

Welcome to another seventh day Sabbath, brethren.

The title of this sermon is *Signs of Pride – Part 2*.

In Part 1 we looked at God's word which defined the word 'pride.' The word 'pride' really is about haughtiness and it is all about a way of thinking, the thinking that goes on within the inner man, thinking that is actually confidential and cannot be seen by others, but God sees it. So this word 'pride' in God's view is 'an arrogance within a thinking,' 'a highness,' 'the lifting up of self,' 'lofty,' which is high, 'swelling,' which is the swelling, and that's what unleavened bread is about. It's about how leaven puffs up, so this swelling in thinking, thinking we are greater in value. We don't actually see ourselves the way God sees us, the way God made us – 'a rising up,' 'insolence,' 'presumptuousness.' It's about taking credit to self. Pride is arrogance! Pride is haughtiness! And that's what pride is; pride is an attitude. It is a way of thinking.

All these words describe a spirit, an attitude, within a person's thinking. Pride is an attitude within a person's thinking which is reflected. In other words, it's revealed by our words, our actions, but often pride isn't seen necessarily in thoughts, because we can have pride in our thoughts, but of course human nature is very good at covering up pride so that it doesn't give an appearance of overt pride. But the human mind has pride within its thinking.

Without God's spirit, we cannot come to fully see the evil of the sin of pride; it's not possible, of being proud. We just don't see it because the natural carnal mind can grasp aspects of pride, but it doesn't see it the way God sees it, which is this raising up against Him, because pride is the way we think and the way we think naturally is when we lift ourselves up against God. And that is what pride is; pride is lifting ourselves up in our opinion and we lift ourselves up against God, the way God sees us, God's opinion of us. We actually take credit to ourselves for our physical attributes and also spiritual attributes. We just simply don't see because the carnal mind can't see spiritual things.

We finished Part 1 by looking at the signs of pride as outlined in James 4, so if you'd like now to turn to James 4 and we'll start in verse 1. **James 4:1 – Where do wars and fights, which are battles, come from among you?** And it's talking about within the Church. It's talking about the brethren who are fighting. And this fighting, of course, is battles, and these can be battles that start in the mind about views or opinions of others or we see people in a different light than we should because we're viewing it from a natural carnal mind. So where do these thoughts, these battles and these fights come from among you brethren? **Do they not come from your...**and the word '*desires for pleasure*' is not there, **they come from your lust, the lust, the desires that war in your members?** ...in our thinking! So that's where these battles come from, because we start to battle in our mind by forming views or opinions about others.

Verse 2 – You lust and do not have. In other words, we desire. We turn our attention to something. We desire to *have* something and it's because we've turned our *view* on it, the way we think towards it. **You murder and covet.** In other words, we desire more, and we desire more because we are envious. We are envious of others so we want *more*. We want to take credit to something to ourselves, **and you cannot obtain. You fight and war** amongst ourselves, in our thinking, in our words and our actions, **yet you do not have because you ask amiss.** And the reason we ask amiss, brethren, is because we ask God

for things, but often we ask for the wrong reason, the wrong motive, because we want to take the credit to ourselves. So the motive, *why* we're asking for something from God, is wrong. We're desiring it to consume it on ourselves rather than to allow God to live *in* us out to the benefit of others.

Verse 3 – You ask and do not receive – Why? – because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your own pleasures. So we're going to use this, what we're asking for, to our own glory. We want to give credit to ourselves. We want to take the credit for achieving physical and spiritual things to ourselves.

Verse 4 – Adulterers and adulteresses! ...and that, of course, is about having unlawful relationships which are relationships with this world, this world's way of thinking, and anything that God says is unlawful and we go and then do it. We're having an adulterous relationship because we're breaking the relationship that God says we should have with Him, so we become spiritual adulterers because of this unlawful relationship. God says to come out of the world and have nothing to do with it, not to be involved in Satan's ways, and therefore, avoid it, leave it, leave it behind because we now have a relationship with God. **Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God?** In other words, it's hostile. It's against God to have this relationship. To be related with Satan's ways and the ways of the world, carnal thinking, is actually going against what God says. We should know that. This question is being asked: **Do you not know that friendship with the world is hostile/enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.** So we're actually fighting against God. We're now breaking this faithful relationship we should have with God and seeking to please God in all our thoughts, words, and actions, because now we're desiring a relationship that is not Godly, that is not ordained of God.

Verse 5 – Or do you think that Scripture says in vain, “The spirit which dwells in us yearns jealously”? Now, this is an incredible scripture! The nature, or the natural mind that we have, desires, longs for, pursues, and seeks out the praises of men and taking credit to self. We desire by nature to be lifted up in the eyes of others and we by nature desire to lift ourselves up within ourselves, and it's called *self-esteem*. In other words, "I am confident of my *own* ability!" And we leave God out of the picture completely.

Verse 6 – But He gives more grace, more favor. Therefore He says, God says: God resists the proud, because God can't work with someone that's proud, because they are *self-reliant*, **but gives grace, favour, to the humble.** A humble person is anyone that knows on a spiritual level, understands on a spiritual level, and understands the wisdom of the statement, 'Of Myself I can do nothing,' and it's talking about on a spiritual level. 'Of and by Myself,' this scripture is saying, we can do nothing. Now, Jesus Christ made this statement because He knew it was God that does the works. It is God that is good. It is God that is great, and it is *God* that achieves spiritual matters in and through an individual. We of ourselves with our natural carnal mind can achieve nothing on a spiritual level. It has to be *God* that does the works. It's *God* that achieves spiritual works, spiritual fruits. So if we do love somebody, it's God empowering us through the power of His holy spirit that achieves love out towards somebody else.

Now, today we're going to continue and explore the topic of pride and humility. Now the purpose we stated in Part 1 was that the purpose of the sermon is to explore the topic of pride for the purpose of spiritual growth – it's individual, personal, spiritual growth. It's about recognizing within ourselves pride and *fighting* pride within ourselves, and that really becomes the main point. The main point of all of this is that we need to begin to recognize the signs of pride within ourselves for the purpose of fighting against it by the power of God's spirit. The truth is we cannot see selfish pride in ourselves to any degree without the power of God in us; in other words, God must reveal pride to us. It is God that reveals pride

to us, and that's why we are called into the Church, because we have a natural carnal mind. We're then called into the Church, the Body of Christ, for a spiritual purpose. It's not a physical purpose; it's a spiritual purpose. That purpose is to be educated by God about the way God thinks. So we are to leave the thinking of the natural carnal mind, and by the power of God's spirit we are then to think spiritually, because God gives us the power to do it. Now, one of the things that God does is reveals ourselves, the natural carnal mind, to ourselves. We begin to see ourselves by the power of God's spirit, and then we see, well, this nature we have is actually designed and has been created in us to be against God. But the *beauty* of it all is conversion, that God is going to *transform* the mind to think like Him – and that is God's plan – to transform the mind to be converted, changed, to think like God. And the way that God does it is through the power of His spirit. We begin to *see* ourselves. We begin to see this natural mind. We begin to see pride within ourselves and that our motivations deep down are driven by pride, selfishness.

Without God's spirit we cannot see the depth of our pride, nor can we begin to overcome it. So without God's spirit nobody can actually overcome pride within themselves. If we think or believe we don't have any pride, and that can be a condition that we can develop, thinking, "Well, I can't see any pride that dwells within me," that thinking *in itself* is proof, *it is the evidence* that we actually have pride! Because only somebody *with pride* would make a statement, "I don't have any pride!" And that is actually the proof. Isn't that incredible?

So anybody, which is talking about us, brethren, if we say to God that well, we don't have sin, we don't have pride, well, that's actually the evidence that we have sin and that we have pride because we're calling God a liar – because God says we have pride and God says we have sin.

If you'd like to turn to 1 John 1. **1 John 1:6**, we're going to look at. **If we say we have fellowship**, and that is a relationship, **with Him**, with God, **and walk in darkness**, we walk in sin, we walk in pride. If we say we have this relationship and we just continue to walk with the natural carnal mind, **we lie**, we don't have a relationship with God, **and do not practice the truth**. What it's saying there is that if we go around and believe within ourselves that we have this relationship with God, we're in the Church of God and we have a relationship with God and that we know God, and yet our conduct, we walk around in darkness, we walk around in sin, obvious sin, one of them being pride, we're pride-filled, well, we're living a lie! We are *lying*, because we're not practicing the truth. We're not practicing the word of God!

Verse 7 – But if we walk in the light, the truth, what God has revealed to us about ourselves, **as He is in the light...** as God is in the truth and God cannot lie. God does not have pride. God does not have sin... **we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin**. Now, pride can be forgiven because it is through the death and the shed blood of Jesus Christ that cleanses us from all sin, and that's done through repentance. The gift of God is repentance, and then of course, once we repent of sin God will forgive us.

Verse 8 – If we say we have no sin, if we say we don't have any pride, **we deceive ourselves**, that's the natural carnal mind at work, **and the truth**, God's word, **is not in us**. So if we say we have no sin, if we say we *have no pride*, we deceive ourselves; the natural carnal mind is at work! We're *deceived* about it and it's really saying the truth is not in us. It's saying that God's spirit is not in us because God's spirit enables us to live the truth. So without God's spirit we can't *see* sin, we can't *see pride* within ourselves, and the natural carnal mind is deceived into believing that it's doing okay, that it is *justified*, that it is *right*. It is self-righteous. So without God's spirit, we live in sin, we dwell in pride.

Verse 9 – If we confess our sins, the sin of pride, any sin, **He, God, is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.** Now, God can cleanse us by His word, and that's what sermons are about, God's word washing through our minds to cleanse our minds, to cleanse us from a natural carnal mind by the power of God's spirit to live love to God and to others, to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. All unrighteousness is pride and sin because all sin is driven from pride. The motive of sin is pride. We lift ourselves up *against*, against God's way.

Verse 10 – If we say we have not sinned, if we say we have not lifted ourselves up against God in pride, **we make Him, God, a liar and His word is not in us.** And that's saying we don't have God's spirit because God's spirit reveals pride *in us*!

Now brethren, if we cannot see pride within ourselves, if we cannot see *any* sin within ourselves, in our thoughts, our words, or our actions, or our attitudes – if we go 1-2-3-4 days without seeing *any sin* within ourselves— it's a great warning to us, brethren! Because we should turn to God and ask God to reveal ourselves *to* ourselves, to reveal the natural carnal mind to ourselves. And if we can see ourselves, what we're really like, this base human nature, we would quickly go to God and admit that everything that we do in life based on a natural carnal mind is driven by pride. If we have God's spirit, He enables us to see it.

We'll look at Matthew 4 if you'd like to turn to Matthew 4:1. This is relaying the situation with regards to Jesus Christ being tempted or tested by Lucifer. So we can look at this and say, "Why does Satan broadcast? Why does Satan broadcast negative or sinful attitudes? Why does Satan broadcast or tempt? Because broadcasting attitudes is *tempting* or *testing* the mind, the testing of the mind of an individual. Well, the reason is to *entice* someone to lift themselves up against God, to *trigger pride* in the thinking. It's the inner mind that Satan is interested in.

Matthew 4:1 (and we'll go from verse 1 – 11) – **Then Jesus was led by the spirit into the wilderness to be 'tempted' by the devil.** And that word really is, 'to be tested.' God was allowing Jesus Christ, who had the mind of God, to face the temptation or the testing by Satan. Now, Satan is really the pinnacle of pride because he was the first to lift himself up against God, to go against God's way, and pride is when we go against God's way. Anything we do that is against God's word is pride. It's driven by pride because we're lifting ourselves up against God's word.

Verse 2 – And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry. This period of time, what it's saying there, Jesus Christ humbled Himself. He lowered Himself by not eating for forty days and forty nights. The physical body today would not cope with forty days and forty nights.

Verse 3 – Now when the tempter, Satan, came to Him, came to Jesus Christ, **he said...** Now, this is one of the biggest triggers of how pride works and it's the word '*if*,' because the word '*if*' creates a doubt. It triggers doubt within the human mind. So Satan says to Christ, **If You, Christ, are the Son of God, command these stones to become bread.** So the focus here that Satan was trying to get Jesus Christ to do was to focus on the physical, and yet Christ had the mind of God so His thinking was spiritual. But here is Satan trying to create an issue within the thinking of Jesus Christ which is, '*If You...*', in other words, "Well, *if you...*" and what it does to a human natural carnal mind if somebody comes up and says, "Well, if you are so good, why don't you..." and of course we would in a natural carnal mind, would then go out and either try to achieve it because we want to paint a new image for this person. They're doubting us. They're doubting our ability, who we are, what we have created of our own image. So when somebody says, "Well, *if you're* so smart why don't you..." and of course we will go, "Well, here,

let me show you!" because that's what the natural carnal mind would do. It would *prove* the other person wrong. Well, Jesus Christ had the mind of God.

Verse 4 – But He, Christ, answered and said, It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.’ What Christ was doing now was pointing things back to their true perspective. We are to live by every word of God. We are to take on the mind of Christ, the mind of God. We are to be spiritual in our thinking. If we were to think physically, we will react, but if we think spiritually, have God's thinking about it, by the power of God's spirit, we would know that we don't have to answer these types of questions. We don't have to take up the challenge, because if we were to take up the challenge, we would be thinking physically, we'd be thinking using the natural carnal mind.

So here is Christ repelling the testing by the very power of God, God's thinking *in* Him.

Verse 5 – Then the devil took Him up into the holy city, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, (verse 6), **and said to Him,** said to Christ, **if You,** so here are those same words again, **if You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down. For it is written...** so here he is trying to trigger pride again, because this word '*If You*' triggers pride within the natural carnal mind, and what was said...'**He shall give His angels charge concerning You.**' Really this statement says, 'He,' God the Father, 'shall give *His* angels,' God the Father's angels, 'charge concerning You/Christ.' So the challenge really came from the word '*if.*' '*IF*' is a challenge word. The natural mind will defend the self. It will set up this self-protection. It will then justify and it will revile back; in other words, it will give a human reasoning answer.

Continuing on in that verse...'**In *their* hands they shall bear You up, lest You dash Your foot against the stone.**' Verse 7, **Jesus said to him, It is written again, ‘You shall not test, tempt, the LORD your God.’** And that word really is 'to test.' So what Satan really is doing there is testing Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ had the mind of God and Christ is answering by saying, "Well, it's written, 'You shall not test the LORD your God.' You shall not go up against anything that God has said or written. What sort of arrogance and pride it is to stand up against God."

Verse 8 – Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And here it is, Satan is still focusing on the *physical*, because that's all Satan can really dwell on, is the physical.

Verse 9 – And he said to Him, he said to Christ, **All these things I, Satan, will give You, Christ, if You will fall down and worship me.** Now, there's lots of things we can see from this. We can see that Satan was actually given the authority over the earth and the kingdoms. So he is the prince and power of the air. He actually roams this earth because he has authority. God placed him in charge to look after the earth and God has left him here – he doesn't really understand his full purpose of why he's here – but he's actually here now and allowed to operate now to help develop Elohim. But here he is, he's saying, "Well, if you lay down and worship me," in other words, "You lift yourself up *against God*," because only God should be worshipped, "But if you were to worship me this is what I will give you!" And of course, that is evil thinking. That is sin. That is *pride* that is asking that question; it is driven by pride, because *why* would Satan want to be worshipped? He is looking for recognition of self. He wants to take glory to himself. The natural carnal mind, that's what it does. Well, Lucifer in his sin, in his rebellion, in his pride, desires the same thing.

Then Christ said to him, Away with you, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.' We know, brethren, that there is only *one* to be worshipped, and that is God the Father, because God the Father *is* the Creator of all things. He is all mighty. He is all powerful, and *He* does the works; therefore, *all* credit, *all* glory, *all* praise should be directed towards one being, and that is God the Father, because He is the author of all things.

Verse 11 – Then the devil left Christ (left Him), and behold, the angels came and ministered to Him. And that is by providing food and drink, to administer physical needs to sustain the body of Christ.

So from that we can see that Satan tries to trigger pride, and that's what temptation is about or testing is about. It's about pride: "How do I trigger pride within a being?" And that's what goes on in this world. Everything is driven by pride. And when we come under attack, when we come under testing through negative broadcasts, through thoughts that are transmitted into the mind, it is all to do with pride.

So brethren, whenever we know and are aware of temptation, we're aware of testing going on in our mind, we should quickly know that this is all about pride. It's all about the way we think, and pride is when we lift ourselves up, we go up *against God*, we become leavened. Sin penetrates our mind (if we allow it). And of course, the ideas of this life, the purpose of this life, really, is to fight against pride, to fight against lifting ourselves up against God, against God's ways, against the way God tells us to live. Because that's what sin is; it's rebellion against God's ways.

Matthew 16:13; we're going to cover an area of scripture here which reveals aspects of pride and how Christ handled this pride when He was confronted with aspects of pride because it was being driven towards Him to, again, cause Him to think wrong thoughts against God.

Matthew 16:13 – When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?

Verse 14 – So they said, Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.

Verse 15 – He said to them, But who do you say that I am? What this question's really saying is, "What do you really believe? What is your inner thinking? What is it you are now thinking that you actually believe that I am out of all these statements of people saying who that I am?"

Verse 16 – And Simon Peter answered and said, You are the Christ; You are the Messiah – now there were prophecies about the Messiah coming in the Old Testament, and here Peter is saying, "Well, You are The Messiah, the one scripture has written about, the Saviour of mankind." **You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.** Peter got it right in the sense of knowing who Jesus Christ was.

Verse 17 – Jesus answered and said to him, Blessed are you, very fortunate are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood, that's the human reasoning, human mind, carnal mind, has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. This revelation of who Jesus Christ really was, the appointed Messiah, The Anointed, by God the Father, was revealed to Peter by God the Father. Now, that same principle applies to us, brethren. We only see spiritual things. We only see spiritual matters. We can only hear what God says because it's God the Father through the power of His spirit that is revealing spiritual knowledge to us. So we can only see pride, something spiritual, if it is revealed to us, not by flesh and

blood, not from human reasoning, human thoughts or human logic or psychology - that's all human reasoning – but it can only be revealed to us by God the Father. It's the only way, through the power of God's spirit.

We'll drop down to **verse 21 – From this time Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and the chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.**

Verse 22 – Then Peter took Him aside, so Peter now takes Christ aside, **and began to rebuke Him.** He's now starting to correct Christ, **saying, Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You!** Because Christ had said that He would be killed and that He would then be raised up the third day. Now Peter is stepping forward and saying, "Well, no! This is not going to happen! We're not going to let it happen!"

Verse 23 – But He turned and said to Peter, Get behind Me, Satan! Now, why would Christ say to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan!" That's strong words! Continue on in that verse... **You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God but the things of men.** So what He was saying was, "Well, Peter, you're actually fighting against God's will and purpose!" Peter is going to step forward and say, "Well, Lord, this is not going to happen to you; don't go around saying these things." What Peter was doing was fighting against God's will, God's will and purpose. He was fighting against the reason Jesus Christ was the anointed Messiah, to be a Passover sacrifice, and Peter is now stepping forward and going against God's will. So that's why Christ turns around and says, "Get behind Me, Satan!" Because where does that thinking come from? It's demonic. It's Satanic thinking. To fight against God's will is pride. It's resisting God. It's going against God's will and purpose.

And He says, 'You are an offence to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God. You are not thinking on a spiritual level about God's will and purpose, but the things of men.' Peter was only looking at it at a physical level because that's the only power that he had, because God had not given him the power to think spiritually at this point in time, and that's why Christ turned around and said, "Get behind Me, Satan!" Because this is a test or a temptation against Christ, because if Christ did not have the mind of God, He could have turned around and said, "Oh yeah, that's right. Let's fight against this! I don't want to die! I don't want to die and be the Passover sacrifice!" But of course, Christ didn't have a natural carnal mind, so He didn't think that way, and here He is thinking spiritually because *He knew* where this attack was really coming from. It was Peter being used as an instrument to test Christ again. But of course, Satan didn't realize that Christ didn't have pride; Christ never had pride. He had *none* of a natural carnal mind dwelling in Him.

Verse 24 – Then Christ said to His disciples, If anyone desires to come after Me, to follow Christ, follow in His footsteps, to be spiritually minded, **let him deny himself.** In other words, we have to sacrifice ourselves, **and take up his stake and follow Me.** Now, this is talking about on a spiritual level. It's not just a physical thing, it's a spiritual matter, because we have to deny ourselves, we have to be in this fight against our pride, because we have natural carnal minds. We are selfish by nature, but God says that by the power of His spirit He'll reveal the pride to us (what pride dwells in us), and we can overcome it by the power of God's spirit. And we have to take up this battle. We have to take up the sacrificing of the self. We have to kill ourselves, which is denying ourselves. Take up the stake and follow Christ, the way Christ lived. **For whoever desires to save his life will lose it,** so if we intend to save our physical life, because we're going to have to think physically to do it, we will lose it, we will lose our physical life, **and whoever loses his life for My sake,** and this is talking about sacrificing the self, we're in

this battle on a spiritual level, **will find it**. We will find spiritual life in Elohim. The purpose of life is to sacrifice ourselves, to lose our life, to sacrifice it for the benefit of others.

For what has a man profited if he gains the whole world, something physical, we gain all this wealth and houses and cars and all these physical things and titles **and loses his own life**, on a spiritual level we're put to the fire, the second death...? **Or what will a man give in exchange for his life?** What *will* we give, brethren? Will we sacrifice ourselves? It's a good question. Will we? Are we willing to? Are we willing to deny ourselves? ...to deny our pride? Because that's what's required.

Verse 27 – For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and He will reward each according to his works, the effort we put in, the effort we put in in relation to the *works*, because it does require a choice to allow God's spirit to dwell in us. And that point is that we're given the gift of repentance. If we do sin, we have a choice, and we know we've sinned. We have a choice to go to God and repent, and the works that we do are the works that God does in and through us.

If you'd like now to turn to **1 Chronicles 21:1-17** – this is in relation to David as king of Israel. **Verse 1 – Now Satan stood up against Israel...** now we know, 'standing up *against Israel*,' is done because of pride. Because any time anybody stands up against anything of God, it is done because of pride, the motive is pride **...and moved David**, so here it is now, 'enticed David' through this broadcasting that he does into the mind, **to number Israel**. So it's going to be a census taking. Now, the reason anyone would take a census in the world is to establish what strength a person may have. These days, of course, in war they'll say someone has so many nuclear weapons and someone else will say, "They've only got one and we've got 250..." So it's actually taking it to the self to know, "What is my strength? What is my ability to defend myself?" And this is the problem here, of course, for David to now number Israel. It's about establishing one's own strength, and the reason we establish our own strength is self-reliance, and self-reliance is motivated by pride.

Verse 2 – So David said to Joab and to the leaders of the people, Go number Israel from Beersheba to Dan, and bring the number of them to me that I may know it. Now, the reason to know it is to know the strength of the army, and the problem is, of course, that leads to self-reliance because, "I want to know how strong I really am."

Verse 3 – And Joab answered and said, May the LORD make His people a hundred times more than they are. But, my lord the king, are they not all my lord's servants? And what he was saying is, "Don't rely on the numbers. Don't do this, David, because God is the one who will fight our battles. It doesn't matter how many we have." **Why then does my lord require this thing? Why should he be a cause of guilt in Israel?** "Why, David, do you need to do this?" Because, "Why is it you're going to sin and there is going to be a problem for us?"

Verse 4 – Nevertheless the king's word prevailed against Joab. David said, "Well, I am the king, you will obey my instructions." And Joab did, to a degree. **Therefore Joab departed and went throughout all Israel and came to Jerusalem.**

Then Joab gave the sum of the number of the people to David. All Israel had one million one hundred thousand men who drew the sword, so that's 1.1 million people that drew the sword, that are able to fight, **and Judah had four hundred and seventy thousand men who drew the sword**. So he had an army capacity of over 1.5 million people. **But he did not count Levi and Benjamin among them, for the king's word was abominable to Joab.**

Verse 7 – And God was displeased with this thing; therefore He, God, struck Israel. So David said to God, I have sinned greatly. Now, this is repentance. So here we have David coming to the sense of God revealing that David had sinned. David now sees it, and the reason David would see it is God has revealed to David that he has sinned, **because I have done this thing; but now, I pray, take away the iniquity of Your servant,** take away the sin, and the sin, of course, is going to cause suffering for others, **for I have done very foolishly.** Now David is seeing now that he actually acted in pride. There was no need to be numbering Israel, to know what the strength of his army was, because God had already promised that He would fight the battles. And David *knew* that God had fought the battles. We will get time today, hopefully, to look at the battle of David and Goliath where *God* fought the battle, and David at that point of time as a young man trusted in God. He didn't rely on His own strength or the strength of the army of Israel; he trusted in God. Well, this is the point where David now has forgotten that and he has now numbered Israel for strength and taken it to himself about how strong Israel was, in other words, how strong *he* was, how reliant he was on man to be his provider and his protector. And now God has revealed to David that he has sinned and David now sees it and now he's in a state of repentance. He realizes what he's done. He has sinned because of his own pride.

Verse 9 – Then the LORD spoke to Gad, David's seer, saying, Go and tell David, saying, 'Thus says the LORD: "I offer you three things; choose one of them for yourself that I may do it to you."' So he's going to be given now the opportunity to *choose* the outcome. There are going to be three choices and of course he's going to have to pay a penalty. That's the point of it all, is that there is a penalty being paid for sin, and we know the wages of sin is death. Well, here is David being given an opportunity to choose three options of the penalty.

Verse 11 – So Gad came to David and said to him, Thus says the LORD: Choose for yourself, either three years famine, so that's the first thing, we'll have three years famine in the land where it will affect every single person, **or three months to be defeated by your foes with the sword of your enemies overtaking you,** now it's going to be war for three months where there's going to be a lot of death and destruction and Israel would have to fight, **or else for three days the sword of the LORD—the plague in the land,** so now we're going to have three days where God would intervene and the people of Israel would die through a plague, **with the angel of the LORD destroying throughout the territory of Israel. Now consider what answer I should take back to Him,** to God, **who sent me.**

And David said to Gad, I am in great distress. Please let me fall upon the hand of the LORD, for His mercies are very great; but do not let me fall into the hand of man. This requires humility. This is the opposite to pride. Because if a person lifted themselves up in pride, they would rely on themselves and they wouldn't rely on God. They would rely on themselves. So what would they do? Well, they would turn around and say, "Well, out of these options maybe I could defend myself for three months! Maybe if we enter into the battle and I've got 1.5 million men of war... and therefore, I could probably defend myself. We won't lose too many people..." and you could work it out all in pride. You could say, "Well, let's have the famine because we'll try and stock up food and we'll try and do this..." In other words, become self-reliant. But David in his humility realizes that God is all powerful, that he has sinned, and there is a penalty due, and therefore, he says, "I will trust in God." And that requires humility. And He humbled himself and has said, "Well, God is all merciful." He believes God, and therefore, "Let me fall into the hand of God because I know," he knew, "that God was merciful," and that God would choose what was best on a spiritual level for him, and Israel, and for us, brethren, because it's lessons for us. These things happen for lessons so that we can learn from them that we shouldn't lift ourselves up in pride and try to work things out, try to defend ourselves, not to rely on things that we may have, money

in the bank or whatever it may be. We shouldn't trust in those things. We should trust in God, and that's the lesson that David is now experiencing and he's experiencing it so that we can learn from it by not having to go through it.

You know, one of the greatest things in life is to learn from things without experiencing it. Now, that is something that humans struggle to do, which is *learn* from something in the past, by looking back and thinking, "That's what happened there and this is the outcome, therefore, 'Ah,' wisdom tells me that maybe I shouldn't do that." But humans, because of a natural carnal mind, we generally, most of us, not everybody, the majority I would say, only learn things by going through it, by experiencing it, because that is what burns into the brain. How we learn by the experience.

Verse 14 – So the LORD sent a plague upon Israel and seventy thousand men of Israel fell. So we have three days and in those three days 70,000 people died. **And the LORD sent an angel to Jerusalem to destroy it. As he was destroying, the LORD looked and relented of the disaster,** in other words, God showed mercy in this, **and said to the angel who was destroying, "It is enough; now restrain your hand."** **And the angel of the LORD stood by the threshing floor of [Ornan the] Jebusite. Then David lifted his eyes and saw the angel of the LORD standing between the earth and the heaven.** So here it is, he's been given a sight in the eyes – because humans can't see spiritual things, but here David has been given this opportunity to see this – **having in his hand a drawn sword stretched out over Jerusalem. So David and the elders, clothed in sackcloth, fell on their faces. And David said to God, Was it not I who commanded the people to be numbered?** "Wasn't it I that lifted myself up in *pride* against You, God?" **I am the one who has sinned and done evil indeed, but these sheep, these people, what have they done?** In other words, "What guilt do they carry? It's me that has sinned. Turn the punishment on me." **Let Your hand, I pray, O LORD my God, be against me and my father's house, but [not] against Your people that they should be plagued. Then the angel of the LORD commanded Gad and said to David that David should go and erect an altar to the LORD on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite.** Here we have the example of David, lifting himself up in pride against God by trying to take credit to himself to think that he was strong. Well, brethren, we learn from this, that we of and by ourselves can do nothing. We cannot do anything! We can't defend ourselves. It's God that defends ourselves. It's God that provides the protection. And if we have to go through sufferings, if we have to go through anguish, if we have to go through physical suffering – which may even lead to death, as it has happened with many – it's God's will that is achieved. We don't try to defend ourselves. We try to handle it the best we can within our thinking, but we do not retaliate or seek revenge.

There are many attitudes of pride that can come out in this world's system, and sometimes we don't always identify them. But for example, the spirit of competition within sport is just simply an aspect of pride because often you'll see, particularly in the western world, where teens will *compete* against each other. And what's it all about? Well, it's about being 'better than.' It's about winning! It's not about cooperation. It's about competing for the spirit of superiority, pride: "I am better. My team is better. We are better than you." And I know there is one particular sport between Australia and New Zealand which is regards to rugby, and what happens is they both run out onto the field and they both stand on the field in a line opposite to each other looking at each other, and one group goes into this chant and it's all about creating fear – and it works! The reality is that it actually works! It's about creating fear in the other that we are stronger, we are better, we are going to beat you – and it's all about pride.

I remember once in a game of football when I was younger, 16-17, running out on to the field in the colors of the town that I represented, and we went out on the field and we used to line up and look at each other on the field and the first thing that went through the mind is I used to look at the person that

I was playing against, that was considered the person who's 'on you' in the position in the field. Well, if he was a lot taller or a lot broader in the shoulders, I must say it created an aspect of fear. The reason was, I didn't think I could beat him! I was competing against him. I couldn't beat him.

Well, that's what sport is about; it's about pride. Well, today, of course, it's about pride and *money*! Everything is about money. It's about *wealth*. It's about clubs creating environments to gain *income*, money, because the more money you have, the *stronger* you will be. That's what clubs are about. Clubs are about gaining money. The more money they have they can buy better players, and the reason they buy better players is to be stronger, and the reason they want to be stronger is to win, and the reason they want to win is *pride*. They want to be better, stronger! That's what it's about. So the spirit of competition in this world has to change, and it will change at the return of Jesus Christ and in the Millennium. So sports as we play them are going to change because the motivation behind any type of sport will not be driven by, "I am *better* than you." It's not going to be driven by a spirit of competition to win, to elevate the self or the team.

When we went over Matthew 4, and also the following scriptures that we've looked at in 1 Chronicles and in Matthew, there is an aspect or a spiritual principle that is worth looking at in a little bit more detail, and it's a spiritual principle that we should be able to see within ourselves and to be on guard against within ourselves because it is to do with pride. Now, this spiritual principle is about giving credit. And it's not necessarily wrong to make statements of encouragement to others, but it can be wrong to give spiritual credit to an individual, and the reason is, of course, is that God is the one that does the works.

Now, what I wanted to just read, this aspect of it, because it does apply to us within the Church, that we need to be on guard within ourselves, each and every one of us, about this very matter, and it's what Satan tried to get Jesus Christ to think, "*If You...*" and it's about elevating or testing the thinking, that we will respond in a physical way and take credit to self. And that's what it's about. So from Matthew 4 we can see that this temptation or this testing was about testing to see, "*If You...*" which triggers pride within a natural mind.

If we truly love our brother, our Family, our members within the Body of Christ, we will never give them personal spiritual credit or try to lift them up by way of placing spiritual credit to *them*, because that is a dangerous thing. Why wouldn't we do this? Because this can be placing a spiritual stumbling block before the individual. Because if we praise them for spiritual 'good,' which only God did through them (it wasn't them that did it; it was God that did it through them), *if* we go and say or give this spiritual credit *to them*, we place this stumbling block in front of them because it's the placing credit to them. And that's what causes the danger, because the danger is then that person can stumble spiritually by (it's their problem of course, but what is the problem?) they will take credit to themselves that *they* did the spiritual work. And if they even *think that* or go down that path, *it is sin!*

So we, brethren, if we love our neighbour, if we love our brother, we should never place this spiritual stumbling block before them, or the potential to cause them to stumble, by giving them personal spiritual credit or placing spiritual credit to the individual. No human should be given *any* spiritual credit because it is God that does the spiritual works in and through the person. Remember, that's what happened with Christ – that spiritual credit was going to be given to Him. They were trying to place spiritual credit *to Him*, and He turned around and said, "Only God is good. It is God that does the works. Of and by Myself, I can do nothing." So brethren, it's a spiritual principle that we need to be aware of. We can encourage people, but we should never give them or place spiritual credit to them. *If* there is

any spiritual good that spiritual good was done by God the Father. All credit and all glory should be given to God, because it's God that does the work in and through the individual. And so when it comes to *anything* spiritual we should always glorify and thank God for the spiritual good that He has given and that He has worked through somebody.

So if we are inspired at any time through a sermon, we should glorify *God* for the inspiration, because it is *God* that gave the inspiration. Now, we often have opening prayers that will ask for inspiration in the speaking, and one hopes that that is the case, but let's just say, for example, that there was not a spiritual inspiration given by God in the sermon and somebody then delivers a sermon and reads that sermon, reads the words of God from God's word, it's the inspiration in the *hearing* that is important. It's *what we take out from the sermon*. It's what was taken out from the power of God's spirit *in* us, and we don't give credit to the speaker because the speaker is simply, with God's spirit we hope, delivering an inspired sermon. But let's just say at some point that there is not the inspiration of God in the sermon. Let's just say somebody got the scripture and started to read it, just like I have done through Matthew 4, Matthew 16, and 1 Chronicles, well, it's God that will give the inspiration from that sermon. It's God that places the thoughts in the mind, and it can vary across every individual. Everyone can take something different out of a sermon because it's God's spirit *in* the person. It's the inspiration in the *hearing* that is important. It's the inspiration in the *hearing* that is the most important aspect of any sermon.

God achieves *His* will in and through those He calls. No human does any spiritual good of and by themselves. It can't come *from* them, from their own mind! All spiritual good is achieved by God by the power of His spirit. Mankind's greatest spiritual danger is the praises of men, and that's why, brethren, we need to be careful not to give credit to an individual or to anybody for anything spiritual, because it can cause a problem to the hearer. They can take it to themselves, and therefore, we should not offer that opportunity of stumbling. We should always give the credit and glory to God.

The praises of men is what our nature yearns for. Remember in James we went through that scripture? That's the problem with mankind's thinking; our natural mind seeks praises of men, and one of the worst things that can happen to anybody is that somebody come up and give a spiritual credit to a natural carnal mind, because the natural carnal mind *yearns* [for] the praises: "Oh, you think I'm very good!" And that's the *worst* thing that we can do!

So brethren, we need to be cautious about what we say and what credit we give. We can give encouragement without giving spiritual credit to the individual. Our nature desires the recognition of self-achievement. It's a problem to mankind's thinking. Now, we know that because we understand pride within our own human nature – so we understand it. The moment we start to take *any* credit to self for *anything* spiritual, we have a spiritual problem and that problem is *pride*, because we're lifting ourselves up against God. All credit, all glory for *everything*, belongs to God and must be given to God.

God uses instruments, human instruments, according to His will and in His time. It's how God works. God uses people. He uses humans for His glory, for His outcome, and no human should take any credit to themselves about what God does in and through them.

Luke 18:18, if you'd like to turn to **Luke 18:18; Now a certain ruler asked Him, Christ, saying, Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?** So it's a question saying, "Well, what is it that I need to be achieving to achieve eternal life?"

Verse 19 – So Jesus said to him, Why do you call Me good? No one is good but one, that is, God. So here is Christ referring back to a spiritual fact, that God is good and only God is good, only God can do spiritual works. So we can see from that, brethren, that pride can be a problem for us individually because God is in the only one that is good and He's the only one who can achieve good works. And I know from my life's experience that there *is* a tendency for human nature to take credit to self and that pride permeates every aspect of our thinking and it is a spiritual sickness, to take any spiritual credit to self. Now, this is a thing that happens over time, which is called spiritual maturity, where we come to see that of and by ourselves we can't do anything spiritual.

I'd like now to look at the history of the birth of Samuel and the prayer of Hannah, which is an account which we can learn from. Today we will look at this account from the view of signs of pride versus humility. **1 Samuel 1:2 – And he, Elkanah** it is, **had two wives: the name of one was Hannah, and the name of the other was Peninnah. Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children.** So now we have an environment where a man has two wives and one has children and Hannah has no child. Now this is... of course, human nature will cause problems, and the problem is pride, because one person that has children can elevate themselves to be better than the other, because that's the natural carnal mind.

This man went up from his city yearly to worship and sacrifice to the LORD of hosts in Shiloh. And this is the Feast of Tabernacles that he is attending. **Also the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, the priests of the LORD, were there. And whenever the time came for Elkanah to make an offering, he would give portions, he would give portions of the offerings to Peninnah his wife and to all his sons and his daughters. But to Hannah he would give a double portion, for he loved Hannah, although the LORD had closed her womb.** This also points to the fact that God is in control of life and death, but He is in control of human reproduction in the sense of whether a woman can have children. It is in God's power and God's control. When He wants to intervene and control it, He does. So we can already see there is going to be a problem here because the family, we see favoritism at work. Now, this is going to cause problems. *Any* favoritism from the natural carnal mind triggers envy in the natural carnal mind. So there is going to be jealousies and problems within relationships because of favoritism, and God makes it clear throughout scripture that there should not be favoritism, which is a prejudice, towards one person versus another. And the reason there is a favoritism is it's not Godly because God doesn't have favorites. God treats everyone with the same laws, same commandments, and He requires obedience from everybody. Everyone with God's spirit would rejoice when receiving something from God, but of course the natural carnal mind won't do that; but we should rejoice when anyone receives anything from God. Well, here we're going to see a situation where we've got somebody now showing favoritism by giving a double-portion.

And her rival, talking about Peninnah, also provoked her severely, now, this is about words that are spoken, **to make her miserable, make her angry and upset, because the LORD had closed her womb.** So now we see pride at work. Here we have Peninnah saying virtually, "Well, I'm better than you because God's blessed me with children, but you, you haven't had any! What value are *you* as a wife?" And you can imagine the misery of the thinking of Hannah because of this continual provoking, the continual raising up of pride within a person, and she may not have seen it as pride but she knew the effects of the words and the way that she was treated. Her husband treats her one way but her husband's wife, the second wife, treats her another way, which is looking down on her and belittling her at any opportunity.

Verse 7 – So it was, year by year, when she went up to the house of the LORD, that she provoked her; therefore she wept and did not eat. So here we have Hannah being very upset and crying often at the

Feast of God where she should be rejoicing, and she didn't even eat and it's a Feast time. It was the time of rejoicing and feasting. So it would have been obvious there's a problem.

Then Elkanah her husband said to her, Hannah, why do you weep? Why do you not eat? "Why don't you rejoice at the Feast? What's going on?" **And why is your heart grieved?** "Why are you upset?" Because it would have been physically obvious in her appearance, from her crying and her not eating and being upset, and her husband would have been aware that one of his wives, there's a problem. "What's wrong?" And he obviously can't see it or hasn't observed it to the degree that he should have. **Am I not better to you than ten sons?** So in other words he's looking to himself now and saying, "Well, haven't I been treating you better than anyone else?" And of course there's an aspect of pride in saying it that way, "Haven't I been treating you better than someone else?" Well, that's a prejudice, but he couldn't see it, of course.

So Hannah rose after they had finished their eating and drinking in Shiloh. Now Eli the priest was sitting on the seat by the doorpost of the tabernacle of the LORD. And she was in bitterness of soul, this is Hannah, **was in bitterness of soul,** bitterness of life. She was angry in spirit. So it would have been obvious in her countenance... **and prayed to the LORD and wept in anguish.** So she cried out in grief and complaint. She's complaining, in anguish... you're distressed.

Verse 11 – Then she made a vow, promise, and said, O LORD of hosts, if You will indeed look on the affliction of Your maidservant and remember me, and not forget Your maidservant but will give Your maidservant a male child, then I will give him to the LORD all the days of his life, and no razor shall come upon his head. And this was a Nazirite vow, which you can read in Numbers 6.

Verse 12 – And it happened, as she continued praying before the LORD, that Eli watched her mouth. So she's kneeling down and she is not saying out the words aloud, but she's speaking them with her mouth. So they're in her mind, but she's speaking them or mouthing them, but quietly or couldn't be heard. **Now Hannah spoke in her heart,** so it was speaking within her inner mind, **only her lips moved,** and we often do that, brethren, with prayer, we pray with our mind and don't move our lips. Other times we may pray in our mind and move our lips, in other words, express it, but no words come out, **but her voice was not heard. Therefore Eli thought she was drunk,** because obviously there's an outward sign. She's a bit distressed and she's speaking these words but nothing's coming out. **So Eli said to her, How long will you be drunk? Put your wine away from you!** Now this, brethren, of course is now a judgment that has been made. It's a judgment without knowledge because here Eli is using his eyes to make a judgment, and Christ said, "I don't measure things by the eyes, the sight of the eyes. It's about the spirit, the spiritual intent of the matter." And of course, here Eli could not see the spiritual intent, but he could observe something and he's made a judgment based on the knowledge, the physical knowledge that he had, but not the spiritual intent of a matter. He hasn't seen this.

Hannah answered and said, No, my lord, I am a woman of sorrowful spirit. I have drunk neither wine nor intoxicating drink, but have poured out my life before the LORD. So she's saying now, "Well, no, I'm not drunk. I'm actually just praying to God. I'm being open and honest and sincere before God. I'm telling God my situation and my thinking, my inner thoughts – I'm revealing them to God." Which God requires of us. Now, God would have known the inner thoughts, but God requires us to express them to Him to have a relationship with Him.

Verse 16 – Do not consider your maidservant a wicked woman, for out of the abundance of my complaint and grief I have spoken until now.

Verse 17 – Then Eli said to her, Go in peace, and the God of Israel grant your petition which you have asked of Him. So it's in God's power to honour this oath or not. It was up to God whether or not He would. The oath was, (this is Hannah speaking), "That if I have a male child, I'll dedicate him to you, God, and give him over to the service of the priesthood."

Verse 18 – And she said, Let your maidservant find favour in your sight. So the woman went her way and ate, and her face was no longer sad. From this point she's gone and she's gone eating and she no longer has this expression or countenance of being sad and miserable. She's actually now placed it before God and left it with God and Eli has said, "May God grant your petition that you've asked of Him." So she would have to wait on God.

Verse 19 – Then they rose early in the morning and worshiped before the LORD, and returned and came to their house at Ramah. And Elkanah knew Hannah his wife, and the LORD remembered her. So it was God was in control now of Hannah's life in the sense of providing her the ability to be pregnant.

Verse 20 – So it came to pass in the process of time that Hannah conceived and bore a son, and called his name Samuel, saying, Because I have asked for him from the LORD, from the Eternal.

Verse 21 – Now the man Elkanah and all his house went up to offer to the LORD the yearly sacrifice and his vow. Now we have another Feast of Tabernacles. **But Hannah did not go up, for she said to her husband, Not until the child is weaned,** because she was nursing him, **then I will take him, that he may appear before the Eternal and remain there forever.** So she was going to fulfill the oath that she had made.

Verse 23 – Then Elkanah her husband said to her, Do what seems best to you; wait until you have weaned him. Only let the LORD establish His word. So the woman stayed and nursed her son until she weaned him.

Verse 24 – Now, when she had weaned him she took him up with her with three bulls, one ephah of flour, and a skin of wine, and brought him to the house of the LORD in Shiloh. And the child was young, because he's only just been weaned.

Verse 25 – Then they slaughtered the bull and brought the child to Eli, who was the priest. And she said, O my lord! As your life lives, my lord, I am the woman who stood by you here praying to the LORD.

Verse 27 – For this child I prayed, and the LORD has granted me my petition which I asked of Him.

Verse 28 – Therefore I also have lent him to the LORD; as long as he lives he shall be lent to the LORD. So they worshiped the LORD there.

Now, if we look back on that particular matter we can learn something from Hannah's approach, which is one of humility. Because remember we've covered the aspect of pride is self-reliance? Well, here we have somebody who is oppressed, and what they have done, Hannah, is turned to God, because it is God that can fight our battles. It's God that can change our environment. It's when we depend on God, it's when we go to God, when we pray, when we seek Him, when we seek a relationship with Him, when

we have God involved in our life, God involved in our decisions – which we've seen from other scriptures in Part 1 – we know that God will answer our prayers, and they're always spiritual answers. They're always answers for our spiritual good.

Well, here God has answered Hannah's prayer and Hannah is now in humility fulfilling her oath. There is not pride involved because pride would lift itself up and fight against God's will and fights against God's purpose and keep the child back for herself. But she knows that God is involved in her life, God has granted her the mercy, and she is going to now continue to humble herself and honor the commitment she has made to God.

In 1 Samuel 2:1 – And Hannah prayed and said: My heart rejoices in the Eternal; My horn is exalted in the LORD. I smile at my enemies because I rejoice in Your salvation. Now, we can look at this on a spiritual level, brethren; we can rejoice in God's salvation because it is God that saves us. God saves us from ourselves. We can't save ourselves. It's God, because the natural carnal mind is hostile to God. It is not subject to God. It raises itself up against God in pride, but we can rejoice that God has given us the opportunity for salvation.

If we have been called, if we've been granted repentance, if we have been baptized for the forgiveness of all our past sins, if we have received the laying on of hands and received God's spirit, so that empowers repentance, so that we can come before God and repent and our sins can be forgiven (because that is a promise of God), we are in the process of salvation. We are being converted. We are changing our thinking. Our thinking is being transformed by the power of God's spirit. Isn't that an incredible plan? ...just to have that knowledge? ...to *know* the plan of salvation, what God has in store for us, what God has planned for us? So we can rejoice in God's salvation for us! Hannah has said, "Because I rejoice in *Your* salvation," because she knew that it is God that grants the gift of eternal life, the gift of repentance. All these gifts – salvation – is a gift from God. We are being saved from ourselves, from what we are, from our pride.

Verse 2 – No one is holy like the LORD, so there is no one that is separate, no one that is spiritually powerful like the LORD, because God is holy. God is separate. It is God that does spiritual good. It is God that achieves spiritual matters, not ourselves. **For there is none besides You.** There is none besides God, Yahweh Elohim; there is none. **Nor is there any rock like our God.** There is *no protection* other than what God provides. God is the one who provides us spiritual protection.

Often the world will look at things on a physical level, so we often look at this on a *physical* protection that we want *physical* protection for our life, but it is God that provides us *physical and spiritual* protection, and the greater thing to have is *spiritual protection*. We want to be kept away from the attacks of Satan. We want God to be our strength, our High Tower. We want God to protect us on a *spiritual level* because we need spiritual protection. In the future, we'll go into aspects of how we are protected by God on a spiritual level.

Verse 3 – Talk no more so very proudly; Let no arrogance come from your mouth, For the LORD is the God of knowledge; and by Him actions are weighed. So God looks at our motive, our intent behind the words and actions. So we should not talk proudly. We shouldn't be proud, brethren, by relying on ourselves or lifting ourselves up. We shouldn't talk anymore in an arrogant way, anything arrogant that comes from our mouth, any boasting, any credit to self. And this prayer is saying, "Talk no more so very proudly; let no arrogance come from your mouth." And that's what should happen, brethren. This is about disciplining the inner thinking because it's from the thoughts that words come out of our mouth.

If we have pride dwelling in our thoughts, it's going to come across our lips from our tongue, from our mouth, because that's the way we are as humans. God looks at our motive, our intent. What we *say* is not the important part, because remember we've also looked at scriptures that say, 'What comes out of the mouth doesn't defile a man.' So somebody can turn around and say, "I am following God," and they can talk the talk and they say, "I support you fully. I do 'this.' I do 'that.'" But the actions don't follow the words! They're *just words*! And God knows the intent. God knows the heart.

So that's the most important thing, brethren, we should check our words – say what we're saying – because we want to make sure we have the right intent. So we've got to be very careful about what we say, how we say it, and what the intent is of what we're saying. Now, when it comes to giving credit to others, we need to be very cautious about that because we need to look at the intent. *Why* are we giving credit to somebody else? Is it to get favor back or to have them to think that we are better because we've done this? Now, not saying that words of encouragement should not be given to encourage us, brethren, to stay in the faith, to follow God, to have unity. That's not what I'm saying. I'm saying about giving credit for wrong motives. And of course we can't give any spiritual credit, but on a physical level we have to be very careful also, because we've got to watch *why* we're giving the credit. We've got to look at ourselves. The words are not the important part. It's the *motive behind the words*. And of course, if we have God's spirit, we know the reality is that the words *are* important because it's about the intent behind the words but also the *words* can affect people. So we need to be careful about what we say. That's not a contradiction there, because Christ was saying to the natural carnal mind, 'What you say, well, that's all driven by what motive,' but for us, brethren, we need to guard both. We need to guard *the words and the intent* because they are connected.

Verse 4 – The bows of the mighty men *are* broken, and those who stumble are girded with strength.

Verse 5 – *Those who were full* have hired themselves out for bread, so this is about self-reliance, and the hungry have ceased to *hunger*. Even the barren have borne seven...

Verse 6 – The LORD kills and makes alive; He brings down to the grave and brings up again. God's in charge of life and death. So God's in charge of all things, and that's an important principle to come out of this. God's in charge of *life*. God kills. God can destroy if He desires to, for someone that is unrepentant, but God can make a life. God can raise somebody back up to a life. He brings them up out of the grave at a second resurrection. He brings them up to *life* to give them the opportunity – which we went through in the Last Great Day sermon – to give them the opportunity to know God, to *choose humility* and reject pride.

The LORD makes the poor and makes the rich; He brings low and lifts up. He raises the poor from the dust; He lifts the beggar up from the ash heap, to set *them* among princes and to make them inherit the throne of glory. So it is God that places us all in positions of authority whether it's physical or whether it's spiritually, because it's God's will. It's God's purpose. It's God's plan. It's not our plan. It's God's, so God will do what God desires to do and nothing can stand before it.

For the pillars of the earth *are* the LORD'S... He created all things, all things physical. He established the foundations, and **He has set the world upon them. He will guard the feet of His saints...** we have a protection, brethren. We can trust in God that God will provide for us. He guards where we go. 'The feet of the saints' is where we walk, the way of life, because it's God in us. We are His people and we allow God, we desire God, to live and dwell in us; that's what we seek.

But the wicked shall be silent in darkness. Well, what's that really saying? Well, that's death. That's second death. When we are dead we are 'silent in darkness.' We know nothing. Well, the second death, the same outcome happens, 'silent in darkness,' and that's what God is going to do. He's going to destroy the proud. Pride cannot exist in the future in God's Family. There will be *no* pride, *no* taking things to self, *no* raising self up against God because God will have a Family that will be in unity.

Continuing on there...**For by strength no man shall prevail.** It's not by human strength that we can overcome our sins. It's not by human strength that we can achieve *anything* spiritual! It's got nothing to do with it. It's God that does it!

Verse 10 – The adversaries of the Eternal shall be broken in pieces; From heaven He will thunder against them. The LORD will judge the ends of the earth. He will give strength to His King... Jesus Christ is the King of kings. It's God that gives the strength to Jesus Christ. He has done it because it was God *in* Jesus Christ. **And exalt the horn of His anointed.**

So we can learn much from this prayer, to realize that it is God that is in charge of life and death. It is God that does the works, brethren, spiritual works, in and through us. There is nothing that happens to us outside of what God desires. We are His people and He cares for us and He loves us.

If you'd like to turn to **James 4:6 – But He, God, gives more grace, more favor. Therefore He says: God resists the proud,** so if we have got this attitude, this mindset, this thinking of self-exaltation, which is a perverted view of our ability, God says He can't work with us. He just can't. He has to resist us because we're fighting against God. So if we have pride, we're actually resisting God. We're fighting against God. **But gives grace/favor to the humble.** So God will dwell with those that are humble. God cannot dwell with sin. God cannot dwell with someone that is proud. So that's why the requirement, brethren, is we are to humble ourselves. We will humble ourselves. If we choose to humble ourselves God says that He won't be against us. He will actually dwell *in* us and *with* us.

Verse 7 – Therefore, because of this statement that 'God resists the proud' and that 'God will give grace to the humble,' therefore, because of it, **submit to God.** Let's lower ourselves. Let's submit ourselves to God.

Resist the devil and he will flee from us. So we are to *choose* to submit ourselves to God. We are to humble ourselves, to put our life into perspective, to admit we have pride, that we don't want it, we don't want what we are, that we want God to live and dwell in us. And if we do that, if we're fighting pride, we are resisting the devil, because Satan is the tempter, he is the one who is *testing* to see whether we will react in pride, just like he tried with Christ. He tested Him by saying, '*if*'... '*IF*'...and that is the challenge to the human nature. Well, we know that Christ resisted it because He was *not* carnal; He had the mind of God. And it says here if we resist Satan, if we're to fight, if we're to recognize pride, recognize the signs of pride in our life, it says that Satan will flee us, because you know why? We'll be on to it, because it's God's spirit that will empower, we will see, "Uh oh! WARNING! This is pride lifting up here. I'm justifying myself. I'm doing these things. I'm saying these words..." We can jump on it straight away and we can turn to God and God says that He will conquer sin for us, *in* us, by right thinking, by having the mind of God.

How do we do this? **Verse 8 – Draw near to God**, by humbling ourselves, **and He, God, will draw near to us**. So if we're to seek God, to seek His will, to seek to fight pride, the arrogance that is in us by nature, we can overcome by God's great power.

Cleanse your hands, and we cleanse our hands brethren... well, we stop the actions that we have. We've stopped *acting* in a particular way. So **cleanse your hands you sinners**, so we're to repent of the pride, we're to repent of the words, of the *actions* of pride, **and purify your hearts**, purify your inner thinking, **you double-minded**. Well, we have two mind sets; we have God's mind-set and we have our natural carnal mind which is hostile against God. Well, it says here, purify your inner thinking. We are to battle the self. We are to guard against pride within our life because it's a natural thing.

Verse 9 – Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. So what we are to do, brethren, is to be on guard all the time with regards to the sin of pride. We are to mourn and lament and weep. We are to humble ourselves by fasting – that's how we do it. We humble ourselves by fasting and we are to look at ourselves and realize through the power of God's spirit what we are capable of. Now, we are capable of two things. One is the natural carnal mind, pride and sin, and the other one we are capable of by the power of God's spirit, is to love God, to live love to our neighbour. **Let your laughter**, your rejoicing, **be turned to mourning**, so it's far better to be in a repentant state of mind than to be in pride, **and your joy**, rejoicing in self, **to gloom**.

Verse 10 – Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, so recognize what we really are, **and He will lift you up**. On a spiritual level, God will elevate us because we will be elevated by having the mind of God, which is having God's spirit live and dwell in us.

Now, we remember the story when Job in his pride had made many statements about God and when God challenged Job, so let's look at Job 40. Now, this is covering an area where prior to this Job could not see himself, which is saying he could not see his pride, and what God had done is revealed the difference between the way God is, the way God thinks, and the way that Job thought, and the way that mankind thinks – because they are poles apart. They cannot be joined together. They're far apart because they're complete opposites. One is righteousness, one is sin. One is humility, God, and one is pride, mankind.

Job 40:3 – Then Job answered the LORD and said: Behold, I am vile. Now, this is the first sign of real humility. When we can see ourselves, because God has given us the power to see it, we can say, "I am vile." And the reason we can say that is because we see our own pride, we know what we're capable of. We will defend, we will justify, we will do *anything* to maintain the natural carnal mind's image that it has built. But when God's spirit convicts us, we then begin to realize that this defending of the pride, the image we have created, is actually sin; it's pride: "I *am* vile!" We should be able to say before God, "Behold, God, *I am vile!* My nature *is* sin! My nature *is* evil! My nature *is* motivated and driven by pride!"

What shall I answer You? Job says. **I lay my hand over my mouth**. So he now understands that he's better off to say nothing at all. Now he starts to see his true value compared to God's value. Now, God's purpose for us, brethren, is that we see our pride – by the power of God's spirit. That's why we're called into the Church, to see it, and now to start to say, "Well, I'm going to put my hand over my mouth. I'm going to *stop acting in pride*. I'm going to *stop talking in pride*." That's what we need to do.

Verse 5 - Once I have spoken, but I will not answer; yes, twice, but I will proceed no further. So he's now recognizing, he's now being able to see spiritually, because God's granted it to him, so now he can

see what he's really like, how vile our human nature really is. It is selfish. It loves its self, and it's driven by satisfying itself, by maintaining its image, by building its image, by projecting an image.

Verse 6 – Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind and said: (verse 7) Now prepare yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer Me.

Verse 8 – Would you indeed annul My judgments? "Would you overrule the way that I have set things out?" **Would you condemn Me that you may be justified?** So, "Will you condemn Me so that you might be made to look right in the eyes of others?" Because that's what he's really saying, "Will you do this so that you'll..." You'll condemn God because, "I'm justified. I'm right. I'm *still* right. I'm maintaining my integrity! I'm maintaining the image it's taken me sixty years to build, so I'm going to defend it, I'm going to justify, I'm going to do anything to maintain it! I'm not going to admit that I'm actually vile!"

Verse 9 – Have you an arm like God? So it's a good question: Have we got the strength of God? Have we got God's character? Have we got the mind of God? Are we *humble*? Do we have God's *intent*? Well, no, we don't. The natural mind doesn't. **Or can you thunder with a voice like His?** No, we can't. We can't control anything. We are powerless. We have no control. Now, if we look at life – one of the things about life and pride is pride tries to control situations because it wants it *its* way, *its* own way of doing things. So one of the things in pride is that unless something is done 'my way,' the way that 'I' see it, it's obviously wrong – obviously! Because that's what the natural carnal mind does; it says, "I want it this way." So we tend to want to insert ourselves into situations to control them, because that's what we like to do, because it's the way *we* want it because of the way *we* see it.

Now, with the understanding we have at various levels on a spiritual level we will still try to do this because we *think* we *see* things on a spiritual level, and because we think we see them on a spiritual level we tend to want to get involved in people's lives or control people's lives because we *see* it a certain way. But what I've learned in life is that we only hear half the story, and I'm guilty of that in myself, is that when we portray a story we often paint it the best picture we can because it's an image or a reflection of ourselves. But we don't ever tell the *full* story because if we told the full story, if we were really open and honest and genuine and sincere and told the *whole* story, well, that wouldn't paint a good picture, would it, to the other person? So we tend to pull back and we tend to paint a picture of the way we want the other person to view it.

I hope that rings a bell with you, brethren, because I know that's what my life has been like. The way that you paint pictures is the amount of pride. So if we don't tell the full story, if we are holding back information when we should be giving it, what's that a sign of? That is a sign of *pride* because we're still maintaining the image we think we have of ourselves. So if we paint even a spiritual picture that is not right, it's wrong. It's deceit. It's a lie, but we can't tell the whole picture because the image we've got has to be defended.

Verse 10 – Then adorn yourself with majesty and splendor, and array yourself with glory and beauty. Well, it can't be done, because God is all powerful. God is the one in glory and beauty. He is the one that has majesty. **Disperse the rage of your wrath; Look on everyone who is proud, and humble him.** Now, what God is saying is that He is the one that has this power, but Job, if you're so good – mankind – Wayne – if you're so good, well why don't you set out and humble the proud? Why don't you do it if you're so good? Well, the reality is we have no power, we have no spiritual power, we cannot humble the proud of this world. It's impossible. God will do it and God says in His word that He *is* going to do it. God is going to actually destroy pride! And we know, we had sermons from Mr. Weinland at one of the

Feast about the end of Satan, because *the end of Satan is the end of pride*, because pride must be destroyed within mankind and no one with pride can enter God's Family, no one with sin, and pride must be destroyed. And God is saying here, "Well, why don't you, Job, look out over everyone and get rid of pride?" Well, it can't be done! It's only by the power of God's spirit that pride can be got rid of, because man in his natural state has pride.

Look on everyone *who is proud*, and that is *everyone*, **and bring him low**. Well, mankind can't do it. Mankind sets out to humble the proud, and the way they do it, because in pride we murder, in pride we do lots of things, and what the court system does is they say, "Well, you've been proud. You've lifted yourself up against another human and I'm going to bring you low. Because you've murdered this person we're going to put you in jail for six years and then we'll let you out on parole." Well, that's not humbling a person, that's not changing the thinking, because the reality is that only by the power of God's spirit can the carnal mind be changed. The carnal mind will *always* think selfishly and with pride. It may *alter* its focus or *alter* its behavior, but it's still driven by pride and ill will and selfishness, because that's the natural carnal mind.

So it's only by God's spirit that a person can eliminate pride from their life, because it's God's spirit *in us* that does the works.

Verse 13 – Hide them in the dust together, bind their faces in hidden *darkness*. Well, that is death, because the only way that you can do it, the only way you can get rid of the proud, bring them low and hide them in the dust is to have death, to destroy them. And then God says, if you do this then, **Then I will confess to you**, Job, that you are right, **that your own hand can save**. You can save yourself on your own strength.

If we understand this discussion on a spiritual level we will conclude that pride and arrogance is human stupidity and insanity of thinking. Because that's the reality – pride is insane thinking! Imagine, lifting one's self up against the *Almighty GOD*! Well, that's pride. That's what we do. To lift our thinking up against our Creator is spiritual madness if we only understand it. And of course that spiritual madness is pride and that is *sin* and it earns the death penalty.

There is nothing that we can take credit to ourselves in life – *absolutely nothing*! If we can see this spiritual fact – that we can't take any credit to ourselves – we have *started to understand* what humility is. *Humility is understanding* that of and by ourselves we can do *nothing*.

Well, with that, brethren, I think we'll close there. We will have to have a Part 3 by the looks of it because there are other scriptures that we will still explore. I had hoped to get through this in two parts, but it looks like there is going to be a 'Signs of Pride – Part 3.'

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