

I would like to say, "Welcome," to everyone today. We are to come before our God on the day of Pentecost. It is a much anticipated and waited upon day in the plan of God. It is today, in God's plan, that we look so forward to being a reality. And it's not long now before that day will be fulfilled and a new world will be here with a just government upon this earth. And it is much about government, the government of God upon this earth.

But before we get into the sermon today I want to remind everyone that it is a Holy Day. And with all the Holy Days we come before our God with an offering. I think all of us understand that by now, but I did want to remind everybody, as it is our custom to come before God with our offering on the Holy Days.

Brethren, I will begin today by giving a little history of what my wife and I have witnessed in God's Church through some prophecy that was prophesied about before Jesus Christ could begin a countdown for his return back to this earth. I'm talking about what was prophesied about one who would become a "son of perdition," the "man of sin" that God had written about in His book.

Mr. Armstrong died in 1986, and approximately two years later, in 1988, God's Church held what was called then a "DELL's Meeting." That term "DELL's Meeting" was about the deacons and elders at that time in God's Church that came together. An evangelist at that time, Herman Hoeh, delivered a booklet, much like the ones that were used in the Y.E.S. program for the children in God's Church. (For those that do not know what that was like, the best you could relate it to was like an illustrated colouring book that you would find for a child, a child that was of school age and a child that has sufficient ability to complete the booklet.) And it was my first alert after Mr. Armstrong died that something was not right in God's Church. Something was being pushed that was not what Mr. Armstrong taught about the Passover. Mr. Armstrong plainly stated in more than one occasion about when the Passover was to be observed, and it was always on the fourteenth. And now we had a change that was taking place in the Church of God that was not what the scriptures taught, and it was not what we had been taught in God's Church by Mr. Armstrong.

Herman Hoeh was an evangelist, and he was the one that had put together this booklet - an illustration that was teaching about a 14th/15th Passover, which some of you may never have been acquainted with. But it was something that was false that was being pushed, falsehood upon the members of God's Church. And it was then that I began to become a little more alert about what was being taught in God's Church and not just take it for granted.

And then somewhat later I got reprimanded about something I had said in a sermonette about character, and that Mr. Tkach was making a change about what we taught about building character. Most everyone understands what God says about building in God's book: the scriptures about the

silver, the hay, the wood, the stubble, the gold, the sort of teaching that was taught by the Church of God through Mr. Armstrong. Some years later, around 1991 and into 1992, we had a child that was in the Worldwide Church of God, a daughter who was baptized that was attending the congregation in Atlanta, Georgia, that was being taught by a minister in that area by the name of Earle Williams. My daughter and her husband, who was also baptized, came to me and said that it was being taught that the commandments of God were not necessary to keep. And I spoke with her and told her that no minister in God's Church would ever teach such a thing, that she must have misunderstood what she heard. She kept insisting that it was so. And with the other events that I had witnessed, my wife and I went to investigate, and the sermon was correct with the Church's teaching. But after the sermon that day an elder that used to be our local elder took us out to lunch, and I had asked him pointedly if they were teaching that it was not necessary to keep God's commandments. And the only answer that I could get from him was that it was good if you kept them. I informed him that that was not the question that I had asked. I asked if it was being taught. And he was very evasive at that time; and that's the way he became, very evasive. And the only answer that he would give was it was good if you kept them.

So this was another alert in God's Church that something was changing in God's Church. And it evolved into making a call to Pasadena, which Pasadena, California at that time was the headquarters of God's Church. And they confirmed that it was not necessary to keep God's commandments or any of the other things, such as the money things, talking about tithing. And they said that it was not commanded, the Sabbath was not commanded. All that Mr. Armstrong in God's Church had learned and taught about the truth was being undermined. And I thought at that time that it was just some ministers and that Mr. Tkach *surely* did not know about what was being taught in God's Church.

So in December 17, 1994, Mr. Tkach, Sr. was to be in Atlanta, Georgia. We were told in our local area that we could not attend. So I spoke with the minister in charge of our area and told him that I *would* be in Atlanta that weekend. We had been discussing what was taking place for about two years before this sermon took place so he was very interested in what was going to be said in that sermon as well at that time, and he did not make an issue of me being in Atlanta. It was being said in our area from those of the Atlanta church congregation that "new truth" would be coming out from headquarters. And we would find out it was far from the truth that would come out in Atlanta, Georgia.

My son-in-law at that time was stricken by this "new truth." That's what they were calling it. And he was very stricken about what would come out in Atlanta, Georgia, and it was his church area that was spreading these rumors about "new truth." So he was very excited about that sermon that was going to take place in Atlanta, Georgia, and he knew that he and I were in disagreement about what was being taught. So my wife and I arrived that Sabbath of December 17, 1994, and it's like I said, what we witnessed was anything but the truth. The sermon, to my knowledge, has never been seen

by anyone. After Mr. Tkach began, he said, "If I speak grace, half of you will leave. If I speak law, the other half will leave." Something on that order. He was wrong. About a third left.

The auditorium was divided into three sections with the center section being in the middle. And after some of the brethren that were in that area heard where he was headed with the sermon, that center, that center section began filing out one by one. And the cameras were rolling; they were filming the sermon that day. And that is usually what they did in those days. When Mr. Armstrong was doing the sermon they usually filmed those sermons. And it was so when Mr. Tkach was on the scene. The cameras recorded the sermons. But now they had a dilemma. The center section had no people on the film.

The sermon Mr. Tkach was giving was doing away with God's Commandments, God's Holy Days, God's Sabbath. And the really big one was the tithing, which he attempted to explain differently later as the funds and the monies began to dry up. We recognized after that sermon that the Church of God that we had known no longer existed. Something had taken place in God's Church. And as we know, it was to become very devastating to the Church of God.

At that time I told my wife that this was going to be massive. And to make a long story shorter, after what we had witnessed, my wife and I began to go back through everything we believed. We went back through the booklets, the Bibles, the Bible studies, the correspondence courses, anything that we had in our possession so that we could prove what we understood was truth, truth about the Sabbath, the Holy Days, the Passover. And that is what we did at that time.

Now, about the filming that was taking place in the auditorium, now they had no people in that center section. And I'm sure there were some others throughout the congregation, but that center section is what caught my eyes. And Mr. Tkach had really gone a little overboard for that filming. I think he was a little too strong, I suspect, for those that were filming, that would make those decisions about that film, so they decided to edit that film and to paste some people into that film in that center section and edit that film for whatever reason. I still do not understand to this day why they did not just use a different filming and do away with that film. But the deception by the church of God by pasting and editing the Atlanta sermon alerted more of the congregation, as those people that were pasted into the film knew that they were not part of that sermon. They were not there. They knew that they were not in Atlanta, Georgia. So what the church had done became very obvious for some. Why would they do such a thing?

The Church that would come out of all this know exactly why they would do such a thing. The Church of God came to understand what had taken place. A prophecy had taken place that was in God's book that prophesied about the very thing that would take place in God's Church. God recorded a prophecy in His book that told of an event that revealed the meaning of a count, a countdown to the return of Jesus Christ to this earth, His second coming. And this was that event where the count began.

So this will be the title today, *The Count*.

The countdown to the return of our Savior to this earth, to set up God's government upon this earth with 144,000 that will be in the government of God to rule this earth with a just government, a government that will teach the correct way of life for everyone to live to be happy, to be at peace, to live with one another in the correct manner. Peace that can only be brought about from the Great God of this universe. Peace would finally begin to come to this earth - physically and spiritually. That was a beginning. Happiness would now be in the reach of human beings. No one is really happy in Satan's world. Some think they are.

When we talk about peace, that's what God gave up so that you and I could have opportunity to have that peace that can only be attained in the God Family. Peace that God says in His book. Peace where there will be no more tears, no more crying, no more sorrow. And we cannot comprehend such a time with this human mind. It's just not possible to comprehend complete peace. But God says that's what He's doing; He's bringing the City of Peace to this earth.

Let's turn to Daniel 9. Daniel was given a count that taught us that Jesus Christ would be born, and he taught us about when he would die. **Daniel 9:20**. It's the "70 week" prophecy. So let's read through some of this; most of us are very familiar with it. And it's where Daniel said, **While he was speaking and praying and confessing his sin and the sin of the people of Israel, and presenting his supplication before the Eternal his God for the holy mountain of my God, yes, while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, and we know who Gabriel is, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, reached me about the time of the evening offering. And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you skill to understand.** In other words, he was going to give Daniel understanding of a prophecy that would take place. **At the beginning of your supplications the command went out.** So Gabriel was given a command to go to Daniel. And Gabriel said that he came to tell Daniel, and he told Daniel that he was greatly beloved and to... **consider the matter, and understand the vision: Seventy weeks are determined for your people and for your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy.**

And let's drop down. Let's look at **verse 25**. The count begins to the counting of the coming of Jesus Christ the first time: **Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince, talking about when he would begin his work, his ministry, there shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublesome times. And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah will be cut off, and this is talking about when Jesus Christ would die, when he would be killed, when he would become the Passover and die for all of mankind. And it says, but not for Himself.**

And in **verse 27**— **Then he (the Messiah) will confirm a covenant with many for one week.** And let's notice, **But in the middle of the week, talking about 3½ days, he will bring an end to sacrifice and**

offering. Now, the sacrifice and offering that Daniel was given this prophecy about, the sacrifice and offering that Daniel was speaking about is speaking about the physical sacrifices that they were offering, the sacrificial system at that time and the laws that pertain to that sacrificial system. It's not about the 10 Commandments. That other deception that goes through the Catholic and Protestant worlds - this is not about the 10 Commandments of God. This is about the sacrificial system that was in place. That's the sacrifices.

So we in the Church of God understand what took place with this count. We understand that Jesus Christ came and died upon that pole. We understand that he was God's sacrifice to us. We understand that Jesus Christ became the Passover Lamb. And we understand that he died upon that stake - with a horrible, horrible death - that they impaled him upon. They stuck that spear... that soldier stuck that spear in his side and his blood spilled to the ground. We understand that count that took place.

And with what my wife and I had witnessed, we did not know at that time that a count had begun, another count. We understood about a prophecy that said that there would be two at the end, and that's the prophecy that we began to look at at that time. We looked for two that would come upon the scene. When Mr. Armstrong died in 1986 we came to understand that it began another era in God's Church. Laodicea had begun. A prophecy would now be fulfilled that God gave to Paul to record in his book. A sign would be given that a count would now begin.

Let's turn over to 2 Thessalonians 2, 2 Thessalonians 2. We all know what it's about, but let's go back through it today. **2 Thessalonians 2—Now, brethren, concerning, (verse 1), concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ...** So this is what it's about, it's about the coming of Jesus Christ back to this earth, and our gathering together to him, we ask you, not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come. Let no one deceive you by any means. Let's notice the context. Because, brethren, there was great deception that went out after that sermon in Atlanta, Georgia. We've used the examples of a flood that washed away everything in its path. So here was a warning. And there was great deception, brethren, that your mind cannot comprehend, that came out after that sermon.

...for that day will not come unless the falling away comes first. And that's *exactly* what it brought about, a falling away from the truth. **...for that day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God, tells us who he is and where he will be, in the temple of God, brethren, showing himself that he is God.** He placed himself above God and took it upon himself to change the laws of God!

Verse 5—Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things? And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way. And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of his mouth and destroy with the brightness (the illumination) of his coming. The coming of

the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, tells us it's demonic, what took place, **with all power, signs, and lying wonders**. And there were sermon series that did about this very thing at that time, that deception that was so strong. I remember that sermon series, about power, signs, and lying wonders. And it still exists very strongly in my mind, what took place. I can still see Mr. Tkach in my mind's eye to this day standing on that stage. It is forever engrained in my mind. So we saw this power that took place, these signs, and it was lying wonders. That's a wonderful way to explain it in God's book. Because it is a wonder how they taught what they did in God's Church. And it is a lying wonder, what took place. ...**and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because—let's notice—they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie**. Thousands upon thousands upon thousands believed that lie, brethren, those lies that were taught, those lying wonders that were taught, **that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness**. This "new truth" that was being taught in God's Church, that they called "new truth" that was anything but the truth. I remember the brethren going around, "I see the light!" There was the phrase that was used in our area.

After the Apostasy that occurred in December the 17th, 1994, the Church of God began to understand that a count had taken place - a count had started. And it was the countdown to the return of Jesus Christ. That's what had actually taken place. A judgment was made when Joseph Tkach Sr. gave that sermon in Atlanta, Georgia. He became what was prophesied in God's book. He became that man of sin. He became a son of perdition, the abomination of desolation. Or like I'd like to say, the abomination that would make desolate. Because that's what it did to the Church of God. But Mr. Tkach incurred a judgment from the Great God of this universe, and he was dead forty Sabbaths to the day, brethren, after he gave that sermon in Atlanta, Georgia where he changed all the laws of God in God's Church. He did away with God's Commandments, God's Holy Days, God's Sabbaths.

Let's turn over to Revelation 12. Let's look what God had written through John. **Revelation 12:1—Now a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and upon her head a garland of twelve stars. Then being with child she cried out in labor and in pain to give birth. And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems upon his heads. His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth**. So we understand what is being said about what Satan and a third of the demons did. They became demons. So we understand what God had John write about Satan and those that followed him at that time.

And the dragon (Satan) stood before the woman (the Church) who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child as soon as it was born. She bore a male Child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. And that's what this day of Pentecost is about, brethren. **And her Child was caught up to God and His throne**. And we know that that's where he's at to this day, sitting at the right hand of the Great God of this universe waiting for this day to come, the day of Pentecost. The countdown began way back then, brethren. And this day is much about counting. It is about the count, to you

and me. "She bore a male Child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron." And this is the day that that will begin to take place, brethren, the day of Pentecost.

The woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days. In 1998, brethren, the Church of God kept its first Feast of Tabernacles. It was the prophesied remnant of God's Church that would be prepared for the return of Jesus Christ, God's Son, back to this earth. The Church of God was established on Pentecost of 1998 as that remnant Church. And from that day, December 17th, 1994, to Pentecost 1998, 1260 days had been fulfilled. A count had been fulfilled.

Let's turn over to Revelation and let's look at another prophecy. **Revelation 3:14—And to the angel of the Church of Laodicea write, These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness—let's notice—the Beginning of the creation of God.** When Mr. Armstrong died we understand that this is where this started, Laodicea began. **I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish that you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth.** Very graphic, brethren. It's not a pretty sight when you witness someone spewing vomit out of their mouth. But this is the way God viewed what had taken place. After Mr. Armstrong died, the truth was under attack. And it resulted in that sermon being given on December the 17th, 1994, when the countdown to Jesus Christ would begin. It was an announcement that was made. God did spew us out of His mouth. God did vomit the Church out of His mouth. That's what took place. And I know some that have witnessed and lived through this very thing. These very events that I'm going through today, there's some that lived through these events.

Because you say, I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked. And we understand what was taking place in the Church of God. And Mr. Armstrong recognized that very fact. And I remember back in the '80s he was putting the Church back on track, so to speak. That's what he called it. To put truth back in the Church, to stop the watering down that he saw taking place that would eventually bring about what we just read about, about Laodicea. It would come to where God would have to spew the Church of God out of His mouth. And it took place. We lived it, brethren. This is what actually took place. They said, "I am rich. I have become wealthy. I have need of nothing." And when we go back and listen to where the sermons have been speaking about, even the ministers did not come to sit at the feet of Mr. Armstrong. They didn't need to be taught anymore, brethren. That's what they thought. So this is a good description of what took place in the Church of God. And they didn't know how wretched they were, and how naked they were, as the rest of that verse tells us.

God says in **verse 18— I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich, the true riches of God, that treasure that is in the field that God tells us about, the white garments that God tells us that we can have eventually so that we may be clothed, *that the shame of our nakedness may not be revealed.*** It's a very shameful thing, brethren, what we did. It's a very shameful thing that took place. God tells us to **anoint our eyes with eye salve, that we may see. As many as I love—let's notice—I rebuke and chasten. Therefore, be zealous and repent. Behold, I**

stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with me. To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with me upon my throne, as I also overcame and sat down with my Father upon His throne. And we know that that's where Jesus Christ is today, waiting for this day of Pentecost, brethren, sitting at the right hand of the Great God of this universe. He who has an ear, let him hear what the spirit said to the Churches.

So we've lived through this prophecy of Laodicea, a prophecy that we would be spewed out of God's mouth, vomited out from God as prophesied in His book. The Church of God had been spewed out of God's mouth, and we lived it. We lived this prophecy and we lived this prophecy about the man of sin who brought about a count for the return of Jesus Christ back to this earth. We saw this "son of perdition." We saw this rebellion against the Great God of this universe. What Joseph Tkach did brought about a count, a countdown - a rebellion that had a count also. And this count is not one that you can just make up. There is no way you can make up these counts that have taken place in God's Church, brethren.

We know that God is very precise in what He does. When we look out into this universe through that Hubble Telescope and we look at those pictures, I am in absolute amazement, brethren. If things were not so precise can you imagine the collisions that would take place? There are billions of stars, planets, constellations that, you know, I am just in utter amazement at the preciseness of what God has done even with the physical universe. And He's doing it in the spiritual also, brethren. He is very precise with what He is doing spiritually.

So these prophecies that have took place were at the very time that it was to take place. All of these. God is very precise. And that was very precise for the countdown for Jesus Christ to return to this earth as King of kings, to set up the government of God upon this earth with 144,000, brethren, spirit beings that will now rule this earth with a rod of iron along with Jesus Christ. All these counts are for our learning, brethren, you and me, those that find our self at the end of an age. The Church of God is being prepared for the return of Jesus Christ, therefore, our name, "Preparing for the Kingdom of God," that is coming to this earth. God has let you and me know the count for His return is Pentecost of 2019. The counts that are given in God's book are being given to the Church of God.

And God is having another book written with the count, all of the counts that have been given to the Church of God, for your understanding. And you really don't have to understand all of them. You just have to understand the end result of what is taking place, the truth of the matter. But the counts that are given in the book that is being written, that is being given to God's Church, you can read about all the numbers, you can read about the counts that have taken place and that will take place that will bring about the return of Jesus Christ back to this earth. We understand that the Church of God has to be ready for this return, the return of God's Son and His government to this earth. And then they will rule this earth for 1,100 years.

The Church went through a "measuring of the temple" - so let's turn over to Revelation 11:1 - to prepare for the day of Pentecost. **Revelation 11:1—Then I was given a reed like a measuring rod. And the angel stood, saying, Rise and measure the temple of God, the altar, and those that worship there. But leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the gentiles.** Brethren, from a count from May 27, 2012, to November 7, 2015, was a prophesied 42 months of Revelation 11. That's what it was.

Revelation 11, last part of verse 2—They will tread the holy city underfoot for forty-two months. And I will give power to my two witnesses and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth. So that the Church could be prepared for the return of Jesus Christ to this earth. God was making final preparations for His Church. A count occurred from November the 8th, 2015 to April the 20th, 2019, which concludes on a weekly Sabbath during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. So this period is recognized as the time for God's witness to complete the physical fulfillment of their witness to the world.

"Revelation 11:3-6 reveals that for a period of 1,260 days God will send his two end-time witnesses to prophesy with power throughout this time. Much of that witness and the power given to it is the writing that is contained in the book [that is being written]. Toward the end of this period of time, they will be able to shut up the heavens so it will not rain wherever and for however long they say." I am quoting what Ron has written. "They will strike the earth with plagues as often as they choose. Much of what is fulfilled during this period will have to do with the Thunders of Revelation that will be more completely fulfilled by those things they proclaim."

So God has given counts for different things in His Church to bring about different prophesies in His book.

Let's turn to Leviticus 23. We know about the fifty days that is spoken about in Pentecost. We know there will be fifty days just before Pentecost of 2019 that occurs on June the 9th. (**Leviticus 23:1.**) We usually go back through Leviticus 23 on just about all of the Holy Days because that's where they are all contained. And it's ever learning for the Church of God, brethren, especially for the Church of God that is preparing for God's Kingdom to come to this earth on the day of Pentecost. But there is a process that takes place. There is a count that takes place.

So let's start in **verse 1—And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: The feasts of the Eternal, which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, these are My appointed times. Six days shall work be done, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of solemn rest, a holy convocation. So God is telling us about holy times that are holy. God says, You shall do no work upon it; it is the Sabbath of the Eternal in all your dwellings.**

So we come down to the Passover and Unleavened Bread season: **These are the appointed times of the Eternal, holy convocations which you shall proclaim in their appointed times. In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the Eternal's Passover. And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the Eternal. Seven days you must eat**

unleavened bread. And on the first day you will have a holy convocation; you will do no customary work upon it. But you will offer an offering made by fire to the Eternal for seven days. The seventh day *shall be* a holy convocation and you will do no customary work *upon it*.

And the Eternal spoke to Moses, saying, Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: When you come into the land which I give to you, and reap its harvest, then you will bring a sheaf of the first of your harvest, talking about the beginning of your harvest, to the priest. A sheaf. He will wave the sheaf before the Eternal, to be accepted on your behalf; on the day after the Sabbath the priest will wave it.

God uses principles of harvesting, principles of gardening in His book, so to speak. And we've had some sermons about this very thing, about God's garden and what He is doing. And it is like a garden that God is growing. So here we see God beginning to reap from His garden. And it paints you and me a picture of what is taking place in God's plan. God is painting you and me a picture of how it takes place. And here we see a sheaf being waved before the Great God of this universe.

So now let's turn over to John 20, John 20. **John 20**. And let's just go through the story today because it's very much about what was taking place. **On the first *day*** (talking about Sunday) **of the week** (it was a Sunday), **Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw *that* the stone had been taken away from the tomb. And she ran and came to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, speaking of John, and said to them, They have taken away... In other words, he was already gone. They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, so he was not there, he was gone, and we do not know where they have laid him. Peter, therefore, went out, and the other disciple, and were going to the tomb. Talking about John. So they both ran together, and the other disciple outran Peter and came to the tomb first. And he, stooping down and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying *there*; yet he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb; and he saw the linen cloths lying *there*, and the handkerchief that had been around his head, not lying with the linen cloths, but folded together in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, speaking of John, who came to the tomb first, went in also; and he saw and believed.**

And let's notice verse 9, it tells us something—**They did not know the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. Then the disciples went away to their own homes. So this tells us that they did not know.**

Verse 11—Mary stood outside the tomb weeping, and as she wept she stooped down *and looked* into the tomb. And she saw two angels in white sitting, one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. So a manifestation was taking place for her. And when they said to her, Woman, why are you weeping? she said to them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him. Now when she said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing *there*, and did not know that it was Jesus. So she didn't immediately recognize him. And it's very much like today; unless God lets you understand who the

real Jesus is you can't see it today, brethren. God has to open your mind and call you in His Church to understand and see the real Jesus, even to this day. So she did not know that it was Jesus. **Jesus said to her, Woman, why are you weeping? She, supposing him to be the gardener, said to him, Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.** In other words, "I will take care of it." **Jesus said to her, Mary! She turned and said to him, Rabboni! (which is to say, teacher).** **Jesus said to her—let's notice what is taking place because this paints us a picture of what we just read about in Leviticus 23—Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to my Father; but go to my brethren and say to them...** Let's notice what is taking place. It's a picture of the Wave Sheaf offering that was given way back in Leviticus 23. **I am ascending to my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God.**

So Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that he had spoken these things to her. Then—let's notice—the same day, that very same day. Let's notice when it was: **at evening, being the first day of the week (Sunday), when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews.** Because they had witnessed what had taken place at the Passover. They saw Jesus Christ impaled upon that pole. They saw him beaten. They saw how badly he was beate, so badly beaten that he was unrecognizable for who he was. So that's why they were there, because of what they had witnessed, the count of Daniel. They had actually witnessed with their own eyes that was prophesied through Daniel a long, long time ago when he would be cut off in the midst of the week, 3½ days. But they didn't understand it at that time. So they were there for fear of the Jews.

And then—let's notice what took place—Jesus Christ... and stood in the midst, and said to them, Peace be with you. And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. So Jesus Christ had been accepted by his Father. He had ascended to the Great God of this universe and then came back to this earth. He had become what we witnessed through Leviticus 23 about the Wave Sheaf. He was now in the God Family. He was now the first of the firstfruits to be resurrected from the dead, to be in Elohim, God's Family. And Jesus Christ was resurrected just before sundown on that weekly Sabbath. As soon as that sun went down it was the first day of the week, Sunday. And it was not until Sunday morning that the priest would offer up the wave sheaf, that Jesus Christ would ascend to God. It painted us that picture. And it painted us a picture of Jesus being received by God the Father. It paints us a picture that it would be the spiritual fulfillment of that Wave Sheaf that was offered.

And we just read about later that day after he had ascended and been received by God. We see that he returned back to this earth to be with his disciples for the next forty days, brethren. And we've had sermons about those forty days and how he taught them for those forty days.

So, brethren, we see the beginning of God's spiritual harvest. God uses gardening principles. It's a spiritual harvest from God's garden, a spiritual harvest taking place. And that wave sheaf paints us a picture of what took place, about Jesus Christ becoming the first of the firstfruits, a beginning of God's spiritual harvest. And it paints you and me a beautiful picture of what is ahead for you and me

as the Church of God. Jesus Christ was killed on Wednesday, A.D. 31, and he was in that grave for three days and three nights. And then on Sunday morning the priest waved the sheaf. The priest offered the sheaf before God, and it paints a picture of Jesus Christ ascending to God the Father, and then accepted and returning back to this earth to be with his disciples. Jesus Christ was resurrected from the dead. He was dead, brethren, dead, dead for three days and three nights. And it paints us a picture about the first, the beginning of God's harvest from His garden.

And let's look at another count, a count for others that will be harvested from God's garden to be in another spiritual harvest. And a count begins for that harvest also, a harvest that will produce God's government upon this earth, a government that will now rule for a thousand years, the Millennium, and then for another hundred years after the Millennium. God tells us about that count of a thousand years. He tells us of a count of a hundred years.

Brethren, Pentecost is the day that the wave loaves were offered up. We understand these wave loaves are about the 144,000 called the firstfruits. And now they will be offered to God. And this paints you and me a picture of a harvest from God's garden again, 144,000 that will be offered up to God in the same manner that that Wave Sheaf was waved before God in Leviticus 23 that God would accept. And we just read about the acceptance of Jesus Christ in John 20.

Let's turn over to 1 Corinthians 15, 1 Corinthians 15. **1 Corinthians 15:1—Brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached, the good news which I preached to you, which also you received and which you stand, by which also you are saved, so it is through the preaching that God uses. And he says, I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. And to hold fast that word that he preached to them.**

For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins—let's notice—according to the scriptures, according to the count that took place, that Daniel told us about in God's book. And it is according to those scriptures. And he was buried, and he rose again the third day according to the scriptures, just like Daniel recorded, brethren, and that He was seen by Peter, then by the twelve. And he was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present... It's talking about that time, that some had died. After that he was seen by James, then by all the apostles. Then last of all he was seen by me also, as one born out of due time. For I am the least of the apostles, so he's talking about himself, who is not worthy to be called an apostle, because Paul understood what he had done, understood what he was. And we should do the same, should look at our self and always understand who we are and what we are. And understand that he persecuted the Church of God. And he understood that it was by the grace of God that he was what he was. And he told us that he worked more abundantly and he labored more abundantly than all of them. So he tells us about the preaching that took place.

And he goes on to say, **If there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen. If Christ is not risen, then our preaching is vain and your faith is also vain. Yes, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ, whom He did not**

raise up—if in fact the dead do not rise. So he's going on and explaining, if *the* dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen. And if Christ is not risen, your faith *is* futile and you are still in your sins! Be a terrible thing if Jesus Christ had not come and made that sacrifice, God's sacrifice to mankind.

Verse 20—Christ is risen from the dead, *and* has become the first of those who have fallen asleep, talking about those that have died. He is the first. He is a beginning, brethren. For since by man *came* death, by man also *came* the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all will be made alive.

Verse 23—But each one in his own order: Jesus Christ the first, the beginning, a beginning, beginning from, afterwards those *who are* Christ's—let's notice—at His coming. Then *comes* the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when he puts an end to all rule and authority and power. And he goes on to tell us that he will eventually deliver everything into the hands of God the Father.

Verse 35—But someone will say, How are the dead raised up? What body do they come up with? Foolish ones, what you sow is not made alive unless it dies. And what you sow, you do not sow that body that shall be, but mere grain. So Paul is going on and explaining something that takes place —perhaps wheat, *grain, or some other grain*. God gives it a body as He pleases, and to each seed its own body. All flesh *is* not the same flesh, and *there is one kind of* flesh of men, another of beasts, another of fish, another of birds. And he tells about the sun, moon, and the stars and all the celestial things that are out there that God has created, all kind of bodies that are there.

And then he tells us in verse 42... He tells us about all the glory that God has created, the body of stars, of constellations, of planets, and now he comes back and tells us about a resurrection that will take place for man and he tells us that, *The body is sown in corruption (verse 42), it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.*

Verse 45—So it is written, The first man Adam became a living being. The last Adam *became* a life-giving spirit. However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural, and afterward the spiritual. The first man *was* of the earth, *made* of dust; the second man *is* the Lord from heaven. As *was* the *man* of dust, so also *are* those *who are made* of dust; and as *is* the heavenly *man*, so also those *who are* heavenly. As we have borne the image of the *man* of dust, we will also bear the image of the heavenly *man*, talking about a spirit body. And there will be a resurrection of 144,000, brethren, that will have that spiritual body that Paul is telling us about, that will be raised incorruptible. They will have spirit life, eternal life in the God Family.

Let's go back to Leviticus 23, Leviticus 23 and we'll start in verse 15. And it's about the Feast of Weeks. It's about Pentecost. Verse 15—And you will count for yourselves from the day after the

Sabbath, the weekly Sabbath, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering: seven Sabbaths will be completed.

Verse 16 we see the count. God tells us to, **Count fifty to the day after the seventh Sabbath; then you shall offer a new grain offering to the Eternal. You will bring from your dwellings two wave loaves of two-tenths of an ephah. They will be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven. Tells us who they are. They are the firstfruits to the LORD. And you shall offer with the bread seven lambs of the first year, without blemish, one young bull, and two rams. And they shall be as a burnt offering to the Eternal, with their grain offering and their drink offering, an offering made by fire for a sweet aroma to the Eternal. Then you shall sacrifice one kid of the goats as a sin offering, and two male lambs of the first year as a sacrifice of a peace offering. The priest shall wave them with the bread of the firstfruits—let's notice what's taking place—as a wave offering before the Eternal, with the two lambs. They shall be holy to the Eternal for the priest. And you will proclaim on the same day that it is a holy convocation to you. You shall do no customary work upon it. It shall be a statute forever in all your dwellings throughout your generations.**

So we just read about the order. We read about how Jesus Christ has risen, has risen from the dead and how he had become the first of those that had died, those that had fallen asleep. We just read about Jesus Christ, the first, and afterwards those who are Jesus Christ's at his coming. We read about each in his own order. We know that the dead rise first, of what is written in God's book. We know about the fifty days that have been spoken about through sermons, about when God will begin to pour out the Seven Last Plagues. Those Seven Last Plagues will begin to humble this world for the return of Jesus Christ. We know that this world has to be humbled. Man has to be humbled. We know that on April the 21st, 2019, the day when Jesus Christ's coming will be manifested, "This manifestation will take place" - let me quote what Ron said - "This manifestation will take place when the wave sheaf would have been offered on that day... The manifestation will be on the morning of the 1st day of the week that follows Passover that year."

Paul described Jesus as the first of the firstfruits to be resurrected. "Jesus, the first, and then the rest at his coming. But everyone in their own order." Jesus Christ the first, and afterward the rest, the 144,000, brethren, who are Christ's at his coming, but each in his own order.

Revelation 14, let's turn over. Revelation 14. During that 50 days this earth (mankind) will be humbled, and then an event takes place on the day of Pentecost. And let's read about it in **Revelation 14. Then I looked and behold, a Lamb, talking about Jesus Christ, standing upon Mount Zion; that's where he's at. And we know where Mount Zion is. ...and with him one hundred and forty-four thousand. So this is the time when the 144,000 will be manifested to the world, when they stand upon that Mount of Olives with Jesus Christ. And I heard a voice from heaven, like the voice of many waters, and the voice of loud thunder. Heard the sound of harpists playing their harps. And this is the way God had it explained in His book. They sang, as it were, a new song before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders; and no one could learn that**

song—let's notice—**except the hundred and forty-four thousand who were redeemed from the earth.** Throughout 6,000 years, brethren, the fruition of God's plan for the firstfruits. Pentecost is when it will be manifested to the world. God's government will now be upon this earth. They are now standing upon Mount Zion to take over the kingdoms of this world. The kingdoms of this world are now the kingdoms of the Great God of this universe.

In their mouth is found no guile, after the change, they are without fault before the throne of God. They are spirit beings, brethren.

Verse 4 tells us they were the one who were not defiled with the religions of this world, that they are pure. They are the ones that follow the Lamb wherever he goes, and they were redeemed from the earth, from among men, being firstfruits to God and to the Lamb.

Pentecost is about a count that took place. We were to count fifty to the day of Pentecost. And Pentecost is the time when the 144,000 will stand with Jesus Christ upon the Mount of Olives on that fiftieth day. God's government will now be upon this earth and now a just government will be here for mankind to "rule this earth with a rod of iron." "The kingdoms of this world have now become the kingdoms of our God and His Son, Jesus Christ."

Turn to the book of Zephaniah. **Zephaniah 2** is what we want to look at, but Zephaniah in chapter 1 tells us about the great day of the Lord. But we know that the world has to be humbled during that fifty days. Zephaniah tells us about a call to repentance. That's what he wrote about in chapter 2. So let's start in **verse 1** and let's read what Zephaniah wrote a long, long time ago - and it was about a call to repentance. And we know that at this time God has made a way for more to be saved, if they will just repent. Just like Nineveh God will give opportunity for more to repent. And that's what Zephaniah was doing in chapter 2, it was a call to repent.

And Zephaniah wrote, **Gather yourselves together, yes, gather together, O shameless nation,** (better said), **before the decree is issued.** And in America, brethren, it is a shameless nation. It is a sick, sick world that we find our self in at the end of an age. There is no values. No one wants to know about God. No one wants to know about the correct way to live life. Everyone wants to do their own thing.

Zephaniah wrote about in **verse 2—before the decree is issued, or the day passes like chaff, before the Eternal's fierce anger comes upon you, before the day of the LORD's anger comes upon you! Seek the Eternal, all you meek of the earth, who have upheld His justice. Seek righteousness, seek humility. It may be that you will be hidden in the day of the LORD's anger.** Brethren, this world will be humbled. We read about it over and over in God's book - many prophecies about man being humbled.

Let's turn over to Zechariah 14 and let's finish up. **Zechariah 14.** Zechariah 14, it's just over a few pages from Zephaniah. And **verse 4.** We've heard this scripture so much through the years - mainly at the Feast of Tabernacles. And it tells us about the day that Jesus Christ will stand upon the Mount of

Olives with the 144,000 and some events will take place. The Mount of Olives will be split in two from east to west, making a very large valley. Half of the mountain will move toward the north and half of it toward the south. So it's telling about some tumultuous times that will take place when Jesus Christ and 144,000 stand upon that Mount of Olives.

And it says that, **verse 6—That there will be no light; the lights will diminish.** So there is some awesome events that will take place. And, **It will be one day which is known to the LORD—neither day nor night.** And let's notice... **But at evening time it will happen That it will be light.** So there are some awesome events that you will see, brethren, take place upon this earth.

Verse 8, we understand what is being said, **In that day it will be...** This is the beginning of what will take place. God calls it "living waters." And we've had sermons about what takes place... will flow from Jerusalem, the City of Peace. And this living waters will now go upon this earth to teach mankind the correct way to live. "Living waters," that's the way it's said.

It tells us "...the LORD will be King over all the earth." Over all of it, brethren. The government of God is now upon this earth. The kingdoms of this world are now the kingdoms of our Lord and Savior. And it tells us about some things that will take place. But now mankind has the opportunity to learn to live the correct way to live so that another count can take place for them. They can now learn to live the correct way of life, to be in the God Family. And a count now begins for them to live their lives the correct way that God says live. And God will make it available to them, those that are here at that time, to have understanding of the truth. It's explained as "living waters that will flow throughout the earth."

It's like the mustard seed that will grow that God tells us about, that will now encompass the whole earth. And that will take place for a 1,000 year period, brethren, another count for mankind. And then at the end, another count for all that will be in that Great White Throne, that 100-year period of time. Another count for man.

So we can see through all these counts that we've just looked at today, just what we've looked at, we can see how God is a merciful God, brethren. How much more could you do for man, that what God will make available through His plan? Today we're looking at the plan of our Great God, about the day of Pentecost when these living waters will begin to flow out throughout the whole earth. A merciful God, brethren, has a plan so that all that wants to have peace, all that wants to do away with the crying, the sorrow, God has made a way for them to attain it, brethren. God calls it a pearl of great price. God calls it treasure that is in a field that one can have. Mankind can have it, brethren, unless they turn against the Great God of this universe. And He has a way to deal with them too that we know about, that Lake of Fire. But how could God be more merciful than what we have seen through His plan through His Holy Days.

So, brethren, be thankful that God has had mercy upon you that you can be here on this day of Pentecost and partake in this Holy Day in God's plan.

And that concludes the sermon today.