

It's amazing how time has flown since Pentecost. We just observed Atonement here this past Wednesday and I don't know about all of you but for me it was one of the most inspiring Days of Atonement that I've ever had. God just continues to bless us with deeper depth, greater understanding, more inspiration about His plan and purpose and it just becomes more and more exciting as we go forward. But now, in only two days, we're going to begin observing the Feast of Tabernacles and I thought I'd mention here for those of you in New Zealand and Australia, and scattered throughout Europe that you'll be listening to this particular sermon here five days after the Feast, obviously, (some will be cheating and listening sooner), which is fine, but it's kind of tough sometimes when you're planning a sermon, thinking about different subjects; and candidly, I really don't, because I just ask for whatever subject I'm supposed to give because I had no idea what to give here until the last couple of days anyway.

But in thinking about that I think about people in Australia and New Zealand and Europe because they do listen to it later on, but right now we're going to have the Feast in between so it's going to be a while before they have a chance to listen to this. But nevertheless, everyone will have the opportunity to listen to it, but it's timely, in that respect, for both before and after here.

Today is a follow up to the series we've just completed and the sermon last Sabbath that was entitled 'Gaining a Brother'. Had a lot of emails from individuals talking about how that they felt this was very needed and it's been very good for them to look at themselves as well, and that's what we're supposed to do first and foremost as we even started in that particular series, when we went into that series about 'Going to a Brother', that it's a matter of looking at ourselves first, and that's the key. And even as we observe this Feast of Tabernacles to make sure we're on top of that because that's where it begins. It's about us, each one of us individually and how we live our lives towards others.

But anyway, we have been through a lot and I think of especially recent times here up till this point of time from Pentecost up until now. We have been through a lot, literally, a lot of tribulation, and candidly, over the past several years. It's always been that way in God's Church and I think of some of those things that we have taught through times past – and I'll get to that in a moment – but you know, God's Church has gone through great tribulation, has been going through tribulation for some time, great spiritual tribulation, and that's been during and following the apostasy that began at the end of 1994.

After several years, after you look at 1994 and you continue forward, things began to level out somewhat, especially within the scattered organizations, because people in organizations became more fully focused upon what *they* were doing, upon *their* particular pursuits, if you will, and kind of settled down a little bit in that respect. And there are reasons for all of that, obviously, but people became focused on what they were doing, which is a natural course of events, as well as us, we did that as well. But tribulation was still around, and it's somewhat levelled out for most people who were scattered, as it levelled out a great deal for God's Church when we went through different periods of time. Then there were times when tribulation came back, because of the struggle and what we'd been through. And I think of the period of time, how that it did level out, especially for the Church, for quite a bit of a period of time there, really for a long period of time, couple of ripples, but it levelled out very well until the second book was published and tribulation began again for God's Church and for God's people.

I think of that process of things we went through, every time we go back and think about some of these things, and there is really a lot of reflection during the Feast of Tabernacles – you'll notice that this year - because it is a process and a means by which God uses to teach us, to understand what we've been through so we can appreciate more fully the journey we've been on and where we're going, and to understand the process that's always been at work for God's people. But the more we do that the more we have a big picture of everything, the more inspiring everything that God does truly becomes to each one of us, if we yield to that and strive to learn that and understand that.

And then I think of when we entered, for the Church, the final 'prophetic day', and tribulation was intensified to its strongest yet – at least since the second book was written.

This sermon today is entitled, *The End of Tribulation*.

So again, whether you hear this sermon today, just before the Feast, or you hear it after the Feast, it's needed now to help us focus on what we're going through concerning tribulation. We need to understand the subject. We need to understand what it's there for, what God does and how He works in our life, that we can focus more clearly on what we need to see spiritually – that's why we're going to go through this today, to be able to grasp and understand the purpose of going through these things, so we can grasp even more fully what we're going through at this particular time.

If you'd like, we're going to turn over and look at some very familiar scriptures today and review them, and it's just like with Atonement; every time we go through a particular area of scripture, when God gives us a particular focus, as we grow He gives us more and more, and certainly He's going that now, a sharper focus, if you will, a better vision of what we're doing and why we're doing it.

Let's turn over to Revelation 12 today. Because what we need to understand going back and even thinking about some of the sermons we've been given, especially at the very beginning, we talked about a battle that we were in, and we need to be alert to that and understanding that. That's why I mentioned individuals here before we even began, during the announcements, to be especially careful this year, even in your travelling, to be cautious, to be alert, to be careful in what you're doing, because this world is stirred up more now than I believe I've ever seen it – especially in the past few weeks. It's just intensified more and more and more; it's like cutting it with the knife, the air is so thick with pressure. And we need to understand *why*, why it's that way, why we do feel this. Because I'm not the lone ranger in this. I've talked to a lot of people who feel this. We, especially those who are older in the Church, understand, because you've had that experience of going through many things including what happened during the apostasy.

The apostasy hit us and it was strong and powerful, but what we're experiencing right now, what I believe is out there in a very powerful way, is a powerfully stirred up spirit world that is kicking and screaming and hollering right now, they truly are. They don't have a whole lot of time and they are stirred up. That's why you need to be especially careful. Understand that this is a final great battle we're in and to strive to be close to God, and a part of that process means we do *exactly* what we've gone through in a series of sermons here, *focusing upon ourselves, making sure* that we're on top of things in our relationships with others, because that's what our spiritual life is really all about. It's in our relationships! That's where it's reflected more than anything else. It's reflected in what comes into our mind, what comes out of our mouth, and our attitudes toward people, our attitude and our feeling toward one another. And I'll tell you, right now is the time that there are beings that want to push

buttons, push *your* buttons to get you stirred up, to get you off track *in that very area!* That's the area you need to be sharper in than ever before!

And so when some of these things begin to happen at the Feast of Tabernacles – *as they will* – you're going to be tried. Some of you are going to be tried as to your feelings and your attitudes toward one another. And some of you are staying together in large groups; you know, there is the old saying about being together. You know, people who have been together many years and worked out things in their life and they function well and they're just team, that's one thing, but if you have a certain routine you go through, the reality is it's kind of like this thing 'after three days'... kind of like fish, 'things begin to smell a little bit'. You've got to be on top of that because it's going to test some of you, it's going to try some of you, and there are going to be things you have to be alert to and understand that's just natural.

But it's not just natural in itself, you're going to have some help, okay? There are going to be beings out there that want to get you off track because they want to work their way into the Feast to mess things up! Don't let that happen! *Don't let that happen!* Because if you refuse that spirit, those attitudes, they have no power. Only when you sin, only when you do those things do you give them power, and then that can be brought right into the environment...literally *them* in the environment of God's Church! And we don't want them there! Because if you give them room they'll come along. I'm not talking about possession, I'm talking about 'with', 'around you'. Okay? And you don't want that in God's Feast of Tabernacles. And so if we can be on top of that very early on then we're going to have a beautiful Feast, truly. We'll be able to rejoice mightily before God during the Feast of Tabernacles. So you have to be on top of this at the very beginning because that's where their power is. Because after you have had two or three days of sermons you're going to be stronger, just like you always are. There is *no time* like the Feast of Tabernacles when we come together and we're stirred up by God's spirit and we have an ability to focus and concentrate on the ways of God because of what He's giving to us throughout the Feast, every day, but it's at the beginning we have to be careful.

So again, reminds me of the scriptures and what it talks about back here in James. Again, we went through those recently in a sermon as well in talking about some of that process and talking about how they function and how we're to function and how we're to live.

James 4:5 - Do you think that the scripture says in vain, The spirit that dwells in us desires, you know, that matter, **to envy,** jealousy, all the other things that go along with the human mind? **But He gives more grace.** God does. **Wherefore He says, God resists the proud and gives grace to the humble.** We have to humble ourselves and that means we have to keep on top of self. We have to ask for God's help to be of a right spirit of humility. And where is that needed? In relationships! *A willingness to swallow our pride* and not let things work their way into your life to create a wedge between you and someone else.

Submit yourselves therefore to God, to this process that God has given us even before the Feast, about relationships, submit to that, which is a matter of God's Government in our life, it's a matter of yielding to that in our life! So our desire should be, in every way, to yield to that process, to obey God. **Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil,** these are not just words, this is alive and meaningful in our lives and *especially* right now because of where we are! **Resist the devil and he will flee from you.** They cannot stand obedience to God. They cannot stand a right spirit toward God. They cannot stand when you have humility in your life and you're exercising that. They can't stand when you're filled with God's spirit. They won't, they can't stand to be around you then. So you have to be sharp and alert.

So, **draw near to God**, as it says, throughout the Feast draw nearer to God than you have in previous Feasts. Pray more! Seek to have a stronger relationship with God during this Feast of Tabernacles. Cry out to God more! Get on your knees more! If you're able to get on your knees, get on your knees and hold up your hands to the Great God and say, "Holy Father, I *need help today!* ...and I need help *everyday* to live Your way of life!" Do that and God will bless you! This is the time to do that more than ever before *because we're in a war!!* We are in a battle, and we need to be alert to that more now than ever before!

And so God has given us plenty of warning of where we are and about *this 'day'* defining who we are and what we are. And I've seen that! I've seen this day defining people already and I hate it when people just give up and throw it all away! That *blows my mind!* At *this time*, in all of history, *to throw this way of life away!* What a *horrible thing!* And it hurts! When you love people and you see them just give up and throw it away because they've let down somewhere in their life and they've become weak in their life and they're lukewarm and they've gone beyond lukewarm. What a *horrible* thing to do! Don't let that happen to you. Don't let it happen to you! We're down to the end of all this, truly! I didn't even get in the sermon yet!

Revelation 12:1 – A good history; good to go back and review a little of this. **And there appeared a great wonder in heaven;** because again here, we're going through this because at the top of the list of things we need to be focused upon as we consider this matter of the end of tribulation, speaking about the subject of tribulation and think about the primary source, the root cause of the vast majority of our tribulation and where it comes from, because of the battles that we go through and so forth that come. Here is its origin, it's from this being. This is where it is! That's why I love the Day of Atonement and what God gave us even more so this year, to understand how He's dealing with sin, how He's getting rid of sin and getting rid of that being - we're so close to that now - and to understand its origin, how he stirs things up. What a blessing when he's not going to be around anymore!

Verse 1 – **And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: And she being with child cried, being in labour to give birth, and in pain, in other words, in torment/pain to deliver. And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns,** it takes it right up to the end of the age, doesn't it, to look where he is, he's always been there and he's going to be there until the *very end*, to the very last time he has his last hurrah.

...having seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew a third part of the stars of heaven, going to look at a little bit of that again at the Feast again this year. What incredible power once you begin to turn from God, power that's evil, that's sick, that's distorted and perverted. And this matter of relationships, this matter of what we share with one another is a great lesson to learn. People can't see me, see the expression, but I'm using my finger here like the mouth is opening and blah-blah-blah-blah, and what we do sometimes as human beings. That's what Satan's tool is, that's his power, to get somebody off to the side, to get somebody else alone, away from others, or a group of people together and begin to just blech...vomit on them in the sense of blah-blah-blah, look at what God is doing – look at what someone else is doing – and begin to judge matters and situations in order to turn people away from. I don't want to get into the Feast sermons. Anyway, there is a lot of power here to destroy, and God's given us some great examples here though they're difficult to go through, of some things that have just recently happened, to *learn this lesson*, to drive it home for those of you who are new. Because I've experienced it far too many times in my life, I really don't like to experience it, don't need to experience it anymore. I know it exists, I know how it works. But God is

blessing *you* to learn how this works so that when you enter the Millennial period you are more alert to that spirit and understand it's danger.

...**And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven**, meaning a third part of the angelic realm – became demons as we know, **and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to 'devour'**, literally means, 'to eat up', 'to consume', not a pretty picture! But it's what he's like! 'To consume', 'to eat up', to *destroy*...that's his desire. ...**to devour her child as soon as it was born. And she brought forth a male child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to His throne.** So it's going through a lot of history here, of things that have happened, bringing us up to the present.

And the woman fled into the wilderness where she had a place prepared of God, this is about the Church later on even. 'She fled into the wilderness', several centuries that God took care of her, helped her to continue on after the early apostles, after John had died, all the original disciples, apostles were gone. John was the last to write and after that there was tremendous power after the Church to destroy it, and God blessed it to continue to survive and to go through periods of time of tremendous persecution and tribulation that was upon them, literally, physically not just spiritual, spiritual and physical because of that being that was after them, because of a great church that began to grow with greater power and did not allow other religions in time. They had power to destroy and to kill, to trample out other beliefs and ideas until about the 1500's.

The woman fled into the wilderness where she had a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days. Literally years, 1260 years of time...those things that Mr. Armstrong has written about in times past that are very inspiring when you go back and look at them.

Verse 7 - And there was war in heaven: so something that followed later on; **Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon fought with his angels:** Every time I read this I marvel that there are spiritual battles that we don't understand! **And there was war in heaven**, again, spiritual battles God allows the angelic realm to fight. He doesn't stop it! He could stop it! That's an awesome thing to understand about God! There is a purpose for it. There is a purpose for those angels, those angelic beings who are faithful to God to experience that, to learn from that still. There are other lessons that will come through time that are learned from these things, about battles and why God allows them and what we're to learn from it - just like the battles we go through and what we're to learn from them.

So, **Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought with his angels [and there was war in heaven]. And did not prevail; neither was there a place found for him in heaven anymore.** For this being. Beautiful! I love this! A beginning of a process to take away his power, a beginning of a process, because before that he continued to come before God. You remember the story of Job? He's walking in the midst there and has a conversation with God – he's still there, still going back and forth doing his thing, and now there is no place for him anymore; he can't go there anymore

And the great dragon was cast out/thrown out, that old serpent, called the devil, and Satan, the adversary, the accuser... finding fault with, accusing. Can you imagine God listening to this? The presence of that being that continually brought back that attitude and that spirit that was before the angelic realm and before God, until He finally got him out of there? *Horrible!* **And the great dragon was thrown out, that old serpent, called the devil, and Satan, who deceives the whole world: he was cast**

out/thrown out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him; that third that was drug along there – it talks about the tail there and a third of the angelic realm.

And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now has come salvation, and strength, and the Kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, literally now meaning to cast out, to throw down, from the word used before ‘to cast out’, it comes from that, adding to it the word ‘down’, cast out and cast down out of heaven in that essence; **who accused them before our God day and night.** And we have those things around us that happen in our lives day and night. And you think, “When is it ever going to end?” It wears you out! It can, if you let it. And then you understand the source, you understand where it’s coming from, you understand the spirit in the world when it’s coming at you and that’s what you need to be alert to when it’s coming at you. Sometimes we need to be alert to realize when certain things come at us it’s to get you off guard, it’s to attack you, to hurt you, to get you focused on something else, and you have to go before God and ask God for help to reject it, to understand it for what it is, to be focused on the things you *need* to be focused upon.

Verse 11 - And they 'overcame', a word that means ‘to conquer’, ‘to prevail’ **against him by the blood of the Lamb,** and that’s how we do it. What does that mean? Whenever it says, ‘the blood of the lamb’ it’s a beautiful thing because it means you’re repenting. It means you’re blessed in repentance and change, because you’re exercising that blessing before God of the New Covenant, the ability to go before God to repent of your sins and to be blessed by Him mightily, to be forgiven, to continue on in this way of life, so that you can continue on with God the Father and Jesus Christ dwelling in you and you in them.

...and they overcame/conquered/prevailed against him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the Word, so that Word can live and dwell in you, the Logos, the Logos of God, the Word of God, the revelatory thought of God, so it can continue to be in you and dwell in you and be rich in your life; **and their testimony... by the Word of God (Logos), and their testimony, their witness;** In other words we cannot be a witness – we cannot be a witness of God’s way of life unless God’s spirit and God’s Word is living in us, unless this is true, unless we’re repenting of sin and changing and conquering and overcoming and becoming something different, being transformed. And that’s how we’re able to get to this point, this word for ‘testimony’, ‘witness’, that’s what it means, of God’s way of life. And the only way we can give witness of God’s way of life is if God’s spirit is in us and we’re living it. And it begins with relationships.

It says...**and they loved not their lives unto the death.** A lot of people have had to give their lives for what they believed. We have it pretty good. We don’t live in that kind of a world right now. We didn’t have to live through that period of time. Individuals grew, the things that the disciples went through even later on...believe that only one of them died a natural death, the rest were killed, of the original apostles... and John is believed to be the only one that lived and died an old age, the rest were put to death for what they believed. And then those who went on beyond that period of time, and that great church that came after them. God allowed some to die for what they believed. God allows those things and He allows things to happen to us. Its tribulation, it’s hard to go through sometimes, but there are lessons to be learned from it. It’s part of a witness.

Therefore rejoice heavens and you who dwell in them. Woe... you know, what a time for the angelic realm. You know, they had to be rejoicing when that being and the rest of them could no longer come around anymore, where they couldn’t come before God anymore, where they couldn’t be in heaven anymore and they’re cast to the earth and that’s why it goes on to say...**But woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! For the devil has come down unto you having great wrath, because he**

knows that he has but a short time. When he couldn't go back and forth from heaven any longer - he already knew because of the Church and because of what God was giving Mr. Armstrong, that we were entering into the end-times. He has known what God has said about a specific amount of time that's been given to him. He knows that. He knows what God has said about him...but these things become more and more real to him as you get closer and closer to it; he gets stirred up more and more, greater wrath because he knows that he has a short time. And the more that that time gets shorter and shorter he gets stirred up worse and worse. That's why it's so intense right now. Maybe you don't feel it, but you need to be alert to it and alert to things around your life and to understand that you're going to be bombarded at different times – maybe on a daily basis – and you need to nip it in the bud quickly and understand where it's coming from and go before God and ask for strength to fight and to resist it on a spiritual plane, to not give in and not cave in, because Satan will work on you, he'll broadcast things into your mind, thoughts and ideas will come into your mind. That's why you have to be on guard.

Verse 13 – this is not a game, this is for real. These are true, real spiritual battles that are taking place. **And when the dragon saw that he was cast out/thrown out unto the earth, he persecuted the woman who brought forth the man child.** And so may well have been the very time Mr. Armstrong talked about and what happened in California. He believes that's when this happened – perhaps inspired by God to believe that. I have no reason to believe anything else; it fits, it seems to make sense in those things that took place. A being trying to destroy the Church back then. God wasn't going to allow that to happen. An apostasy had to take yet and that would still come to pass – but now all the way up to the end.

And so again, **He persecuted the woman who brought forth the male child. And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle:** We've gone through these sermons before but it's awesome to think about, to go back and consider exactly what we have lived through, talking about protection, that this example here talking about special protection that God gave to His people. And it says, **And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle that she might fly into the wilderness.** Again, God protected the Church so it continued on for 1260 years at a time when that church was out persecuting every individual or groups of people who came up, who were beginning to emerge, who began to teach anything different than what they taught. They sent people out, they had power in governments to kill, to destroy anything that would oppose it. It became *illegal* for people to believe, to practice anything else in so many of these areas of the world in Europe.

...that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place where she is nourished for a time, times, and a half a time from the face of the serpent. So I think of this period of time from December 17, 1994 all the way up to Pentecost – amazing – to Pentecost, May 30, 1998 when we understand God protected us, He blessed us so we could get back on the right track again because *we were asleep* as God's people, and He began to stir us up and to bring others along – not a lot, just a few scattered throughout this world, began to bring people along again to recharge them, to begin to convict them Sabbath by Sabbath, Holy Day to Holy Day, until by the time we got to this point we were able to stand again, we were able to fight the fight as a Body, as a group of people. So God did bless us, that came to pass.

It goes to say, **And the serpent 'cast'**, interesting here, sometimes certain words and how they're used; it's an active voice, a verb with action of the past that happens at a specific point in time in the Greek language, and this should be translated 'had cast' in other words, because it's going back and telling what had happened here when some of these things began. And so the first part is talking about a time when protection was needed for the Church, for 1260 days, and God gave it protection, and then it's showing here what had taken place, **because the serpent had cast out of his mouth water as a flood**

after the woman, that was the apostasy that began, **that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood**, to be washed away, to be swept away quickly with one fell swoop. And it was powerful when it happened, that period of time from that Sabbath in December to the first Sabbath in January, by the time it had been sent out to all the areas of the world by video to be watched – another one that had been repeated, the same thing that took place on the day of the apostasy, but again, those follow up, the sermon that they spliced together.

Verse 16 – I love this one too... **And the earth helped the woman**, you know, the kind of language that God uses isn't so that people can pick it up and say, "Oh, I know what that means, it's so clear!" Jesus Christ spoke in parables – spoke in parables to His own disciples, of things that... we're going to read one here today if we get time to, to do so, that they said, "Now we understand." And He said basically, "Do you really?!" He knew they didn't! But they understood part of something physical, they thought they did, but they didn't grasp what He was talking about at all. And that's the purpose of it – God doesn't give everything all at once. It is not intended that everything be given all at once. It's a growing process and it's a progressive revelation through time as well, of what God gives. Beautiful how God works.

And this example here too – **And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth and swallowed up the flood**, so it's just like you have this flood going along and all of a sudden the earth cracks open and water... How does this apply to what happened to the Church? You think, "What does that mean?" Well, what happened with the apostasy? It was around the earth. It was around the world in every nation where people in the Church of God, the Worldwide Church of God...and it's because of that that people were scattered all over. God picked a few here and there in different places... **the earth helped the woman**, from the very fact that we were scattered where we were in such small... we were unnoticed. God blesses us that we weren't even noticed by that being.

He's not everywhere. He's not like God! He's not everywhere all the time. He doesn't have that kind of power, but he's powerful and he can broadcast throughout the earth, indeed, he can broadcast toward individuals in God's Church, but he doesn't have the power to be everywhere, to know everything that's going on with everyone all the time.

So again **...swallowed up the flood which the dragon had cast out of his mouth**. So that which went to destroy just began to seep into the earth, that got lost in everything, and there were those who were swept away by it and other that God began to save through it all and began to protect through it all.

And the dragon was angry with the woman, the woman was still there. It became obvious in time the woman is still there, the Church is still there, he didn't destroy it, he wasn't able to destroy it. **And the dragon was angry with the woman and went to make war with the remnant of her seed**, he knew where it was in time. **...who keep the commandments of God**, that's how he knew, **and have the testimony of Jesus Christ**, the witness of Christ in their life, that He is indeed living in them and dwelling in and through them. He knows where God is. He knows where God's spirit is, where it's working.

So anyway, incredible what we've lived through! And talking here about different times, different things that have happened as far as tribulation has been concerned, but it's spiritual upon the Church, of things we've gone through all through time. And this example here of what's been given here through Revelation 12, especially about the Church and what happened during that 1260 years and then on to the very end, because God just brings it all the way through to the very end, because most everything focuses on the end – because it's about a time when His Son is going to come permanently to this earth as far as the time period for man is concerned.

Matthew 24, let's turn over there. So with all this in mind, all this history in mind of what we have gone through, of what we have experienced, what we have been witness of in our lives, things we can see and understand about all this period through this whole chapter of Revelation 12, let's look at this matter of tribulation and how the Church has viewed it all along the way, because we have grown in our understanding of this, what it's about. Because through Philadelphia and up to this end-time, as a matter of the present truth, the present understanding we had at any moment in time, it's changed in this particular matter of what tribulation has been upon the Church and how the Church has viewed it all along the way. Because the reality was there was a time when we viewed it differently in God's Church. 'Great tribulation' - that expression has been deeply imbedded in my being because of Worldwide, because of what I came into the Church and what we've always believed about a period called the 'great tribulation'. But the reality is, the truth is, God's people have always had great tribulation, and so we learned a lesson through that, and there is a lot here that to me is inspiring, how God reveals it, how God gives it.

Let's go back here to Matthew 24. Again, things that Jesus Christ was answering His disciples concerning His return, when He would come in His Kingdom, and so He gave these verses here that follow and those are the things that are so deeply etched in our minds because we have seen these things, we have witnessed so many of those things, those people who have been in Worldwide especially, because most of what's written here is that period of time all the way up through Laodicea to the present.

Matthew 24:14 - And this gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come. Incredible! That which we have looked at through time, things that Mr. Armstrong talked about, believing that we were in the last period of time for this earth – God hadn't given everything concerning Philadelphia and the era of Laodicea yet; but still, because of things that had to come to pass yet, because of the apostasy that had to happen after he died...and so there were those things that were given, and indeed the gospel was to be preached in all the world, powerfully so!

I think of all 'The Plain Truth's' that were sent out. I remember being in Bricketwood and they had separate printing presses over there where they had a place where we'd go and help out at different times. We'd volunteer to go, students would, to help out to get just tons and tons of booklets and 'The Plain Truth's' month by month that were sent out into Europe and into Africa – because that's what Europe took care of. And of course they were printed here separately in the U.S. and sent here and other places in the world as well, but it's such an awesome sight and such an incredible thing to consider, all that was done during the period of Philadelphia and what God did. And we still come across people on a continuing basis at times, of people that *heard* Mr. Armstrong, or *received* 'The Plain Truth'. It's still out there after all this time, him dying in 1986. Incredible! Because of the power of what happened during that period of time of Philadelphia.

And so it says, **the gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world unto a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come. When you therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet;** I love this too, because I think, "What an awesome thing! Mr. Armstrong stopped at verse 14 every time he went into this." He didn't go into verse 15 as a whole because it wasn't for his time, it wasn't to happen during his time. He knew he had a job to do, a commission to do, and he knew it was verse 14...and he was motivated powerfully to get it done.

And then **verse 15 – When you therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso reads, let him understand): Then let them which be in**

Judaea... We understand what that means now but we didn't before, we didn't understand what that meant back in Philadelphia. We didn't understand what that meant, as a whole, going through Laodicea! What does it mean? ...until toward the end of Laodicea and then God began to give it to His Church, what this means; **when you see the abomination of desolation...**and there are still scattered groups out there today, as a whole, this is what they believe – they still believe that this is something physical that has to happen in Jerusalem like what happened with Antiochus Epiphanies and the swine that was killed upon the altar and the desecration that took place at that time in a physical sense.

There are those that think something has to happen at the end-time that's a repetition of this on a physical plane. That's why there is one group out here, one large group, that basically believes that at least an altar has to be built so that this can happen. And I feel for them, but it's so blind, they don't understand what this is about. They don't grasp this is something we experienced in God's Church on a spiritual plane – the abomination of desolation, that which began to destroy. What's worse? To destroy a physical temple, to destroy something that's not even being used by God anymore? To destroy something, to desecrate something where God isn't even present anymore? To destroy that? To do what man does anyway? Or something that happens to God's Church that begins to *destroy His own Church and His own people*? Which is more important in the scheme of things? Which is the greater abomination of desolation – to destroy? ...that's abominable before God?

Verse 16 – Then let them who are in Judea flee into the mountains: so we've gone through sermons; I remember when God began giving this to us. I remember starting to speak about this in a basement in Cincinnati, going through Matthew 24, and then later Matthew 25 followed. God just continued to give us more and more to help us become set, solid, sound once again. And this one here, **and let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains;** it was about the Church. Where do you flee and what are the mountains? Well, what happened to the Church? God's government was scattered all over the place! Different ones in different areas in different organizations and basically that was what God told us we had to do in the beginning. There was nothing else. There was nothing else established. We were not established yet. We began to participate in that function. We went to one of the mountains, what we thought was going to be a mountain and it turned out to be one that we had to flee again. **...to flee into the mountains.**

And don't let him who is on the housetop come down to take anything out of his house: again, it goes back to what happened when the apostasy took place and some of the things that began to happen toward the very beginning, but it was like this game that people played – I say people played at that time – of what they were going to do, whether they were going to stay in Worldwide, or whether they were going to leave, and why they might stay in Worldwide and why it was dangerous to stay there in the first place. And this is a part of that story, and God is basically saying here, **Don't let him that is on the housetop come down and take anything out of his house,** that has spiritual meaning and implication to it. In other words, by staying there or going back to it who are you going to try to save?

I made *this* mistake! How many Sabbaths? Three Sabbaths in a row. See? Because I was *pulled by* this thing of different ones who were still there. We were going through a process of an apostasy; we heard the sermon at the beginning of January, January 7th it seems like or somewhere in there, whatever the date was that it was played everywhere, and I think of that process there going back then for the next three weeks hoping someone was going to ask me a question of why I'm resigning or why I'm not going to come back or why some have left or something about what was happening...and people didn't care. I was blown over by it...so I sat through three *sick sermons* one Sabbath after another Sabbath after another Sabbath – somewhere in there, I may have the timing of some of it wrong. But anyway... It's

like that attitude, “Who are you going to try to save?” Because the reality is you can’t save, you’re to *flee*, you’re to get out of there as fast as you can. When something like that happens and sweeps through it and begins to take place, God says the answer is to flee, to get out of that environment, don’t try to go back and save some individual(s) as people did. They wanted to save their family or friends, so they would stay there for a while, and if you’re not careful then what happened? Some got sucked into it. That’s exactly what happens. That’s why God said to flee it, get away from it so that that won’t happen!

Verse 18 - Neither let him who is in the field return back to take his clothes. You know, going back and trying to salvage anything that we think could still clothe us. No, when there is apostasy you flee because there is *nothing fit there* to try to hold onto. Some people made those mistakes, thought they could still receive something there. No, it’s gone! It’s no longer a part of God! But spiritually, people got pulled into some of that.

Continuing on in **verse 19 - And woe to them who are with child, and them who are nursing in those days!** I thought of the period of time that followed. Some wondered, “Why isn’t the Church growing? Why aren’t there new people coming along?” And I thought, “It should be so obvious! Look at us! We have to become strong again. We have to get back on track again, and who wants anyone new to come into *this* environment, because people were so messed up and areas were so messed up. Why would God bring anyone new into that environment?” And He wasn’t doing that. It wasn’t happening. And this is a good example of that.

Woe to those who are still nursing in those days – someone who might, through someone, begin to see certain things. It’d be a horrible battle that’s in front of them. They don’t even know what they’re coming into!

Verse 20 - But pray that your flight be not in the winter: I think of that attitude we talked about in times past, of “Well, I’m going to stay here because this is more comfortable.” I think of what we did at different times and it wasn’t comfortable. It wasn’t comfortable the first time we started a Feast of Tabernacles, the first time we separated from everyone else and had a Feast of Tabernacles. That was so uncomfortable. It would have been far more comfortable to stay where we were as far as the ease of it all, but conscientiously couldn’t do it, no. And that’s what God is saying here, “Flee, do what you have to do! Move on! Don’t use excuses!” And there were some of the people who stayed in some of the groups because of being more comfortable, it was just too hard to continue to do, and especially with... “Shouldn’t we be a large organization? Shouldn’t we try to salvage what we have here and work together and ‘build some bridges?’” One of my ‘favorite’ expressions!

Verse 20 - But pray that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day: I was able to keep it as long as possible before fleeing, over the Sabbath day, in essence. There are a lot of things that could be used here but this is certainly one of them because a lot of people who stayed around as long as they’re going to ‘keep’ the Sabbath. I think of different countries who were able to keep the name – to them that was the Church, and since they were able to still ‘keep’ the Sabbath day they stayed there. Think, “Nope, you should have fled!”

Verse 21 - For then shall be great tribulation, an expression that we’ve very accustomed to in God’s Church, because this has always been looked at, as a whole, through Philadelphia and on into Laodicea as the end-time physical tribulation on the earth, and it isn’t about that at all. But that’s what we believed because that’s all that God had given to that point in time, because He reserved it to be given

later on as we grew spiritually to come to understand these things and how they apply to the Church. This word here in the Greek – I like the actual word – it's 'megas' – you think about something 'mega', whatever, this is where it comes from, 'great', 'mega' tribulation.

For there shall be mega tribulation such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, nor ever shall be. Spiritual! Why? Well, we just read through Revelation 12 about this being that's so stirred up and coming at the Church more powerfully... he wants to destroy it all and now he had an ability to be at that charge, the head of an apostasy, because he was, that's what it talks about back in 2nd Thessalonians. That being was there, there was tremendous power that was given to have that apostasy through the man of sin, the son of perdition, and what took place.

There was a being behind all that. That man didn't do that by himself, he had help, powerful help! And that being's desire was to continue – has always been - to destroy God's Church! And he's very stirred up, and the more stirred up he gets – this is a part of the story still – **For then shall be great tribulation,** spiritual, for God's people. I lived, starting in 1969, in Worldwide for quite a number of years never having experienced great tribulation, never really... Things were going along so smoothly, as a whole, in most places where I lived, when Laura and I got married and we moved to the Houston area, in that area there, very strong. What, seven years there? Tribulation? Just wasn't there! We weren't being pressed! I don't remember times of pressure that was in the air just thick and you being bombarded on a spiritual plane. There were some areas that experienced some things that had happened in the Church and certainly that was a time when California began to get hit hard and some of the things that happened out there, but as far as our Church area, we didn't experience that there. We were kind of removed from it because it just didn't sweep through the Church, it didn't have the power to sweep through the Church back then. And depending upon the ministers at that time there, had two very strong ministers at a period of time, and John Ogwyn the longest and Leroy Neff for a period of time until Mr. Armstrong brought him out to be the treasurer of the Church. And we were very blessed with unity and oneness and close Family in the Church, close to 600 people in that congregation. Awesome what we experienced!

And then as we moved forward, mega tribulation, it really wasn't around the Church as a whole like it has been since the apostasy and then it kind of levelled off again and now it's back again very powerfully so. We need to be alert to that, to realize that's the reality of what we're dealing with because it's spiritual, because of how it attacks and comes at God's people and why.

So again, this has always been primarily about the Church – we didn't understand that – on a spiritual plane. But we understood it as a whole – we even understand it now still being physical in part, but only in a small part, because this really isn't... this is still primarily all about the Church, but it's a 'type' of something. There is still a 'type' here of something that *is* going to happen on a physical plane. Usually it's the reverse – physical type of something spiritual – but there is still going to be a 'type' of something that still happens later on on a physical level, but this is still primarily, and through Matthew 24, about that which is spiritual. It's about the Church.

Verse 22 - And except those days should be 'shortened'; a word that means 'to maim', 'to cut off'; **There should be no flesh saved; but for the elect's sake,** that means the Church, **those days should be shortened:** I understand this more today on a spiritual plane than I ever have. More than a year ago, more than six months ago, especially since May 27th...**And except those days should be shortened there should no flesh,** God's Church. This isn't a physical thing yet. There are things that are going to happen physically later on, that this is a kind of a 'type' in part of, because the reality is true there, if God didn't

intervene there wouldn't be anything left on this earth. But this is still about the Church, and you need to know, and you need to understand that if God didn't cut this short – even though we're going through what we're going through right now – how long could you last? How long could you go on? How long? Because I know where I would be if things continued on in May anyway. What would happen to God's Church in time in different parts of the country, in different parts of the world? I *know*, and I hope you know – okay? God has the power to give help and to inspire and to work with individuals and to give them the ability to teach and to preach in a very powerful way...but I also know where we are as a Church and how God has worked with us and brought us to where we are.

And if time were to go on three years, four years, five years...how long would you endure? How long could you endure if God didn't cut it short – *this* phase of tribulation, literally at the very end here, that we're going through right now? I am convicted with *all my being* the scripture, what Jesus Christ said, "Will there be faith on the earth when I return?" If God didn't intervene brethren, where would any of us be? If God didn't intervene in some manner, in some form, in my own life or in your life, to help us to see and to know by just flat communicating it to us – because I don't believe there would be any other way except God send an angel or God Himself manifest, or Jesus Christ manifest Himself in order to talk, in order to explain things, because there comes a point in time where you can't continue on in faith. And that's the beauty of God's way of life, because it is one of faith and He doesn't forsake us, He doesn't let us go. This is a matter of [faith] ...what we're going through is a matter of faith all the way to the end, of what God inspires and what He gives to us. But I hope you understand the seriousness of our lives and how delicate they are, and if it isn't the way God works with us and is working with us right now, if it weren't that way, if God didn't do certain things in a specific manner we would not long endure anymore. Truly! We would be scattered to the wind and sore dismayed and lost on a spiritual plane, because there is nothing else, this is it, this is God, God's way of life, God's truth, God's Church.

Thankfully God doesn't forsake us, He doesn't leave us. So again, just making it very clear what's being said, **and except those days should be shortened**, to cut off, **there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake**, because God loves His Church and because He knows, He knows us inside out, He has moulded and fashioned, He's brought us to this point in time; **those days shall be shortened**. Thank God...thank God!

So, it's a sobering thing when you understand your life is in God's hands, and that's what you need to understand all the time, but all the more reason to understand why you have to fight the kinds of battles you do to the very end. A little sobriety sometimes doesn't hurt us – just like on the Last Great Day last year, being shocked and sobered into something, to be able to look at something as God was preparing us for something we didn't even know was coming...but we were to examine some things in our life at *that* moment, to ask the questions; What are we going to do? What are we going to do with our lives? How much are we convicted in what we believe?

Verse 23 - Then if anyone shall say to you, Look, here is Christ, or over there; do not believe it. For there shall arise false Christ's, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; same expression that's used about what happened even during the apostasy – power, signs, and lying wonders – that means there's great spiritual power in some of those things...and there still is out there. ...**insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive**...even this expression here, something the Church has not always understood, '**the very elect**'. There is one organization out there that believes they are the 'very' elect, they are the 'elite' of the elect. That's what they believe. They believe they are the elite; that there is this little pocket of God's people and the rest really..."Well, they're Laodiceans and you know what Laodiceans are like!" So there is this little elect pocket of 'elite people',

the 'very elect'. They're not going to be deceived, they know where the truth is and they have...that's been their selling point, because they have to sell that and there are people who buy into it. It's just a word that means 'even' the elect; it doesn't mean the 'very' elect, like some elite of the elitist. It says, **even the elect/God's people.**

So the point being – **shall show great signs and wonders so much that if it were possible...** Who are God's elect? Well, those whom God is working through, those who are part of the Church of God, the Body of Christ and those who are yielding themselves and striving to be strong within that Body indeed, alert and on guard, spiritually alert and on guard like God says, like it said at the end of Revelation there, 'those who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony/the witness of Jesus Christ in their life', because of what they're living, because they're living this... Just as we're going to be living during the Feast of Tabernacles what we've heard in the previous sermons here about relationships during the Feast, and more so in our life until the end.

It gives different examples here – again, something on a spiritual plane – **Therefore if they shall say to you, Behold, He is in the desert;** in other words, it literally is about a place...it's like you're going to leave a place where you're being fed, a place where you have proof, evidence that God has blessed you and given you more and more and more, year by year by year, and yet somebody over here who doesn't have that, who says, "Here is where Christ is. Here is where the Church is. This is where you need to be...because look at him, look at what he's done, look at his life, look at that bad example, look at what people are saying out there, and they can't be wrong." And on and on it goes; to find reason why you need to go here instead of staying where you are where you're being blessed with rich food that God has given to you, that is proof. Instead, to take people into the desert – that's what it's talking about. I'm going to give some examples here in a moment but you think, "How *sick* is that? Why would you go out to where there is famine? ...where there isn't this spiritual food? Why go back...?" That's something that blows the mind sometimes. I'll come back to this in a moment.

Verse 26 – Therefore, if they shall say to you, Behold, He is in the desert; a place of famine, that's what it means, no food. That's a great place to go isn't it? **...'do not go forth'**; carries more meaning here. This word literally means more than that. It doesn't just mean 'do not go forth', it literally means 'to come out from and go forth'. **...do not come out from and go forth;** What are you coming out from? A place where you *have* food and abundance, but you're going out into the desert where there is nothing, no food, where there is going to be famine? How insane is that? But that's the admonition here because it's already happened to people. You think, "How sick!"

...or look, it says here, **He is in the 'secret chamber'**; it has to do with a word that means 'an inner room', that has to do with more of 'the treasury', 'a treasury'. It has the concept of a treasury, that's why it says a 'secret chamber', a place where things are hidden. In other words, the truths, the truths of God, the secret chamber that is the treasury. Here is where the truth is, here is where the treasury is, the truths of God. That's why I have encouraged people over and over and over again to prove those things to yourself and review them and look deeply into them and where are you in unity and oneness with them? Because we have enough evidence that shows that there are some who definitely last Feast of Tabernacles didn't have this in them, they weren't in unity with the truths that God had given even though I encouraged people to do so.

Verse 27 – Beautiful! - For as the lightning comes out of the east, and shines even unto the west; so shall the coming of the Son of man be. Awesome! In or during the time of tribulation, in other words, God's Church will see His coming...God's Church will see His coming. I think again about the truths given

to the Church that we have talked about in times past, that will illuminate His coming. That's what it's about here, it's about the truth that God gives that illuminates. Because that's how we came to understand He's coming – that's the lightning from east to west that God gave to His Church, to His people. I think of number 22, the first one that God gave us:

22 (1) There has been an apostasy that is unprecedented in the Church of God as prophesied in 2 Thessalonians 2:1-3.

Those verses repeat over and over again about the return of Jesus Christ, the coming of Jesus Christ, when He's coming. Over and over, just in the first three verses there. And so that's one of the first great truths that God gave to us, that there has been an apostasy, that that which we had talked about in God's Church through Philadelphia, in time we knew that there was going to come a time when people were going to fall away from the truth that God had given to the Church. And I think, "Where...? Are people going to go out there now, to some place that doesn't believe that?" Are you going to go someplace now and give up what God gave to you, this knowledge, this understanding, this ability to see this, and go someplace where it doesn't exist, where it's not taught? Especially number 23?

23 (2) The Man of Sin has been revealed to be Joseph Tkach, Sr., who initiated the end-time apostasy.

Truth? True or not? I think of people who have left, and I think, "Can you answer that? Are you going someplace that doesn't teach that now? What do you believe? Did it happen? Did it happen through him? Was he the one that lied? Is he the one that tore apart the doctrines of the Church? *Did he do it or not? Is he the man of sin, the son of perdition? How hard is that to acknowledge and to admit for God's people?*" And yet there are people who have left that truth to go into the desert, to go eat sand, to live on sand, dry air, hot air. Incredible what we've lived through and what we see sometimes!

And this should even give us greater understanding as to what is recorded in 2 Thessalonians 2 that's referring to, again here, in large part to what we just read in Matthew 24:27 – 'For as lightning comes out of the east and shines unto the west, so shall the coming of the Son of man be.' I'm going to read 2 Thessalonians 2:8, because that's what this verse is about.

2 Thessalonians 2:8 - And then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth and shall destroy with the brightness – 'like lightning from the east to the west' – that everyone in God's Church should be able to see! That no one is without excuse! But very few have ever believed it, do believe it to this point in time. **...and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming.** You think, "How awesome!" I think of the timing. I think of the timing when we came to understand another one of the truths about the 1st Seal that was opened, that this is about the Church, it's not about a physical 'great tribulation' on the earth, it's about *spiritual* tribulation on God's people. *Awesome* to understand that! ...and the apostasy, and the man of sin, and that which was going to begin at that particular time, and 280 days later he died, a time of judgment within a period of 1260 days because God was showing us something about judgment here and about 'Time, Times, and a Half a Time' that we were able to learn. But anyway you cut it there is always going to be a period of 1260 days, but for God's people the 980 is going to mean a great deal as well as the 280 preceding it, because it has meaning in it and *God's* judgment and what *God* is doing and that *God* is involved in this and *God* is the one who destroyed him. You think, that was the beginning! That was the beginning of a timeline. I think of the chart we have – very clearly cycles of the 70 and 13, and all the way from that day on

December 17th, 1994 all the way up to May 27th and then that day. That *is* the day of Christ's return but it is a 'prophetic day', a 'spiritual day'. Awesome!

Number 24... So as we were given more and more truth God was leading us to see more and more the brightness of Christ's coming. That's how He strengthened us in the beginning in a very powerful way, to help us to see things that no one else was seeing, because God wasn't working anywhere else, and He gave us strength through this, He gave us ability to understand – Jesus Christ is coming! We didn't even know the timeline yet, we just knew that it was started, it had started. We didn't know the time period that was to be in there. We learned that through time.

Number 24, The "Temple" – the third truth that God gave us.

24 (3) The "temple" in Matthew 24, 2 Thessalonians 2, and in many other prophecies, is about the Church of God.

Not about a physical temple in Jerusalem, it's about the Church of God. And I think about people, "Why would you leave this truth? ...something that Mr. Armstrong was teaching just before he died, teaching and making it very clear that the 'Temple of God' is a spiritual temple and not a *physical* one in Jerusalem!" And yet, look at the groups out there, that's what they believe! They believe it's a physical temple or at least a physical altar that has to be set up.

So to leave the truth and to go out in the desert and suck up sand, it's hard to grasp sometimes, it's hard to understand. Can that happen to you? If I'd asked this last year to a group of people that it's already happened to, they wouldn't have believed it would happen to them, but look what they got caught up in. That's why we need to understand the battle that we're in. That's why we need to understand the power of that being! That's why we need to understand that there is *power* out there to pull you away from God's Church...and that's what that being is striving to do! That's why he's bombarding you more now than ever before in your life! Since May 27th! And how you come through all this is what *defines* you in God's Church! And it can define you in a beautiful way or it can define you in a bad way as being a vessel of dishonour instead of a vessel to honour. God gives us the choice of that!

In some cases, people don't have a choice. Mr. Tkach didn't have a choice, in that respect. He was called to fulfill a purpose. Now, he had choices all along the way, don't misunderstand what I'm saying; he had choices to make all along the way but he was destined to fulfill something. Not everyone in God's Church is destined to fulfill something; you have choices right now to make that determine *now* as to what's going to happen at this stage of the game, if you will, or at this stage of where we are in this process of what God is doing. I don't like that other expression there at all but it's one that we tend to use sometimes in the world.

So again, the temple of God is about the Church of God. I'm going to read some more here because I think of one after the other that God just gave us, more and more, the lightning, the brightness of His coming was made stronger and stronger to us. That's why we've known where we are. That's why we've known what has happened. The fourth one He gave to us...

25 (4) The Abomination of Desolation is about what Joseph Tkach did in the Church.

The abomination of desolation. What could be more hideous and more abominable to God, that destroys.

26 (5) The stones of the temple are about the people in the Church of God at the end-time.

Stones of the Temple! You know, in Matthew 24 Jesus Christ said that 'not one stone would be left upon another'! Who believes that out there? Who believes that? Shouldn't that tell us what took place? Shouldn't that be the very thing that's evidence of what's happened to us as far as an apostasy and what we did and that we're all guilty of what took place and we had to repent of that?

27 (6) All in God's Church during the era of Laodicea were Laodicean.

You know, that's an important one to understand because that's a part of repentance, that's a part of... it's a part of ownership, like we talked about last Sabbath! ...owning up to the fact of what you've done! And there are people out there who can't do that; they're still Philadelphian, they're the 'elite', they can't acknowledge. Some acknowledge there is an apostasy, in part, but they don't believe the rest of the story – stones of the Temple – Laodicea – we were all spewed out of God's mouth, all these things. No?

28 (7) All of Laodicea was spewed out of God's mouth as prophesied, separated from Christ, and scattered.

You know, over and over and over again, powerful things that God gave to us to help us to understand Jesus Christ is returning, this is it, this is the end, it's begun.

29 (8) The entire Church fell asleep just as it is described in Matthew 25:1-13.

And I think... I can't help it, I think of people who have chosen now in recent time, and even this last week I got another letter from someone who had been ordained as well, that's confused. How can you not believe after all this time? Has been with us nearly from the beginning! How can you be at a point in time where you can't believe this truth? ...that we were all spewed out of God's mouth, that what it said about Laodicea was fulfilled, that we were *all guilty* of what took place concerning the apostasy, in that respect, because we'd become weak. And God's word is true, when He said this was going to happen to His Church, when He said "You're not hot and you're not cold; you're this stuff in the middle that I'm not going to accept, and I'm going to vomit you out of My mouth because this is not... You can't be this way in God's Church! I can't work with you this way! Where is your zeal for Me? Where is your love for Me? Where is your sacrifice? Is it owed to you?" That's the attitude of Laodicea – it's owed to me, I'm rich and increased with goods, it's owed to me. No, it isn't! You have to *fight* for this way of life if you want it, you truly do! And that requires zeal, it requires being *hot* for God's way of life, and that begins with repentance, of being able to acknowledge what we are and our need for God's spirit. If you don't grasp the need for God's spirit you're not going to cry out for it and you're not going to be repenting before God for the wrong attitudes and the foul things that come out of your mouth at times.

But when those things happen we repent because we're zealous for God's way of life, we want it, we don't want this world, we don't want the way of this world, we don't want the spirit of this world...we want God's spirit! Awesome!

And so how people can go suck up on sand, dry sand, blows my mind! What happened to you? Where did your mind go? What did you do? When did you start losing this? When did you *stop believing* that you were Laodicean and that you were spewed out of God's mouth and that you needed God's help and that you were awakened?

I think the one individual even made comment about how that... about falling asleep. What was the comment? Do you remember how it was stated? Now believes that what he fell asleep by was, "Yeah, I fell asleep..." and basically going back to 1986 now, that's the cut off. God hasn't revealed anything else to His Church since 1986? ...no more understanding? We don't know what we went through during the apostasy? We don't grasp these truths that God has given to us? What happens to the mind to do things like this? Well, there is a lot of power there and that is why this is a battle and that's why you need to be on guard.

Because this happened during the apostasy, where one day I could talk to a minister who the next day could talk to Joe Jr., for one, two, three, or four hours, and the next time I talked to them they were not the same person. I didn't know them anymore. We didn't have anything in common. This happened over and over and over again with friends in the ministry – just an hour or two or three of talking to Joe and they were gone, and as pathetic as it was some started using the example of a sci-fi movie, 'The Invasion of the Body Snatchers', because the point being is one day they were one way and the next they were something else and you couldn't carry on a conversation. They were not the same. They *truly were not the same person!*

And you think, "How can this happen?" Because there is a *power*, that unless you have seen it... you don't want it to happen to you, because if you do, if it happens to you, you're gone! That's why you need to be close to God and take it seriously and understand there is power to destroy. Power, signs, and lying wonders...

You need to be on your toes all the way to the end, fight this fight all the way to the end, and right now more than ever because of the very thing that God is crying out to the Church about right now. We are in a *great war!* In the Church of God right now, more than any other time in God's Church, this is it, this is the final part of it and you've got to fight with all of your being. This is not a cake-walk, this is not something we can just come to Sabbath services and listen to the sermon and then say, "Oh, that was nice," And go home and not change something, and not pray about something.

The things we're hearing? We need to be praying about and changing things in our lives and making sure that indeed the last five sermons we've had here, as an example, our relationships are *better today* than what they were yesterday, that our relationships with one another in God's Church are going to be richer at this Feast of Tabernacles than last Feast of Tabernacles, *because if they aren't, something is wrong with you!* *You're not yielding to God's spirit and you're not fighting the fight!* You've got to fight this fight, because that being wants to get a way in! He wants to make a wedge to get in here! Don't let him in! Fight the fight! It begins with you, that you're determined you're going to have a right spirit toward one another, that you're going to love one another, and where you don't, ask God to help you to see what's wrong in your mind, *why* you don't love someone, *why* you don't want to see them succeed, *why* you don't want them to make it, *why you* don't love them and have a great desire for them, a willingness to sacrifice yourself and your own desires in order for them to be able to do better. *Why?* That's what we should be toward one another! This is a battle and this is the time we're waging this more than... This is the time going to be written about more than any other time!

You want to read the book of Acts and be inspired by it? That's wonderful, that's inspiring! Those stories and things they lived are exciting! But I'll tell you what – in the future people are going to be very inspired to come back and read about *this* time, what you're living through right now! "You mean, this happened? You lived through that?! You mean this is what these people went through and he was stirred up and this is what he did and this is how he came at God's Church and this is how he came at God's people? Amazing! You mean you did *what* up until May 27th and you... and you didn't know? And some of you were out on the rooftops?" Some were looking up in the sky with their families! Now, that's *conviction*!

And it's like those bags back there, those gunny sacks with coffee labels on them; they itch. You have to wear them, sackcloth, because that's what comes next. "And they did that! That's awesome! Another year! Pentecost to Pentecost – how beautiful!" They're going to be inspired by what they read about God and what God did and the revelation of things that God gave. I'm inspired by them, they're going to be inspired by them.

Sometimes when you live something you're not as inspired. You can go back here and read stories and think, "Oh, that's amazing! Amazing stories!" And they *are* amazing, because God's in it, He's working things out, but the vast majority of things that are being worked out in a very powerful way throughout the Bible – they're all looking to this time, *this time*, and to be there when Jesus Christ returns.

I think of so many in God's Church as well, what an *awesome thing* that some of you are going to know people in the God Family! *Personally* know them! Now, there is no one else in the God Family that has that ability until the Great White Throne, of being around people who know them. So to have that opportunity to know people in the God Family right away at the very beginning? How awesome is that? How incredible is that? How unique are you on the earth in 7,100 years of mankind? *You are unique!* What an awesome blessing!

I don't know where I was... I think I was reading through some of these truths and wondering why people go out and suck up on sand, hot sand, hot air. Now, I know they're getting a lot of hot air because I know where it's coming from! Whew! Anyway...

Let's go on, Matthew 24:28. I could go on and on, but all these things, the truths that God gave us in the beginning was so we could see what had happened to us, so we could be strengthened, to understand *why* they happened to us and so that we could grasp where we were in time and be motivated and more focused upon where we were going and the final stretch.

Matthew 24:28 - For wherever the 'carcass'/the 'body'; you know what, how it's often translated, which means more to me today than what it did a year ago? Its most often translated as 'dead body'. And what did we go through in Revelation talking about the end-time, about how others look upon us? Dead. As far as they're concerned, their attitude is toward us. And where are they? **Wherever the 'body'/'dead body' is,** and how they view it, **there were the 'eagles'**, that word really has to do with 'flesh eating birds', that's where they're eating, because that's their attitude, that's where they're picking apart. And you think, "Why not go bother somebody else?" No, I don't even want that! I don't want anybody else to have that upon them. But I think of that example in 'Fiddler on the Roof', Tevye, was that his name? ...and he's talking to God and he always put his hands up in the air and he said, "God, just for one day could someone else be your special people?" ☺ Because of all the things they were going through in Russia at that time there, if you remember the story there of 'Fiddler on the Roof' and the oppression and so forth of the Jewish people and so forth (no matter where they've lived in the

world), but I think that's where that one took place if I remember the story correctly, it's been so long ago. But anyway, I don't wish that upon anyone else.

But **where the dead body is there were the eagles**, like vultures, we can relate to that, **that's where they're gathered together**. They're not gathered somewhere else; this is where they're gathered.

Immediately after the tribulation of those days, in other words, at the end of the spiritual tribulation upon the Church – this is beautiful – **immediately after the tribulation of those days**, because Matthew 24 is about things that have happened in the Church, things that led up through Philadelphia and then on into Laodicea, all the way up to the end here. **Immediately after the tribulation of those days**, in other words, at the end of the spiritual tribulation upon the Church, **shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light**, these are the prophecies – they're repeated in Acts but they're from the book of Joel, as a whole, Joel 2. Says ...**shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars, it says, shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken**: You know what this is? It's the transition from the spiritual tribulation into a physical one, to a final physical tribulation upon this world. That's what it's about.

Because the reality is even when we begin to go into a greater physical tribulation, which we have always called, in essence, in times past, the 'great tribulation'; when that begins we're not going to have the same kind of spiritual battles anymore. Candidly, you're not even going to have to live by the same kind of faith you live by right now because it's going to be right in front of you and you're going to be stronger than ever before.

And so the spiritual tribulation part won't mean anything anymore in that respect, in comparison, because the physical begins. And that's what God has given to us today. That's why the sermon is titled what it is, 'The End of Tribulation', we look forward to the end of it all. But we're very close now to the end of the spiritual tribulation, the beginning of a physical one, and then it's all over, thank God. Thank God that being who's behind all this is put away. Thank God Jesus Christ is about to return to this earth to remove all the suffering, all that people go through, and I think about the Church and the scattered Church that's out there and those who are going to come along. And we may be blessed to see a 'type' of that for the world – what an awesome thing! Things about God's mercy and things about what God is striving to do during this time we're going through to save more and more and more. ...and isn't that what the two-day fast was all about? There are some powerful things coming down the pike – beautiful things.

So again, the reality is tribulation upon the Church has always been part of God's plan, it's always been a part of God's purpose, it's always been there, great tribulation.

I thought it would be good just to go through some of these, we have time to do it. Revelation 7. Tribulation is a power means for strengthening, moulding, and fashioning of character, of God's mind in those who will *yield* – because you have to yield to that process. For those who will yield themselves to that process, because the reality is that's why so many leave, because they don't want to yield to that process. The battle is just too much, it's too great, and it is hard, it is a battle, and that's why you shouldn't strive to fight it yourself. It has to do with your relationship with God and how important that relationship is and how close and how much you truly cry out to God and are opening up to God and are being truthful with God.

So, when speaking of the 144,000 here God reveals much about those who become a part of that count, and that's what we're going through here.

Revelation 7:4 – And I heard the number of them who were sealed: and there were sealed a hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.

Verse 13 - And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, Who are these who are clothed in white robes? And from where did they come? And I said to him, Sir, you know. And he said to me, These are they who came out of mega, that word there again, that word 'megas'/great tribulation, in other words, all of the 144,000. We didn't focus on things like this in times past. When we heard the word 'great tribulation', in our mind, in my mind....that's why I've even used the terms even (I know, I'm positive it's there in the book somewhere), because this was still what we looked at, 'great tribulation', because we thought so much in a physical plane and what God was going to do. And it's been spiritual indeed, but generally we took these things first and foremost as physical at one period of time until the apostasy.

And so, it's making very clear here that 144,000, called out over 6,000 years, they've all gone through great tribulation, because the reality is, what God has been preparing for the past 6,000 years to be in that Government, it's the primary means of moulding and fashioning certain things into them that placed them there, that they have to go through in order to be there. It's the very thing that God uses to create certain things within their being, in their minds and what they experience. And that is *why* some of you, many of you who have been called, who are going to live on into a new age when Jesus Christ returns, in the Church of God, still in embryo waiting to be born later on, have so much going for you. You are *so unique* in time, because you've had the opportunity to live in this period of time and fight the same kinds of battles and be moulded and fashioned with things that people aren't going to have the same opportunity for later on.

Satan won't be around, some of the battles and wars and things that have taken place that mould and fashion people, of things you go through, some of the spiritual battles – they're not going to be around. They're going to grow, they have to overcome and conquer and yield to God's spirit and all those things, but what is moulded and what you have opportunity for because of what you've experienced...you can't put a price on that, and you are going to understand that one day. You can't put a price of value on that. That's why the 144,000 have what they have, because of what they've gone through, because of what God has moulded and fashioned *in* them during that period of time that could be done in *absolutely no other way nor time*. It's awesome, beautiful when you understand what God is doing.

And so he said, **they are those who came out of great tribulation and have washed their robes, washed their robes and have made them white in the blood of the Lamb.** Over and over again, I love that expression more and more because it's all about repentance. It means that's how you do the washing. The more you repent the more you're washing. It's like one of those old things you put down in a tub of water and had all these ripples on it and you get your hands down there and you're going back and forth and rubbing it on there, scrub-board, scrub, whatever it is, [washer board] and especially in this way of life, you are rubbing hard to get the stains out, to get the dirt out, to get the sin out. And that's what we have to yield ourselves to, to fight against. It *is* an incredible battle, in this age especially of the 6,000 years that people have been living through, especially with that being being around.

So again here, this thing of repentance. We should always see repentance as a part of this process; over and over again when we read verses like this because it shows what is upon us, the need to be

constantly repenting and changing and yielding to what God has given to us – and not staying the same, not coasting. I've had a lot of letters and comments from people, how they acknowledge that before May 27th they were coasting for an easier way! Kind of *coast into* a new age... It's not going to happen. You're not going to *coast* into it, you're going to *fight for it*, especially now because of the changes you're making. First of all, you're fighting yourself, you're fighting your own mind and your own spirit, your own attitude because you want to yield to God's spirit and God's attitude, God's mind, the *beatitudes* as Christ talked about. You know, the be-attitudes, it's the attitudes you're supposed to be. 😊

It goes on to say, **Therefore they are before the throne of God and serve Him day and night**; that means more to me now because of things we've talked about, **serve Him day and night**; We don't sleep. You can work around the world 24 hours a day and it just fills your life more and more – 8 hours here, 8 hours there, you just... A lot of opportunities of seeing God's people constantly. Awesome! What could you ask for more?

...and serve Him day and night in His Temple: because you're *in it* forever, in the Temple forever, you're a part of the construction of the Temple. **...and He who sits on the throne shall dwell among them**. All of them, all 144,000 because He's *in* all of them. **They shall be hungry no more, neither shall they thirst anymore; neither shall the sun light upon them, nor any heat**. In other words, they can manifest themselves physically but they're spirit and none of those things affect them, none, like it would flesh.

Verse 17 - For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, always, forever, spiritually, spiritual power, spiritual life, spiritual oneness, the mind, the total unity that's there in a way that we only taste of in this physical life. The times that you've been the most inspired, the moments you've had at different times when you've been the most inspired in your life, that's the way it is all the time, it's just always there. I don't understand that fully but that's what it is. **...shall feed them and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes**. No longer the kind of suffering there is in this human life, but only deeply, powerfully so, full understanding, oneness, unity with God.

Let's turn over to Acts 14; another area that talks about tribulation. We're not going to have time today to go into some of the scriptures where Paul talks about how we rejoice in tribulation. I have a battle with that one. I understand, I do rejoice at times here, like in a sermon I rejoice in that because I see it, I understand it, I embrace that because I understand what it's all about. But when you're actually going through it it's another thing, you're not always jumping up and down when you're going through it because of the human weakness of the human mind, the human body, and what we experience, the agony, the hurt, the pain, the suffering that you have to fight against. But once we get through it then I've been able to rejoice more when I see what's been moulded and fashioned and why it's there and how it's there.

He speaks in terms that I think were unique to him in a very powerful way because of what he experienced in his life and how God worked with him. But he did rejoice as things were actually happening and that's awesome! I fall short in that area; but anyway, we're all different.

Acts 14:19 - And there came there certain Jews from Antioch, so we're jumping into the story here, **and Iconium, who persuaded**, in other words, they convinced **the people**, not good things about Paul and about the Church and about the truth, these Jews. It says, **and having stoned Paul**, so they convinced them to this point in time of how bad Paul was and how he needed to be stoned according to the law of

the Old Testament there, and so that's exactly what they did, **they stoned him and dragged him out of the city, supposing he had been dead**, that he had died.

Verse 20 - However, as the disciples stood around him; so they were there, they came around him because his body was there, **and he rose up;** How incredible is that? ...to give in the beginning of the Church, as the Church was just beginning, because of the things about Christ. There wasn't a history, there wasn't a thing written about the Church at this point in time, they were writing it, it was in their lifetime that these things were being written about, and so here they were standing around and Paul gets up, stands up, **and came into the city:** God gave him strength, power, healing power, obviously, there. Doesn't mean He took away everything, because they were able to see... you know, when you have a few rocks thrown at you to the point that you're bloodied up and everything else...it takes a little while to heal from that part, that God leaves certain things with us. But he was able to get up and it says, **they came into the city; and the next day,** right away, **he departed with Barnabas to Derbe. And when they had preached the gospel in that city, and had taught many, they returned again,** how anxious would you be to go back, **to Lystra, to Iconium, and to Antioch,** the very places these Jews were from? But he was moved by God's spirit to do so, so he went back, because of the people, because of the Church, to continue to work with them.

That's what it says, **Strengthening the souls,** or in other words, the hearts and minds is what it's about, because with the truth and that which gave them spiritual strength. **Strengthening them of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith,** that's what God does to us, we've had that today here, to continue in it, to keep fighting the fight, to understand the truths that God has given to you, to be inspired by them, to be moved by them, to understand how you're fed, exhorting them to **continue in the faith,** that means in what you've been given to believe. God gives that to you! He brings you along and gives you the truth! Why would anyone go anywhere else?

...continuing in the faith, and that we must through 'much' tribulation, and this word here has to do with 'much', 'many', that's what the word means here, little bit different than 'megas', but it's just showing that it's going to be a repetition, it's going to be continuing, much, many tribulations in other words, in our life, **enter into the Kingdom of God.** So, especially speaking of the 144,000. God's purpose is to make it easier for people during the Millennium; that's God's design, to save more, to work with more, God's Government's in action, God here, Jesus Christ here on the earth in other words, in the God Family and in the Great White Throne.

So again here, it's just a part of life. We don't cry about it, we don't whine about it, we don't go mope about it, we don't go off into a corner, although sometimes we might feel like it, and maybe for a little while we do on occasion, to the point where we get on our knees and we're motivated to get on our knees because you just cry out to God. Sometimes you just cry to God...truly, have tears because of what you feel, because of what you're battling, because of what you're going through. I had a little of that this past week as this bombardment was taking place and knowing where it was coming from and you cry out to God about God's people and about things that are going on that people are suffering through...but we suffer through it together, but we have a vision of where we're going and what we're doing. That's what it's all about, and we fight it together and we learn to treasure each other more and more and more because we're in this together.

John 16. Barely have time for some of this but I think it's a good one to end on here today. I don't have time to go into some of the others, but maybe it'll be for another time. But here is a story; this was done on the last night of Jesus Christ on this earth, the Passover night, after He'd had the Passover with

the disciples. This is a part of what we sometimes read through on Passover in God's Church, because this is the instruction that Jesus Christ was giving to the disciples after they departed, after partaking of the Passover that night, before He was going to die the following day period of daylight.

John 16:16 – In a little while you will not see Me: and again, in a little while you shall see Me, because I go to the Father. Basically He was telling them goodbye, and they got that out of the message here. How do you tell them, "Goodbye. I'm leaving you. I'm going someplace else." Now, they didn't grasp all that He was saying but they knew this was a goodbye; that's what you need to understand by this. **Then some of the disciples said among themselves, What is this that He is saying to us, that in a little while, and you'll not see Me: and again, in a little while, you will see Me: and, Because I go to the Father?** "What is He saying?" **Therefore they said...** They knew what He taught about God the Father, that it was God He was talking about. They knew. But what does this mean? How do you go to God? What is He talking about here?

Verse 18 – Therefore they said, What is this that He's saying, In a little while? We cannot understand what He's saying. So this is a conversation amongst themselves.

Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask Him, and said to them, Are you enquiring among yourselves of what I've said, In a little while you will not see Me; and again, in a little while, and you shall see Me?

Verse 20 – Truly, truly, I say to you, That you shall weep and mourn, but the world will rejoice: and you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. Now, this is very prophetic because it isn't just about the time of His death, it's about things that will follow through time. It is about what we go through as God's people and about where we end up when it's all said and done. It is about a process of life. And so again, it's using something that's going to happen right away physically to Him but it's also picturing something that's going to continue to happen in their lives, as a part of their life, it's prophetic.

He says, **you shall weep and mourn, but the world shall rejoice; and you shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. When a woman is in labour she has sorrow, because her hour has come: but as soon as she has delivered a child, she doesn't think anymore about the anguish for joy that a child is born into the world. And you now therefore have sorrow:** and because, again, they understood here that He was in essence saying goodbye. So there was that which was entering into a part of their being here. He says, **but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and no one shall take away from you your joy.**

Verse 23 - And in that day you shall ask Me nothing. Truly, truly, I say to you, Whatever you shall ask the Father in My name, He will give it you. Again here, He's beginning to project forward into things that are going to happen as a result of what He's going to go through, but what we're all going to experience in time as far as the Church is concerned.

But going on, **verse 24 –** Because this message of what He gave there – that's why we read this Passover to Passover to Passover, things like this, of why He gave Passover instruction – because it's for the Church through time and *especially* until He returns and comes back. And that's what He's telling them in essence here, in part. **Up to now you have asked nothing in My name:** He was there with them. He was there teaching them. He says, **you've asked nothing in My name: ask, and you shall receive,** that which is according to God's will, not just what we want, but that which is according to God's will as a

part of the Church of God, of why He's called us – especially the desire for God's spirit, especially for the desire to be led by Him, especially a desire for Him to be with us in the battles we fight and all the things that have to do with spiritual warfare and a spiritual part of our life and the desire to grow, conquer, and overcome, to repent, all the things that are a part of this.

...ask, and you shall receive; Ask what? One of the primary things you ask for, because of what He's going through, is to be forgiven of your sins! ...and God will grant it! That's one of the *primary* things that comes as a result of *exactly* what He's telling them here, what He's getting ready to fulfill the following day! What an awesome blessing! **...ask, and you shall receive, that your joy may become full.** To be able to be rid of sin and to be able to continue forward knowing that God is going to continue dwelling in you to give you strength? Oh, it's awesome!

Verse 25 – I have spoken these things to you in proverbs: in other words, they weren't supposed to be able to understand it all yet because it's prophetic, things that are going to happen through time, things they're going to begin experiencing once the Day of Pentecost comes. **...but the time comes when I shall no more speak to you in proverbs, but I shall show you plainly of the Father.** That began on the Day of Pentecost and it's continued on in God's Church ever since. Jesus Christ is the one who shows us plainly of the Father, He is the one who has been given charge to give *truth* to the Church; it comes through Him. He is the head of the Church, that's how God gave it.

At that day you shall ask in My name: and I say not to you, that I will pray/ask the Father for you: For the Father Himself loves you, in other words, we pray to the Father through Christ, in His name, that relationship that we're able to have with God the Father and with Jesus Christ, and it shows here because God loves us, He's the one who calls us and gives us to Christ. He made that clear in other places.

For the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me and have believed that I came forth out from God. That's what it's saying here, **I came forth from the Father, and have come into the world: but again, I am leaving the world and going to the Father. His disciples said unto Him, We see now as you are speaking plainly and are not speaking to us in proverbs.** "Now we understand it, You're going to the Father!" They didn't understand it fully. It was only in part here, but again, it's that eagerness to be in agreement, that eagerness to receive what their 'rabbi' had for them.

Verse 30 - Now we are sure that You know all things and have no need that anyone should ask You: by this we believe that You came forth from God. So, they were convicted of those things, to that degree anyway, to a point in time of everything they had experienced in a very unique way being with Christ.

Verse 31 goes on to say – **And Jesus answered them, Do you now believe?** Really? He knew they didn't understand what He was saying fully to them by any measure. **Behold, the hour is coming, yes, and now has come, that you shall be scattered, everyone to his own, and you shall leave Me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me.** You know, what was in His mind and what was going to take place, very much a part of His thinking here obviously in that which He was conveying to them, and to us now.

Verse 33 - These things I have spoken unto you, that in Me, that which was going to begin on Pentecost...**you might have peace.** That's how we're able to have peace. The sermons we've had recently coming up to this is about how to have peace amongst ourselves in God's Church because it's always, always, always... the 10 Commandments are *fully about* relationships! It's about the Family and

God wants us to understand! That's what's *spiritual*! It's in the *relationships* we have with one another! And God wants us to see this powerful so! It's not how much time we spend on our knees in prayer! It's not how much time we study the Bible! It's not how long or how many sermons we might listen to in a month! It's *none of those things* – although those things are important to do, to be done.

What determines is our response spiritually and the change that takes place in that, and our yielding to the change, and our truly understanding that the greater thing, above everything else, is in our relationships. That's how we're judged. That's what God wants! That's what He's changing in us so that we can truly have peace, because it's about Jerusalem – peace – the way of peace and how we live toward each other. What comes out of us is to be peace, and that's only possible if we're in Christ and Christ in God and God's in us and Christ is in us. It's a matter of what is spiritual because they're the source.

These things have I spoken to you, that in Me you might have peace. In the world you shall have tribulation: so there is that battle. In the truth we have peace because we see where we're going, we're inspired by that, and yet we have battles to fight in this world. That's the way it is as long as we're in this flesh like this, especially in this age, in this world. We have battles to fight, and they're not the kind of battles where we get to a point where we begin to focus inward and begin to feel sorry for ourselves and get out our little violin and start playing our song and going before God... Now, you may go before God at times and feeling like you're just, you're spent. I've done that a few times! I've felt that way a little bit last week – told God, "I feel totally spent! I don't have much more in me!" I don't! I'll just be honest with God, I am spent!

I understand things that are written by different ones in ways that I have never understood them before. Feel a little bit like I understand Elijah a whole lot more now when he wrapped up around the tree and just said, "Just let me die." That'd be too easy anyway. ☺ But there are things you go through and you fight battles and you fight battles, and you can feel where you are spent, there is nothing else in you. And the reality is there are times that there just isn't, it has to come from God. And that's what it's all about. It's always your strength, your life, your power, your ability to focus, your ability to keep going comes from God, and you keep going, you keep focused on those things, you keep fighting the fight!

...In Me you will have peace. In the world it just is what it is, **you're going to have tribulation:** it's not fun, it's a sick world, and you know what, the more you see and the more you understand about God and the more you understand human nature, the worse it is. And right now it's really getting worse because of the being that's stirred up out there, the beings that are stirred up out there and what they're doing in the world. It's almost more than you can bear. You've got to keep focused; you've got to stay close to God.

Great Feast of Tabernacles we're going to have, an opportunity to get charged up, to get focused, to be inspired, and especially by practicing what we're going to practice because we've been prepared for this by the things we've gone through in sermons about relationships – because that in the long run is what makes it richer in the first place, powerfully so, with all the truth you're given.

...in the world you'll have tribulation, but be of good cheer; In essence, rejoice, be thankful, be thankful before God, be thankful for this way of life, rejoice in this way of life, He says, **because I have overcome the world.** The message is, in essence, that because He overcame it, conquered it, He's going to help us to conquer it, because you can't do it on your own. You can't do it on your own by any measure, you've

got to rely upon, depend upon, and cry out to God for the strength and the power to move forward day by day by day, to fight the battles that are in front of you. And it *never* ends until it's ended.

That's why it's a great blessing to understand. To me, I take great encouragement in what God has inspired in this because until after Atonement I had no idea what the sermon was going to be this Sabbath; started to go in one particular direction and God gave this, 'The End of Tribulation'. What a blessing! To come to an end of spiritual tribulation, to enter into indeed what is physical and then no tribulation ever again. What an awesome thing!

Have a great Feast! Rejoice before God! Draw closer to God than any time in any Feast you've ever had. This is the time to do it, truly; this is the time to pour yourself out before God at the Feast, to keep focused, to listen closely to what you're given at the Feast and to apply those things that are given there.

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