes it to come to pass. He moulds and fashions life! He moulds and fashions nations! He moulds and fashions everything! And *we can't*... we don't get that! Now, we're starting to see more and more of that as we go along, as we grow and it becomes awe inspiring the more God gives us to see. It is *awesome* to see how God moulds and fashions life. In time you will look back and you'll look at your life and you'll understand more of what God did to mould and fashion you, to take you where He was taking you from the very beginning...because God is the master builder. He is the one constructing it all. He built and constructed the universe and our lives and the lives of His Family. He is building, but not like we do as human beings where people come together and a child is born and life just happens and goes on. With God, He designs every bit of it all along the way! Awesome! *Awesome!* We can appreciate it but we don't comprehend it fully by any measure.

So He speaks of Moses this way, and in **verse 4** it says, **And right afterwards the Eternal spoke unto Moses, and to Aaron, and to Miriam, saying, The three of you are to come forth to the tabernacle of the congregation. And the three went forth. And the Eternal came down in the pillar of the cloud and stood in the door of the tabernacle and called for Aaron and Miriam: and both came forth. And He said, Hear now My words: If there is a prophet among you, I the Eternal will make Myself known unto him in a vision, in other words, as by seeing or sight in or by revelation, and will speak to him in a dream.** Now this is, evidently to this point in time, how God worked with individuals. He's worked in different...as we read in Hebrews He's worked with different ones through different ways through time. And so in this manner at this time God says, "If I do this, this is how I'm going to work with you/them."

My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all My house. With him I will speak mouth to mouth, awesome! ...even apparently, as it says here, or this means here – doesn't mean anything in English too much, but it means 'in plain sight' or 'in clear sight'. In other words in what is clearly seen or revealed; mouth to mouth – words spoken outwardly. ...**and not in dark speeches; not in riddle**, in other words, as the word means here, **not in clouded words, not in difficult to understand things** that sometimes dreams can be, of different things that even... something that God gave unto Daniel in being able to interpret dreams and such. He was noted for that; God gave him the ability to interpret, because what is it if there is something there that comes from, or that God's in it and no one knows what it means.

It says, **and the similitude/likeness of the Eternal shall he behold:** and it goes on to say, **Therefore why were you not afraid to speak against My servant Moses?** So He made it very clear, "...with him I've been speaking face to face." Word to word. In other words, it's not something that it's put in the mind or revealed in that fashion through a dream or something of that nature. It is going to be something

that is going to be direct – starting with the bush. That’s where it started. He heard the words. He heard something spoken to him. God had a conversation with him. And on and on it’s gone with Moses – God spoke to him in this manner. Very unique in that respect as far as an individual with whom God worked.

So again, God had spoken through them but not in the manner through which He had spoken to Moses. So He was working with Miriam and Aaron but not like He did with Moses and that’s what He’s making really clear. So it’s like, “Aren’t you fearful then, if you know that I am working with him in this manner and working with you in another? Do you not clearly see the one whom I’ve given to work through, to lead you?” And that’s what He’s telling them here. And so they were fully aware of that.

I want to throw in another verse here before we continue on just to show you a change through time that took place, because God worked in many different ways with His people through time and this is something that is revealed through Paul later on, that I thought this would be a good place to mention it. **Ephesians 3:1 - For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ, bondservant, in other words; it’s his desire, willingly so, for you Gentiles, If you have heard of the dispensation, and this word here meaning ‘the stewardship’, ‘the administration’ of the grace of God which has been given to me toward you: In other words, there is that which has been given to me as a matter of stewardship and administration toward you, toward your benefit for this purpose. How that by revelation He made known unto me the mystery;** and so he’s showing here, here is something that God has given through revelation.

It goes on to say, **(as I wrote before in few words, Whereby, when you read you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)** so he spoke often here about this mystery and how we’re able to understand it and in Corinthians he talks this way and how that these are things that God gives to us. It’s like when you’re called; there is that which is put in your mind that you just know! It’s not because we’re a genius or smart or intellectual or of great education or great with a Strong’s Concordance (that can be a detriment) and all the other things. It’s a matter that God just puts it in your mind and that’s why you know it. And then when you read something that He’s revealing to you it just comes alive in scripture, or when you hear it in a sermon, when the lights are there and you see everything – that’s God giving it! He’s speaking to us through that power, the power of His spirit. And this is a part of what it talks about when it talks about ‘the mystery of Christ’, that there are those... it’s a mystery to the world, they can’t understand it, but you do because it’s given spiritually. The carnal mind can’t receive it because it’s given through the spirit.

Whereby, when you read you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ, in other words, that which has been given to me *you* can see, *you* can understand in the same manner. **Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets by the spirit;** and so again here, God has worked in different ways and this is showing a very powerful way in which God has worked with the Church and continues to do so. But things have been different through time and that’s a part of what God was telling Aaron and Miriam here and addressing some of this in how He’s working with Moses.

Going back here then and continuing on: **Numbers 12:9 - And the anger of the Eternal was kindled/heated against them; and He departed. And the cloud departed from off the tabernacle; and, behold, Miriam became leprous as snow: and Aaron looked upon Miriam and behold she was leprous.** So a very powerful lesson that God was teaching here right in the very beginning with Israel and with the Israelites, of something that was going to be very well known in the camp of Israel from that day

forward, as to how God was working with Moses and a difference here with Aaron and Miriam, and they were to learn from this – which they didn't do well, speaking of the Israelites.

And Aaron said unto Moses, Please, my lord, I ask you not to hold this sin against us which we have so foolishly done/committed and wherein we have sinned. So he recognized then, acknowledged that there was sin involved here, that they had sinned in the things they were saying and the things they were thinking and the things they were doing.

And Moses cried unto the Eternal, saying, I beseech of you to heal her now. And the Eternal said to Moses, If her father had spit in her face wouldn't she be ashamed/in disgrace seven days? Unclean. Because this had been given already as far as law was concerned, as far as uncleanness and so forth. And so He saying, "Wouldn't that be at least for seven days?" So **Let her be shut out from the camp for seven days, and after that let her be received back.** To learn from. Some can say, "That's awfully harsh, that's awfully hard." No, it isn't. God could have taken their lives and been righteous in doing so.

You know, when God does things it's always righteous and it's always done out of agape, a kind of love that we don't even come close to. It takes a lifetime to grow in and then we still aren't where we need to be. Sometimes it's so difficult to understand how God works with time, with people. I think of death and the cycle of death that regulate our lives so much and our thinking as human beings. But God doesn't work that way because God's beyond that. Time, and what He sees in His Family, what He sees for the Great White Throne – love, agape. What He sees for the Millennium. But for us as human beings sometimes we look upon it and think it's so unfair...it's so unfair, so unfair that so and so is taken from me, or taken 'early', or whatever it is we do as human beings. It's just the way we are sometimes and if we're not careful sometimes we judge God in the process, but it's a plan and a purpose that God's working out in our lives, in the lives of people in this world and so forth.

Verse 15 - And Miriam was shut out from the camp for seven days: and the people did not journey until Miriam was brought back. They knew why they weren't journeying. This went around quickly, it doesn't take long when people are camped like this for word to spread fast through the leaders and then throughout the system they had there.

Verse 16 - And afterward the people moved from Hazeroth, and pitched in the wilderness of Paran. I think of this example here and I hear Mr. Armstrong using that example. He's gone through and given so many things, shown so many examples through times about that which always started with Satan. To grasp and understand pride and humility, the difference, and the difference between seeking to be at one with God and doing it His way and knowing that everything else causes hurt, pain, and suffering - everything else does – only God's way is the way for life to be lived.

Going on here in **Numbers 13:1 - And the Eternal spoke unto Moses, saying, Send men that they may search the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel: out of every tribe of their fathers you shall send a man, and every one is to be a ruler among them. And Moses, by the commandment of the Eternal, sent them from the wilderness of Paran of all the men who were heads of the children of Israel.** So here, leading man of each of the tribes was chosen to spy out the land. Two of the names are known well by most people. We don't remember the rest of them but we remember two names – Caleb and Joshua. Caleb was of Judah, Joshua of Ephraim, and they're known.

And I think in the story here there was no one sent out from Levi. **Verse 16 – These are the names of the men whom Moses sent out to spy out the land... And Moses called Oshea,** it's like Hosea; it means

‘salvation’. It’s the word for salvation, but this is Joshua. So there are different names you find here at times and then they’re all brought together. It says, **the son of Nun**, and so it says here what he called him; he called him **Jehoshua**, which means ‘Yahweh is salvation’.

And Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan, and he said to them, it’s because of a job that Joshua was to have, a name that Joshua was to carry because of a job that God had for him in the future. And again, Moses moved and inspired to do so here. And so **Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan, and he said to them, get you up from this way southward and go up into the mountain: And see the land, of what sort it is; and of the people who dwell in it, whether they are strong or weak, few or many;** So it was to scout out the land and see what it’s like, see what they’re going into and come back and report on that, see what kind of a land God is taking us to.

And so if you see on most maps here, it wasn’t the way they actually went in across the Jordan river, but they came in below and went up into that region of what became known later on as Judah, in the southern regions of Judah. And so they travelled up through that direction there far to the west side of the Dead Sea area, going up into that area.

Verse 19 - And what the land is like that they dwell in, whether it be good or bad; and what cities are like, that they dwell in, whether in tents or in strong holds; And whether the land is fat, a word meaning ‘rich and plentiful’ **or lean**, ‘meaning sparse or poor’, **whether there are trees**, in other words a word used here that has to do more for wood, for timber, for lumber, in it or not. **And be of good courage, and bring of the fruit of the land.** And so again here, this admonition that’s given over and over that God gives to us, about being of good courage. What is that in context? God’s giving it to us! It’s from God! We’re to be of good courage, with that always in our mind that this is coming from God. Be of good courage, God is going to give us abundance, God is leading us to.... anyway, all these things that are a part of what we go through in our life.

And be of good courage, and bring of the fruit of the land. Now the time, it says, **was the time of the first ripe grapes.**

And on down here in **verse 23 - And they came to the brook of Eshcol**, which the word means ‘a cluster of grapes’ **and cut down from there a branch with one cluster of grapes, and they carried it between two of them, upon a staff; and they brought of the pomegranates, and of the figs.** So sometimes even in Israel you’ll see in shops, or whatever, statues of two people and the staff going across and this big cluster of grapes in the middle because it’s depicting this story here of the spies going into this land here that God later gave to Israel, to Judah, in that area of Judah, but to all of Israel.

Verse 24 - The place was called the brook Eshcol, because of the cluster of grapes which the children of Israel cut down from there. And they returned from searching out the land after forty days.

Sometimes it’s difficult for us to grasp and comprehend that everything that’s here, God wrote the book and God moulded and fashioned the events. God moulded and fashioned their lives. They weren’t to come back in 38 days; they weren’t to come back in 42 days. God worked it out to where they went there and came back in *exactly* 40 days because it was already a plan in motion. There was a plan and a purpose. God knew what they were going to do as a carnal, physical people. It’s like Adam and Eve - and I mention this often because it’s the way we sometimes think in early stages of our life and without understanding more of the plan of God - and I remember sitting in class in Ambassador one time and different ones discussing some of this and thinking, talking about Adam and Eve and it was like when they finally sinned it was like God hit His forehead, “*Now what am I going to do? What am I going to do,*

they've *sinned!*" Like this was a surprise to God, that something He made physical for a purpose, to be made physical for a reason, for the very fact they *could* sin, for the very fact that they were of a nature drawn to it in the first place, so that we can learn the things we need to learn in this flesh so that this transformation of the mind can take place to take us from this into God's Family, to make us different from the angelic beings. Because when you're spirit, like we've talked about at the Feast, when you're a spirit being and you're composed of spirit and your mind is fully spirit, when you think differently from what God has given you to think there is no going back. You can't. Its spirit – it's set.

With human beings our minds can change! God made us this way for a reason, to have a carnal human physical mind with a spirit essence in it that gives us the ability to think and reason. That's a *marvel*, an awesome thing to understand! And then the ability to impregnate it with His holy spirit to be able to communicate with that mind then when we're baptized, when we have hands laid upon us, when we're impregnated with God's spirit. That's incredible! And then the mind can be moulded and fashioned and changed so that it can become something *permanent* through a process that God takes it through so He can one day say, "Now I *know* you...Now I can give you the rest, the body, and the mind, the being, and the power to go with it!" *Awesome* to understand that, what God is doing and how He's doing it.

And so again here, they returned after the 40 days, **And they went and came to Moses, and to Aaron,** God new the exact... He not only picked the time but He had it set at a time... If you go back to Leviticus 23 and read the story, God told them that when you come into the land... it has to do with the timing, very specifically here, about when they actually came into the promised land. It had to do with the timing that God would stop the manna and when they would actually go in and be able to do the things that they were going to... and an ability to count the timing, of how to know when, how to count Pentecost. All that's contained when they crossed the Jordan River, when they came into the promised land, when they finally came there. And so God not only had all these things planned like this but even the specific timing of the day and the week and the month that was going on, the days of the week that had to be *exactly* that way when they came into the promised land to fulfill what He commanded them in Leviticus 23. *Awesome!*

And they went and came to Moses and to Aaron and to all the congregation of the children of Israel unto the wilderness of Paran, to Kadesh; and brought back word unto them, and unto all the congregation, and showed them the fruit of the land. So it spread like wildfire. These things started going through because everybody is anxious. They know where they are, they've been gone for 40 days. What happened the last time when somebody was gone for 40 days?

Verse 27 - And they told him, Moses, saying, We went into the land where you sent us, and indeed it flows with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it. Nevertheless, in other words, **However,** in other words, **BUT,** that big word sometimes. Two big words in life sometimes, 'but' and 'if'. And this is basically the one they were using. **But the people who dwell there are strong in the land, and the cities are walled,** now, that's not wrong to mention those things, but it's the story that went with it, that some of them went off in a different tangent and began to add to it and it began to be their focus and God was not in the picture. **...and the cities are walled/fenced/fortified and very great: and moreover we saw the children of Anak there.** Okay...why did they mention that one? Giants! You can just hear it in the group, "The *giants!*" So it's how they presented it.

You know, you can tell a story, like we did in the beginning here, and do things God's way with a proper focus, with God always at the forefront, with this 'be courageous' attitude. In other words, God is in the picture and when God's taken out of the picture and you look at it physically then all we see are giants.

That's the way we are as human beings, we see *giants*! And this is what they did – not everyone – but most of them did because God wasn't in the picture for them. They didn't go into the land with that attitude of mind, of being courageous. In other words, the very reason they would be that way is because of understanding, is because of a confidence and a boldness here that they had that God has brought them this far, "He's done all these things for us. He's going to give us this land and we're going to go there, and it's a great land to have because it has great cities already there. God's going to give them to us!! The works already done!" Is that how they looked at it? No, they looked at it in a different way. "That's something we can't do. It's something we can't have. It's something that's *greater* than us. It's something that's going to conquer us!" That was the attitude of mind that went with it – God wasn't in the picture anymore.

Incredible, the human mind and how we sometimes think and why we begin to panic...why we can sometimes begin to panic because things happening around us become so physical and our focus is so physical and God starts leaving the mind and how we're thinking. *Incredible!* Two different ways of thinking here.

So some things can be very, very true – most of it can be very true, can't it? But its how you look at it that makes all the difference, how it's twisted a little bit here and a little bit there to actually say something different. That's where the danger is. Like that video thing I read about earlier. A little bit can hurt people; a little bit of twisting, just a different way, something added to it at the end to make it different, to give a different message. And that's what they were doing. They were coming back and they started... it wasn't that these things were not right, it's how they twisted it, it's how they misused it, it's what their focus was, and *God wasn't a part of it*. God must always be a matter of our focus. In other words, where God is leading us and what it's all about and what we're doing and having confidence that God has brought us here and He's going to continue leading us - all those things that are a part of our thinking.

And so it went on here, **verse 29, The Amalekites dwell in the land of the south: and the Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites, dwell in the mountains: and the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and by the coast of Jordan.** Now their focus... they already knew about these things. They knew about different peoples that were up there, and so now they just keep adding to this and how, in essence, part of the story here, the great peoples that are there. In other words, that's the story they're coming back with.

And it says, **And Caleb**, Caleb jumped in here and he **silenced the people before Moses**, because something was starting there. He silenced those who were talking and some who were listening who starting to talk amongst themselves. That's what happens in these situations! Some of them started talking as soon as they heard 'Anak'. "Sons! The children of Anak! Giants!" Right away people started talking and this is what the focus is in the mind; no more thinking about God and the Red Sea. No more thinking about God's speaking to them from Mt. Sinai. No more of the things of all the quail. No more of all these things that are in their mind at all – that's all gone. All they see now are giants and fortified cities and masses of people and families that have grown great in the region that they're going to go into. They see war, they see loss of life, they see what the Egyptians did when they were coming up there and "We're going to die! You brought us out here to die!" This is basically the attitude of mind again. This is what's starting to happen.

And so Caleb intervenes, **He silenced the people before Moses and said, Let us go up at once!** "You're looking at this in a wrong way! Let's go up right now and take it!" And notice what he says, **and take possession of it, for we are more than able to overcome**, meaning 'to prevail' over it. Why? Because

he saw God in the picture! “God said He’s going to give it to us! We’re going to conquer! Let’s go up and take it! Those fenced cities...those great big cities, those walled cities – great for us to have so if someone comes up against us we have great walled cities! God takes away the army, the peoples, it’s all ours, it’s already built, its already constructed. What do we have to do?” Different thinking – isn’t that amazing?

But the men who went up with him said, We’re not able to go up against this people; now it gets worse... now it gets worse. Now they’re really twisting and distorting things because this is what was in their heart already and now more of the truth comes out of why they were distorting it...because God wasn’t in the picture and now they’re being more dogmatic. “We can’t do it!” **We can’t go up and take these people because they’re stronger than us.** God’s not in the picture here at all.

And they brought up, that word meaning ‘delivered’ or ‘gave out’ **an evil report,** this word means ‘slandorous’, ‘slanted unfavorably’. Isn’t that amazing how people can tell a story and depending on their motive of what the conclusion is supposed to be, that you’re supposed to interpret from it. So many lessons to be learned in this if we can look back through time and judge things in our life or things that happen in the future by such things as this and what God gives to us and knowing how God works with us and so forth.

And they delivered/gave out a slanderous, slanted unfavorably type of report to the children of Israel of the land which they had searched out, saying, The land through which we have gone to search out, it is a land that eats up, it devours the inhabitants, those dwelling in it. Eats them up. Anybody that comes in there, anybody that messes with this, it’ll devour them, the people that go there. **...and all the people that we saw in it are men of great measure/great stature.** That’s quite a focus to have isn’t it – start thinking of all the negative things, start thinking of all the things that are going to prevent you from doing what God says you can do. Start panicking! Start thinking about all the physical things around us...and that’s what we are like as human beings. So often in life we get so wrapped up in the physical things around us and we lose sight of what’s so importance and what should be the major focus in our life – that’s God always-always-always...and where we’re going and where we are now and where we intend to keep going.

Verse 33 - And there we saw giants, the sons of Anak, who are of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight. “This is what we felt like.” And they did feel that way, at least several of them did. “They’re bigger than us. We can’t go up against them, and to us we’re nothing. They can swat us, they can get rid of us easily, we’re just little grasshoppers. They can step on us and we’re done. Who can go up against that?”

I want to read you a letter here that I didn’t think I’d get to today. This was sent some time back and I thought, “Amazing, some of the flow of things covered here and what was stated.” This individual says:

When May 26th came and went I was certainly confused and disappointed, however the teaching on Pentecost, ‘Day of the Lord’, made complete sense to me.

About the ‘day’ we’re in.

Just as encouraging to me were the words, “We move forward.” Moving forward made it clear that we weren’t trapped by the Red Sea anymore, we had passed through May 26th and we were on the

other side. At first I thought I had to rethink, pray, over all the challenges that were still looming in front of me for another year. These same things that I trusted God for now seemed bigger. Once again, our Father came through with another great message - "Stick to plan 'A'!" So I picked up where I left off and continued down the same path that I had been walking and praying about for the last several years.

See, that's the whole story here, isn't it? ...and it's what we have in our focus; God's always in the picture, how God leads us, it's the same thing we're reading about. And so he went on to say here:

So I picked up where I left off and continued down the same path that I had been walking and praying about for the last several years.

There are days I feel strong and sometimes I feel like a bozo punching bag; I get knocked down but end up back on my feet. Surely the Lord's picking me up.

I can't help but think of the spies who scouted out the promised land - I don't want to report that there are giants in the land.

Well said. Don't want to think that way because that's exactly...at times like that those are the things that people have to come face to face with: Are there giants in the land? Is that what we see?

I trusted God and He brought me through the 1260...

Speaking of those days...

I also know that there is a great and fulfilling life in the Millennium for me. I can, and will, trust our Father for this 'day' as well.

The reason I decided to write is because I made up my mind several weeks ago, but I kept getting knocked around. I don't want to question myself or focus on the giants anymore so now I'm submitting my scout report to you. When you give the word I'm ready to fall into formation and move out wherever the Eternal leads us.

Submitted on July 4th, 'Dependence on the Eternal Day', and 40 days since May 26th.

☺ I thought that was pretty good because it sums up how we think as human beings sometimes. We do see giants; things become bigger than us, things become bigger than our calling in the sense of what drags us down, what pulls us down. They can be things about health, finances, relationships, on and on it goes...battles, sins - everything under the sun that we go through as human beings - they're out there and there are highlights of that at different times that put us to the test even more, like the 26th and the things we went through. And I know that God is overall so very well pleased with that, with how we went through it. We went through it as human beings. We went through it with disappointment. To

different levels we went through it sometimes with discouragement, sometimes with the things that had to be addressed now in life – but people went through it with a determination, at times with repentance, whatever it might be involved with it, but went forward, because that's how we are, and God had brought us to that point. To me that's an exciting thing.

But He's still having us go through a process of time right now, of various things in sermons to become even more deeply convicted, more deeply determined, if you will, spiritually, on a spiritual plane, to stand, to stand fast, to go through this period of time that's ahead of us, to look at these things that have happened in the past to learn lessons from it, of what the pulls are. And even a better way, because every time you go through a major trial like that there is something you learn about yourself that you didn't know before. Every time we go through something measured, in a measured way like that, in a powerful way like that, of major magnitude, if you will...and there are different times in our life like that. Those of you who have been around a long time, you've been through a lot of difficult times, the apostasy being the biggest one, the greatest one of all.

But all the things you go through at different times, at some point, maybe not at that moment like the apostasy, it might have been later on as God began to awaken you – at some point you begin to see things that you otherwise could never have seen but for those events. God has a means and a way of bringing things to the surface as He moulds and fashions us, knowing the timing in our lives, in our thinking, in our ability to respond, what we will do or won't do, and examples sometimes in the Body that we learn from and see – good and bad – of things we go through in life. It's all a part of our training – but all for the purpose of this mind being able to change, to be transformed, to think differently. And that's an awesome process. And all we have to do is yield our self to the process.

And so we go through these things now to learn, to become stronger in the sense of determination, to be of good courage, to learn, to have these so deeply embedded in us that we are fortified in spirit, in mind, "This is what I'm going to do no matter what! This is me! This is who I am!" And we do it with greater boldness and greater confidence. And that's what it's all about. And then God will make us to stand in His time in a very powerful way. But He's preparing us as well so that we'll be of an attitude of mind of humility at that time, because if we know all these things about our nature and about ourselves that's healthy, and we won't be lifted up because we know who we are, we know what we're capable of doing and we know that others can't help but do what they do until God frees them from Egypt.

You know when God's not kept in the forefront of one's thinking and focus and human reasoning begins to take over, attitudes can change rapidly to that of working against God's purpose. And some of those spies began to work against God's purpose, in one respect... in one respect they were a part of it because it was their nature. But God made certain that there were two in there, Caleb and Joshua, that He worked with to do something else through that we could learn from. Because these things were written for our admonition, for our learning. It wasn't as much for them. I mean, Joshua and Caleb, Moses, all of those that God worked with, He worked with a handful of people through time there but overall these things are there and written and recorded for us, for the Church, for the past 2,000 years, for people who have been moulded and fashioned by these stories because God with His spirit teaches that which is deeper in understanding of what this is all about.

And so human beings can work against God's purpose, and I think of the meaning of anti-Christ and what it says in here, those things that have been with the Church from the beginning, from when John talked about it, from the very beginning after nearly, what, 70 years of the Church having existed, the last apostle of that original era, and writing about these things in the book of 1st John and talking about

how there was that which was in the Church that was resisting the spirit of God and denying the power of God in their life...and above all people, especially now where we are and who we are, we don't want to do that. We want to yield ourselves to God's spirit, to develop a closer relationship with God to the point that we abhor coasting, that we abhor the spirit of Laodicea and what it did in the Church, of being lukewarm, of kind of waiting for God to solve our problems.

We've got to jump in and do what we can at all times and to move forward, but we have to be a part of the work and a part of doing... of doing, if you will. God isn't going to do it all for us, we've got to fight, we've got to draw closer to God, we've got to cry out to God more often, more than we did last year, truly, keep our focus. Because we don't want to work against God, we don't want to work against Christ. We don't want to get to a point where we somehow take the truths that God has given to us, everything that's on the website, in any fashion, not represent it faithfully, not be in agreement with it. It's such a dangerous thing sometimes to have our own ideas about how we see things... If it's not written there what are we doing if we speak about it in a different way? If we speak of it in the same way of what is given and it may be a certain story in our life that fits our life, that's fine, but if we alter a little bit by our own interpretation that becomes *horribly dangerous* because it's what the spies did, twisting and distorting what is true. We want to keep everything, we want to understand it the way God gives it and to have it come through our lives by example or by what we say, to be in that same agreement, that everything is in agreement and at one. It's *so important* to be at one.

That's a marvelous thing that God has brought us to and is going to continue to give to us a little bit more even at the Feast this year, a little bit more about the importance of that, and we just grow a little bit more every time we go forward, every time we go along, until we're finally there. For those of you going into the Millennium, it's a great head start; it's a great opportunity to be able to be thrown into something so powerfully, to start out as powerfully as you'll be able to. For the rest, we're still going through training as a part of the process, still being moulded and fashioned until the very end. It's what it's all about.

Numbers 14:1 – Amazing, amazing, human nature. Because of what the *majority*... see, if the majority says it, it must be true. Isn't that the way man is? If more people are saying it – I think of the websites out there – think if the majority are saying it, it must be true. That's the way people oftentimes take things.

I think of what happened... well, I don't need to go through all that, some of the history of something that happened in the group and we had a battle back in 2000, and part of the Church didn't want to grow; they wanted me as a minister to stay in Toledo, and yet there were other people coming along who wanted help and were crying out for help and visits and so forth. But I was told, "No, those are *our* tithes," basically, "and you're to stay here." My response is, "No, there's more tithes coming in from elsewhere now and we're to serve them as well." And so there was division that came and probably little more than half the Church left at that time. Amazing! And I think of a meeting one night that was held and only two of us, in essence, as far as the men were concerned that were a part of that, were faithful, and the rest carried a bad report, a false report of what had transpired and the purpose of it and so forth. And it reminded me so much of this story here, about what we just read and how it affects people in people's lives.

But here this says, now the reaction of the people, they listened to the majority because they *surely* are right. **Numbers 14:1 - And all the congregation lifted up their voice and cried; and the people wept,** a word meaning 'lamenting', 'crying', and what goes along with this is 'complaining'. There was fault finding in this. It's not just a matter of weeping and crying because they're hurt, it's something so selfish

that it goes way beyond that, it has an attitude, it carries attitude with it big time! And so it says **...they wept that night, and all the children of Israel murmured,** complained, grumbled. It's really difficult sometimes when you go through these stories but you've got to think and remember what they came out of. They came out of Egypt. They didn't know the ways of God, they didn't have the way of God, the mind of God, the law of God, if you will, even the law, the basic law, until they got to Mount Sinai, and the lifestyle they lived before that wasn't good. It wasn't good; and relationships and how people lived toward each other wasn't good.

And it says, **And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron:** that's always a fun thing to go through. It wasn't a matter that they murmured against God and found fault with God, it was of Moses and Aaron. **...and the whole congregation said unto them, Would to God that we had died in the land of Egypt!** How many times did they say that? They said it a lot! **...would to God that we just died in the land of Egypt or would to God we had died in this wilderness!** ...and now we have to go up there and fight these giants and fight these cities and they're going to step on us.

And why has the Eternal brought us into this land to fall by the sword? Now they've left Mount Sinai, they're up in Paran, they've had the scouts go up there and they've come back with this report and it's like, now we're moving forward, we're about ready to go into the promised land, we've gone through all this, we have a year behind us, we've had all these things we've gone through and *now...* same old story... *now* we're going up there to die! Some promised land! Now we've come all this way and... Sometimes it's hard to go through some of these stories and think about what it is that's in their mind because it's so hard to believe people can think this way, but that's our nature. And we have done it on a spiritual plane at different times in different struggles we've gone through; it's just a part of growth.

It says, **they grumbled, they complained against Moses and against Aaron: and the whole congregation said unto them, Would to God that we had died in the land of Egypt or we'd died in this wilderness. And why has the Eternal God brought us to this land to fall by the sword, that our wives and our children should be a prey/a spoil?** We're coming up here and our families are now going to be slaughtered; our children, our wives. **Wouldn't it be better for us to return unto Egypt?** We've been away a year, maybe we can go back now. Even there, I don't know how physically you can even think that way, but this is what they really believed. Maybe as a people, if we could go back now, we know Pharaoh and his army is destroyed, maybe somehow we could... since that's the land we know and maybe we could work with them and maybe we could have some peace and maybe if we just go back and offer ourselves as slaves again... Was that in their mind? Go back and be slaves again in the land of Egypt; that would be better than going on up here and seeing these sons of Anak.

So, wouldn't it be better to return to Egypt? And they said one to another, Let's make a captain, and let's return into Egypt. Now that just blows my mind! I mean, really, even physically and carnally, I understand... but this is a little tough, it really is, to get to this point, you're actually going to pick a leader, one of these people probably that spied out the land or one of the main ones of the other leaders there that were set apart at one point – pick them and for them to lead you back into Egypt.

And I think just how insane it is when people give up and quit – they do *exactly* the same thing. When there have been splinter groups that have happened through time's past and people pick someone – it might be small, it might be large – but they pick something of what they are wanting to do, and it blows the mind, it truly does. What are you going to follow? What are you going to do? You want to go back into slavery...and so God gives slavery again if that's what they want.

Verse 5 - Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the children of Israel. Do you know why they did that immediately? They knew what was coming. They knew how God was going to receive this, that the power and what they were doing in fighting against God that by all rights God could come in and destroy them, and so they fell on their faces for the sake of the people. Here they were the ones being... it wasn't because the congregation was finding fault with them, because that's what happened here. It says they were against Moses and against Aaron, and yet they were the very ones, it says, who fell on their faces for them because they immediately saw how evil and how serious this was.

And Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, who were of them that searched out the land, and it says they '**rent**', in other words **tore their clothes**: this was a custom they had. It's a custom of rending one's clothing, was a sign of grief and of grieving if you will, grieving for what they were doing, grieving for what was taking place here and how serious this was. I think of the prophecy back in Joel 2:13; it says 'to rend your hearts and not your garments'. That's what God wants. In other words, that was an outward show but that's all they knew at that time, but it reflected that which they were concerned about concerning the response that they were having toward God at that time. But what God wants in our life, of each individual, is that it be in our hearts, that there are times we are to grieve for what we do, and sometimes for others too, that we go before God and plead for, or pray for, if you will, others. And I hope we do that with one another. When somebody is going through a trial, a hardship, to pray for them, when somebody's going by the wayside, to pray for them, to ask God to help them, to intervene to correct, to do whatever it takes to... but that His will be done. But to have that attitude of mind, of a willingness to do those kinds of things, whatever it might take.

Numbers 14:7 - And they spoke to all the company of the children of Israel, saying, The land which we passed through to search out, it is an exceeding good land. So here they're going out and they're trying to calm people down, trying to help them to see what God said we could have, and they said **it's an exceedingly good land: If the Eternal is pleased with us then He will bring us into this land and give it to us, which is a land flowing with milk and honey. Only do not rebel against the Eternal, and neither fear the people of the land for they are bread for us: and their defence has departed from them, for the Eternal is with us, so do not fear them.** Isn't that an amazing thing? A different attitude of mind of Joshua and Caleb here - totally different mindset! A totally different way of thinking because God is in the picture, all the way in the picture, and sometimes we can help each other that way.

Sometimes when someone's down, when someone's not feeling up, and we all go through things like that - every one of us has those moments in our life, and if there is someone else there to help you, to encourage you - not to jump all over you, but to encourage you. Sometimes there are times when someone needs to talk sternly to you as well, if it's done out of love. But as a whole, to have that attitude toward one another, that we have this, that we can go forward, that we can do this, or you can do this, this is what God has brought us to and He's not abandoned you, He's not leaving you behind, but you have to do the right thing! We have to move forward and do what He shows us!

So he says, **don't rebel against the Eternal, and don't fear the people of the land;** don't fear what's in front of us: don't fear the year ahead, whatever it is, **for they are bread to us and their defence has departed from them.** In other words, it's as good as given to us. God said He'd give it to us and He'll give it to us, its coming.

Verse 10 - But all the congregation sought to stone them with stones. That's pretty tough. Here two of them were there and they're coming out with this story and saying, "This is what we can do. This is

what God has said. This is what this place is really like and it's ours to have if we'll go in there." And they were so opposed to that they wanted to kill them, stone them with stones. Amazing!

And the glory of the Eternal appeared in the tabernacle of the congregation before all the children of Israel. And the Eternal said to Moses, How long will these people continue to provoke Me? And how long will it be before they will believe Me, for all the signs which I have spoken unto them? God knew the answer to that but it's something to train, to teach; to teach Moses, to teach Joshua, to teach Caleb, to teach the Church later on, to help us to grow in, to help us to understand things, that by these examples we can come to more deeply understand them. God knew exactly what they were going to do! How long will they do it? Until they have their time when they can receive the impregnation of the holy spirit – that's how long they're going to do it. For them it's going to be in the Great White Throne. God knew the answer! These things are here for us to learn from. He knew full well that they're going to keep doing this over and over and over again...and they did, over and over again.

Verse 12 - I will strike them with pestilence and disinherit them and will make of you a greater nation and one mightier than them. And Moses said to the Eternal, Then the Egyptians will hear of it, (for in Your might You brought up this people from among them); And they will tell it to the inhabitants of this land: for they have heard that You, Eternal, are among this people, and that You, Eternal, are seen face to face, and that Your cloud stands over them, and that You go before them: Do you think that there aren't people in those regions who didn't know about these things? ...who didn't have eye witnesses of accounts of people traveling through regions from one area of Arabia, Midian, or whatever it might be, on up to the area of Canaan and some of those lands, and people talk, people who related, because of commerce and so forth? Just like the area around Petra, there was a pathway for commerce through the region that went into some of those lands. There were ways that people travelled and people saw. Can you imagine traveling through an area and seeing a cloud and seeing fire at night, a pillar of fire? ...and having these stories go out and people being told these things? So they knew them! ...and a pillar of fire by night.

Verse 15 – But if You will now kill all these people as one person, then the nations which have heard of your fame will speak saying, Because the Eternal was not able to bring these people into the land which He swore unto them, therefore He has killed them in the wilderness. What an awesome thing! God had brought Moses to that point in time to make that kind of a plea, to have that kind of a spirit. And that's the whole point, to become more at one with God. It wasn't God's desire to do that and God wasn't purposing to do that, but it's to learn from.

And now, I implore You, let the power of My Lord be great, according as You have spoken, saying, The Eternal is longsuffering, isn't that an awesome thing when you know what God is like and you rest on that? God is long in patience. When God says you can repent and He'll forgive you, He'll remove it from you, you don't have to beat yourself up as we tend to do as human beings. And those who are new, so often until you learn those things deeper in your being... we tend to beat ourselves up. It's like somehow we'll feel a little bit better if we can... I think of those things I've seen in different countries, like in Mexico we saw this one time, they had these things with cords on them and they were beating themselves on the back and blood was coming off their back and they're walking on their knees up to this church, Catholic church, all the stone that's out there. And because of distorted and twisted thinking that people sometimes have it is like if we beat ourselves that's what we deserve.

God isn't like that, and so the more you know God, the more you're at one with God, the more confidence and boldness you have in these things of believing what God says. When God says you're

forgiven when you repent, if you repent from your heart, from your being, and your attitude is right, it's *gone*! But sometimes we won't let it be gone, will we? It still haunts us, or we think that the next time we do the same thing... we slip, we fall, and all that comes rushing back and we're right back where we were. God wants us to be free! We repent and we go forward, it's gone. And it comes down to this matter of believing God again. Is it as far as the east is from the west? Is it wiped out? Is it cleansed from your mind, from your being, and God has made you free? What an awesome thing! Because it's only in that environment you can truly grow – when you're free. That is what is such a beautiful thing about repentance, and then you grow in your understanding of the mercy of God. And then as situations come up in life and someone does something toward you, or whatever, you can be merciful to them before they ever come to repentance, because that's how God has *always* dealt with you. That's *always* how He has dealt with me – He's always been merciful – ready, *anxious* to forgive, because that's the environment in which we can grow! And we desire that for one another. Do we treat others like that, to understand the weak frame because we've been down that road?

You know that's the greatest thing anyone in the ministry can ever learn in how to work with people – is to know how God has worked with you...is to always remember. Our ability to be merciful to others is remembering who we are and what we're capable of doing as human beings, and therefore not being overly harsh in judgment, being stern and to the point sometimes for the sake of others, yes, but with mercy and with grace. Lessons, lessons, lesson always to be learned.

Well, the beautiful thing is here at this point, Moses was of that mind. He was growing in God's spirit and the impregnation of God's spirit that was in his mind, in his being, like we do in the Church, except God worked individually with people at that time and they went through a process like we do as a Body, but he was going through this and this was where he was. To me this is a beautiful thing, to read this, because it shows where God had brought him, that he was at one with God in this because this is the very thing that God would say back to him. "This is what I've done. This is what the nations would say therefore I'm not going to do it that way." See? "I will continue to be merciful to them. I will take them into the promised land. I am going to do what I said I was going to do, what I told Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to their children, that I'd bring them."

So again, **verse 18 - ...The Eternal is longsuffering and of great mercy**, so he's saying this is what I've been told, this is what I believe, this is what You have brought me to. Don't let others see something different, don't let other nations, other people see something different. Let them see this, that You're longsuffering. Let Israel see this. Let them see You're longsuffering. **...the Eternal is longsuffering**; you think God doesn't already know that about Himself? Moses is telling Him that, pleading. Moses is pleading with Him about this because Moses is still learning. ☺ To me it's an awesome story.

....The Eternal is longsuffering, long patience, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and by no means clearing, in other words... it says here 'clearing the guilty'. 'The guilty' isn't the word here. It means, '**by no means clearing or taking away the penalties**'; there are those things sometimes that are a matter of penalties but there is that attitude and spirit of God. Sometimes we have to pay, there is a payment, we pay for things we've done wrong. We carry certain things with us, there are certain things that happen. We make a foolish mistake, something happens, whatever.

...but visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation.

Therefore I implore... and that's because of what people do. In other words, sometimes we don't realize as human beings, even though God works with us, that the very thing we're battling – it might be children growing up in the family, they learn, they see certain things and certain things stick with them and now their battle is going to be a part of what our battle was, and so they're going to... That's why

Mr. Armstrong said it's going to take three and four generations to get rid of so much of this, because certain things are passed along. It's just a way of life, you can't help it! And each generation gets a little bit better as time goes along, a little more freed from Egypt, if you will, freer from those things that were a part of that life before.

So again, things are actually passed along by example, by whatever it might be. **Therefore I implore you, to pardon/forgive the iniquity of this people according unto the greatness of Your mercy, even as You have forgiven**, now, this word here in Hebrew is a word that's something different here, it means **even as You have...it means 'to bear up', 'to carry'. ...even as You have carried this people. ...Because of the greatness of Your mercy, even as you have carried this people from Egypt even until now.** Beautiful, how this is stated.

Verse 20 - And the Eternal said, I have pardoned them according to your request: But as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Eternal. God had a plan! There was going to be that which was going to still be accomplished and this is a part of the process. **Because all those men who have seen My glory, and My miracles, which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have tempted Me/tested Me now these ten times, and have not listened to My voice;** up to this point He's saying, **Surely they shall not see the land which I promised unto their fathers, neither shall any of them who have provoked Me see it.** And the word means 'to spurn', 'to reject with contempt', because that's the spiritual attitude behind it. And so God says, because of that attitude and because of that spirit they're not going to enter in. Forty days spying out the land – did God not have a plan and purpose of things He was going to teach and show the power of what He was going to accomplish, that only two individuals out of all them from the age of twenty years old and upward would be delivered. God has that power. That's awesome!

And all the things we have read and know about that's going to come to pass toward the end of this age here, down to the very numbers, God's going to do it exactly to the exact numbers. God has that power!

Verse 24 - And My servant Caleb, because he had another/different spirit with him, and has followed Me fully, him will I bring into the land whereunto he went; and his descendants shall possess it. (Now the Amalekites and the Canaanites dwelt in the valley.) Tomorrow turn and get you into the wilderness by the way of the Red Sea. And the Eternal spoke unto Moses and to Aaron, saying, How long shall I bear with this evil congregation who murmurs against Me? I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel which they murmur against Me. Say unto them, As truly as I live, says the Eternal, as you have spoken in My ears; so He was dealing with them in a very physical manner, in a manner that had to be dealt with with power and strength because of the numbers of the people. I think of the time they went up against Aaron, the times they've wanted to do various things – so God had to use power to deal with them, as so many peoples in life sadly have to be dealt with in different nations sometimes by power. Because otherwise the anarchy, the chaos sometimes going through various things in life, sadly that's the way human beings are.

So again here, He tells them these things – **say unto them, As truly as I live, says the Eternal, as you have spoken in My ears so will I do to you:** In other words, because of your murmuring so will I do to you. And so again here, spiritual lessons for us. Very powerful, physical things for control and government for them to continue to work with a people, because He's going to deliver them but they're going to die in the wilderness...but the next generations going to come along and be the ones He deals with.

Verse 29 - Your carcasses/your corpses/your dead bodies, shall fall in the wilderness; of all who were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward, which you have murmured against Me. Most assuredly, you shall not come into the land, which I promised to make you dwell therein, except for Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun. But your little ones, which you said should be a prey/a spoil, them will I bring in, and they shall know the land which you have despised. In other words, because of their attitude, because of their actions, their attitudes, their unbelief, and their murmurings. He said, you have despised what I have placed before you.

But as for you, your carcasses/your dead bodies, shall fall down in this wilderness. So, tremendous power and things we can learn from, to be humbled by, to recognize the power of God, to understand even so much more so we want to do things the way God says to do it, and to sin, to be able to have the kind of grace and mercy we have within the Church, what an awesome way that God works with us, for what we really, truly are deserving of as human beings. That's incredible! Because sometimes we can get into a spirit, and I saw that in times past, especially in Laodicea, where it became a part of the Church where it was almost like certain things were owed to us. No, they're not.

Verse 33 - And your children shall wander in the wilderness forty years and bear your harlotry, and your carcasses, your corpses, your dead bodies have been wasted in this wilderness. After the number of the days in which you searched out the land, even forty days, each day for a year, shall you bear/carry your iniquities, even forty years, and you shall know My breach of promise. What it means to be at enmity with Me, in other words, to be against Me. **I the Eternal have said it and I will surely do it unto all this evil congregation who have gathered themselves together against Me; They shall be consumed in the wilderness and there they shall die.** Pretty strong language and pretty strong pronouncement that was given to them.

And then notice the reaction... 😊 Sometimes it's just good to laugh at human nature. When you can laugh at your own human nature and see it for what it is and be appalled by it, better yet - spiritual growth.

Verse 36 - And the men whom Moses sent to search out the land who returned, and made all the congregation to murmur against Him, by bringing up a slander... interesting here, what this word means. It means 'they're whispering', 'a whispering'. That's how things happen. Now sometimes people get on the internet and it's like they're trying to whisper, they want to whisper what they believe to someone else and someone else picks it up when it's divisive. It's the same spirit. So again, it was a lie, a distortion of the truth. That's what it's about here, a twisting of facts. **...upon the land: Even those men who did bring up the evil report upon the land, died by the plague,** because of the judgment upon them; **before the Eternal.** So people began to die.

Because of these things there was still a pronouncement of what was to happen. It says, **But Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, who were of the men who went out to search out the land, they lived.**

Verse 39 - And Moses told all these things unto the children of Israel and the people mourned greatly. And they rose up early in the morning, and gathered themselves unto the top of the mountain, saying, Look upon us! We are here and we will go unto the place which the Eternal has promised: for we have sinned. So it's this reaction here; now people have been dying by this plague and they've been told

this bad news and they're going to have to stay out there for 38½, whatever more - whatever it was at this point in time – more years to finish out forty full years and they didn't want to stay out there.

And Moses said, Why now do you transgress the commandment, and the word here means 'the mouth'; it's the word literally for 'mouth'. In other words, it comes out of the mouth of God, the words of God. **Why are you now going to transgress the words of the Eternal? ...For it shall not prosper.** God has told you what's going to be and here you want to do this now. Now you're going to go and take the land, you're going to decide for yourself that you're going to do something different from what God said. God has already pronounced what He's pronounced and basically it's going to be that you're going to be out here for forty full years before it's said and done and this is where you're going to die.

Do not try to go up, for the Eternal is not among you, or else you will be struck down before your enemies. Amazing! Again, these stories over and over again about doing things *exactly the way God says to do it*, not to deviate from it, because then that will be blessed. No matter what the justification.... I think of the two that put their hands up to steady the ark. The two individuals, I don't remember their names, aren't coming to me; Uzzah....and then another one. But anyway, I don't know if you remember some of the story here but it was when they were bringing back the ark of the covenant and I think David had them put it on a wagon and an ox tripped and the wagon started to tip, and so two individuals put up their hands to save the ark, to keep it from falling, and God struck them dead.

Some read that story and think, "Oh, that's horrible! That's harsh!" But they were not obeying God. God told them how to carry the ark and it was through the staffs, the poles. There were rings on the ark and there were poles to run through on both sides and the Levites had a job and a responsibility for transporting the ark. God was very specific in how He said that they were to do it. The lesson to be learned from it is you don't deviate from the way God says to do things, no matter what the justification. **It might seem so right to do; it might seem you're justified for doing it, [but do it] God's way.**

I had ministers in God's Church – well they weren't in God's Church, I believe, anymore at that point in time, before we became organized ourselves as a Body that basically came right down and said specifically that a little lie here and there is okay if it's for the justification, for the sake of the Church. A little white lie here and there – if it's not the full truth, the full story, and it's slanted a little bit then it's okay if it's for the sake of the Church, then it's justified.

See, people can come to things where they can justify in their minds. The reasoning of the human mind is an incredible thing sometimes – hideous, sick – when we stray away from God. And in examples like this, the example I mentioned of the ark of the covenant; No, you do it exactly the way God said to do it and if you stumble and fall and things don't go right then you need to go back and examine. Isn't that what we have to do when something doesn't go right, when you think perhaps you've done something in a right way and it fails? That you go back to your knees, look back and say, "Did I handle this improperly God? How could I have better handled this situation to do it right if something here is wrong?" Or whatever... God brings out that something is wrong in the way that it's been done, then we have to change – it's about a change we have to make.

And so, they changed after this, they made a change. They did it the right way from then on in how they obeyed God.

And so again here, that's why I stress so often the importance of being at one with God. That's why I stress so often in the lectures and so forth, we call the ministerial meetings, to the ministry and so forth, and that they're deeply grounded in the matter that everything that's on the website, that's what we are to be at one with. If something comes up, if someone asks a question, it's from there, we are in oneness with what is said there because that is what God has given us to this point in time and we all speak the same thing. That's what the Church of God is all about. Where we have gotten into trouble in the past is when that hasn't been the case. Whenever we stray a little bit from the center, from being straight on in God's way, that's when trouble happens – always-always-always. And so these lessons are here, lessons that are contained in this story as well.

So here they decided they're going to go up and take it because... and so he says, **Don't try, for the Eternal is not among you; or else you'll be struck down**, you know, when there's sin there God isn't with us. How often do we hear that? If you have sinned, if you're doing something that you're not supposed to do, if you've been told to do something a specific way and you don't do it, *God is not with you!* That happens in God's Church a lot; it's happened through time. When we sin we get cut off from God. If we continue in sin we remain cut off from God until we repent. That means a change has to take place. It doesn't mean you're not going to fall and do the same thing in time again, or whatever, but the motivation, the drive, the zeal, the desire is to do it *exactly* the way God says...and where we don't, we repent.

For the Amalekites and the Canaanites are before you, and you shall fall by the sword because you have turned away from the Eternal, therefore the Eternal will not be with you. But they presumed, a word that means 'to be lifted up'. It's a word that literally means 'to swell as defiantly', like the chest swelling up, to swell as being defiant, to be lifted up. It's pride; it's always pride to do something different.

...but they presumed to go up unto the top of the hill country: nevertheless the ark of the covenant of the Eternal and Moses did not depart out of the camp. In other words it didn't go with them, God wasn't with them. **Then the Amalekites came down, and the Canaanites who dwelt in the hill country, and they struck them down, and crushed them all the way to Hormah.** Killed. It doesn't say how many. Big slaughter took place because they presumed to do something, so they came back and they stayed in the wilderness that 38+ more years, nearly 39 more years in that area.

Over and over again, incredible stories given, incredible lessons to learn. It goes back to that letter I read earlier of what we're to glean out of these things, to understand the period of time we're in, to understand the things that test us and try us and our determination of mind to do things *exactly the way God says to do it* – to stand fast in what God has given to us, to know that God has brought us this distance and He'll continue to take us the rest of the way...and we stand in that, faithfully so.

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