

Brethren, those of us in God's Church, we follow Jesus Christ as he leads his Church and he leads his Church through those that he has chosen, and we continue to follow where we're led. We continue to follow the truths that are revealed as it comes to God's Church through His apostle and prophet at the end-time, and that prophet and apostle is leading God's Church as we know. It's a beautiful thing when one believes what God says through those that He has chosen. When obedience to the great God of this universe takes place it is a beautiful thing, but that is what happens. Obedience is what happens when one believes what God says.

We know God worked through many of those of old, such as Moses and Aaron, Daniel, and so many down through time. We will look today at how God worked through some of them. We know where true knowledge comes from, and it is from the great God of this universe and He is the one that has called you and me and gives us knowledge of the truth. We understand that it is our God that has called us and revealed true knowledge and that knowledge gives you and me understanding of the plan of God. You cannot use human reasoning to know these things. You cannot use human intellect. You cannot use studying. It does not matter how many PhD's you have in this world you cannot come to these things without the great God of this universe revealing it to you and it comes directly from God and then it is received as a matter of faith once God opens your mind. That is what happened to all of us in this room, in those that are listening.

Paul wrote in God's book that God, the great God of this universe, has dealt to each one a measure of faith, to those that He has called. We did not come to the knowledge of this truth of God's true Church by our human reasoning by our human intellect or by how much studying that we have done. There are many that have studied these scriptures that you and I understand have no knowledge of the Great God of this universe and what the truth is, but God had to call you and me to open our minds to understand these things. God had to draw us and reveal these truths that we understand to us. We came to the knowledge of God's Sabbaths, God's holy days. We did not come to the knowledge of those days and what the true meaning is by our own means. God revealed that to you and me. God communicated it as truth to our minds through the power of the holy spirit. That's how it was done. God has to reveal the knowledge of His truth, and then it's up to us to receive it once He gives that truth to us and then we have the ability to believe it. Then we can act upon it, through that faith that God has dealt to everyone, that measure of faith that He has given to each and every one of us.

So the subject today will be about believing God. God tells us what faith is, that faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. God tells you and me about His plan that He has for man and He says that faith is the substance of things hoped for. The fruition of God's plan and the evidence of things not seen, we cannot see it yet. We see it in our mind's

eye and we believe it is true. We believe that God will send Jesus Christ back to this earth and that Jesus Christ will set up God's government upon this earth, a just government.

When we look at the universe that is out there that we can see through that Hubble Telescope (and I use this so much), but when we look through that Hubble Telescope we see what God has created on a physical plane and we believe it is the great God that created all those things that we can see.

God wrote it in His book that He did it; He was the one that did it, that He created it and you and I believe it. Most of the scientists, those with the PhD's cannot accept and believe that the great God created all these things that they can see in outer space. They think that it had to be a big bang that created those things and that is what is taught in the colleges or universities to this day, that there was a big bang that took place and it just evolved into what it is today. Even man, that maybe it was some kind of slime that crawled up on a piece of dirt somewhere and it evolved into what man is today. We have the real truth. We have the real understanding that comes from our God and we believe what God wrote in this book. His book is true. We believe what God reveals to you and me in His Church, His truth. We believe that He will send Jesus Christ back to this earth to save mankind, to save man from destroying himself from the face of this earth. God says in this book, His book, that He created everything, all of it, including man. He is still creating the things that we can see and the things that we cannot see.

The spirit world that is there, we know about their world, that age that they inhabit, even though we cannot see it. In that age, their world (talking about Satan's world, Satan's age, the demon world), we know that age is coming to an end in just a short while and that they will be put in prison for a thousand years and a new world will begin, the Millennium will begin. We believe that that is true. We believe God and what He says.

So let's begin by turning to the book of Hebrews, Hebrews 11. Hebrews 11 and we'll begin in verse 6, and let's see what was inspired by His servant to write in God's book about those that believe what God said.

**Hebrews 11:6.** You can put a marker here as we will come back to Hebrews 11 several times. God says through His servant, **Without faith it is impossible to please God. For he who comes to God—let's notice what is being said, what he's talking about; he's talking about believing God— For he who comes to God—let's notice—must believe that He is, that God is.**

So let's turn over to Romans 12. Keep a marker in Hebrews. Let's turn over to Romans 12 quickly and let's see what was written about faith and how God inspired Paul to write about how we are to think along with that faith that God gives to each one of us that He has called.

Romans 12:3, and this is where God tells us what He has done. **Romans 12:3 says, For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God dealt to every man the measure**  
Believe In God

**of faith.** So we have to think soberly along with the faith that God has given to each of us, all those that are called by God. It is this faith that God gives whereby we can believe what God reveals to His Church. God has given to everyone that He has called a measure of faith to believe God, those that He has called.

We believe that it is the great God of this universe that created all things and when we look at that universe today you and I can believe that God created it and He created it for a purpose, for a future use. We know that that universe is stagnant at this time, but we know that that will not always be the way it will be. It will be used mightily in the future. God's plan is not standing still. God is still creating, brethren, but His focus is on another creation at this time and not that physical creation. His creation that He is focused on now is creating His family, Elohim, and we believe and understand that that is what God is doing, that He is creating His family.

So, let's go back to **Hebrews 11:6**, and it says, **Without faith...** We understand that if God has not given that measure of faith to someone they cannot understand God and His plan for man. Let's notice what is said next, **it is impossible to please Him: for he that comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.** So what is this saying, "must believe that God is?" That we have to believe what God is doing, better said, and when we do, something takes place, "That He is a rewarder of them who diligently seek Him, to those that believe God and are seeking to follow God." When they do they are rewarded through understanding about God's plan and what He is doing. God opens the mind to those that obey Him, those that God has called into His Church, and He is a rewarder of those that believe Him.

We have to believe that God is leading His Church. We have to believe those that God uses in His Church to lead us into a new age, a new world. God says that He has given those He has called a measure of faith to believe God so that they can believe the plan of God.

**Verse 13—These all died in faith,** and it says, **not having received the promises,** not having obtained. So we understand when they will obtain these promises, and it is at their resurrection from the dead, at the return of Jesus Christ back to this earth, those that will be in the first resurrection, and to those that are called to live into the Millennium, if you continue in faith, if you continue believing God, if you continue to be a part of God's Church. There is always that big if. We have seen so many fall by the wayside. God says in this book that many are called, few are chosen. So God says to those that continue in the faith and continue believing God, speaking to those that are called to live into the Millennium to be a part of God's Church, if you continue to believe God He gives you understanding. God says that everyone that continues on the same promise will be given to them that was given to the 144,000. It will be given to them at their resurrection from the dead to become a spirit being, to become in the God Family, to become Elohim.

It says these all died in faith not having received the promises, **but having**—let's notice what the rest of this says—**but having seen them afar off...** So what did they see? They saw the same thing

that you see, brethren. They believed God and God revealed His plan to them. They could see. They could see God. They could see His plan for man and they believed God. They believed that the great God of this universe created everything and He revealed His truth to them. Let's notice, **they were persuaded of them and embraced them.** In other words, they believed and embraced the things that God was telling them, that God revealed to them. Let's notice what took place: **and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims upon this earth,** because of what they believed. That's just how you and I feel. You've heard me say this before. We are like trying to put a square peg in a round hole in Satan's world. We just do not fit in this world because of what we believe. We do feel like strangers and pilgrims in this world and that's a good way of saying it. We're looking for a new world. We're looking for a new age where Jesus Christ will come and be the King upon this earth and the government of God will be established upon this earth. That's our world that we are looking for and that's what we look forward to. We believe God, just like they did and this is what they saw. They understood that they were strangers and pilgrims upon this earth and they were looking for a new City, the same City that you and I are looking for.

Let's turn over to 2 Peter 2. **2 Peter 2:5**, and we'll see what was written. **And He**, talking about God, **spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth preacher of righteousness.** So what is this saying? This is saying that Noah was the eighth upon this earth and that he was a preacher of righteousness. There were many born upon this earth. This says that Noah was the eighth and he was a preacher of righteousness. So we understand what this is saying, that Noah was the eighth person that God had dealt with. And it says, let's notice the rest, **bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly.** So, "Noah was the eighth preacher of righteousness, and being in the flood upon the world of the ungodly." So we see that Noah was the eighth.

Let's go over to **Jude** and we'll look at **verse 14**. It's just over a bit. We see some of these things that are listed in order while they were upon this earth, while they lived. This shows us the order while they were upon this earth, those that God had worked with in their time upon this earth. Now it is our time upon this earth. So this will tell us a little bit about Enoch and what took place. **Enoch was the seventh from Adam**, so we can see where he was in the space of time in God's plan. So the rest of this verse tells us something else about Enoch and what he did. It says, **he prophesied of these, saying**—let's notice what he prophesied about—**and he said, Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of his saints.** So we can see that Enoch was one that prophesied about God's plan, so that means that he was a prophet of God and he was moved through God's spirit to see something that God gave to him about a future time in God's plan. So it shows that Enoch had some understanding of God's plan and what would take place at the end-time. He knew about that future time in God's plan. It says he was the seventh upon this earth.

So we can see that God gave Enoch some understanding about what would take place. And let's notice what Enoch said, "The Lord comes with ten thousands of his saints." So Enoch talked about a period of time when God's government will be upon this earth. We understand what Enoch was talking about, and God revealed this to Enoch about that time that would take place. Enoch said

that the Lord would come with ten thousand of his saints, and we know that he is talking about 144,000. Enoch probably didn't know the number, and that's the way it was written, but we understand the number because of what was written in God's book where God had John write down exactly how many it would be, that it would be 144,000 that would return to this earth with Jesus Christ. But Enoch knew about that time, and it was ten thousands of his saints, the way that Enoch understood it.

So God gave you and me a glimpse through Enoch and what he saw about God's plan and it paints you and me a picture down through time. So Enoch is writing about God's plan and this was even before the flood took place.

So let's go back to Hebrews 11. We know that God worked with each one of these on an individual basis. We know that God works with you and me individually, but we also understand how God works, and He does now, works with you and me now, through His Son Jesus Christ, and then through an apostle and the prophets and down through the Church of God—PKG. That's how it's done and we know the order.

**Hebrews 11:7— By faith Noah—let's notice what took place—being warned of God—let's notice—of things not yet seen.** So Noah was told by God that something was about to take place. So God is doing the same in His Church today. God has sent one to warn the world and to tell you and me in the Church of God and the world about things that are not yet seen but are about to take place.

Let's hold our place here. Let's turn over to **Daniel 12:1**. God had it written about what would take place, about things that are not yet seen, but we know what is about to take place. We can look on the world scene and tell that something is about to happen. We know that there is only one just government that can govern and that it will not be long before that government will be upon this earth. It's about to take place, brethren, and it's not long before these things that are not yet seen will take place. God tells us about them in His book and He had Daniel write it down for you and me, His Church, the Church that is preparing for the return of God's Son back to this earth to prepare for what is written in God's book, therefore, our name. That's why we have that name. We do believe the great God of the universe about what is about to take place. We believe God. We believe the one that God has sent to teach us about the things that are unseen.

So let's look at what Daniel wrote (and it's in chapter 12 and verse 1), because this is about to take place, brethren, what was written a long, long time ago in God's book. Daniel said, **At that time Michael will stand up, the great prince which stands—let's notice—for the children of your people: and there will be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time.** We can look on the horizon. We know about all these nuclear weapons that are here. There has never been a time like this for man when man can destroy every living thing upon the face of this earth. We can see that time of trouble approaching fast. It is coming swiftly upon man. We live at a time when man can just reach up and push a button. It's an awesome

thing to understand. They can just push a button and the sky would light up. Man has the capability to destroy everything that is living upon this earth. Here it was written a long, long time ago by Daniel that Michael would stand up at this time, at that time of trouble.

**At that time your people will be delivered**, that's what Daniel wrote in that book, and we believe it. Daniel said, **At that time your people will be delivered**—let's notice the rest—**every one that will be found written in the book**. So hopefully your names are written in God's book.

So when we look at what is taking place, what is in the mind of so many nations with these nuclear weapons, we see the hatred that is there, we see what is in the mind of man, nation against nation. They are just itching to push those buttons, brethren. We see it in the news. We know that America will be the first to be hit. We see a violent, violent world about to take place. So Daniel tells us about a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation upon this earth and we are living at this time. We see it taking place. We see the news. You have a front-row seat to see the most awesome things take place upon this earth that will ever take place, things that Daniel wrote about.

Daniel wrote about the time that you and I live in when all this trouble will take place. Daniel wrote that at that time God's people would be delivered. It says in **verse 2**—let's notice—**Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth will awake**. We understand this is speaking about the first resurrection, those that will be first. Daniel will be in this resurrection. We know because of what is written in this book. It says, **some to everlasting life, some to shame and everlasting contempt**. We know about some that will be vessels of honor and some vessels of dishonor. After all the resurrections take place we will see those vessels of dishonor.

And let's notice, **They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever**. And let's notice what Daniel was told. Daniel was told to **shut up the book, and seal the book, even to the time of the end**, the time that you and me live in. **Many will run to and fro, and knowledge will be increased**. God's people have lived through some awesome times in the history of man. When we think about Noah and the time that he lived in upon this earth, Noah lived in a time when it had never rained upon this earth and he was told to build a boat. Noah was steadily building that boat every day and we can only imagine the ridicule that Noah withstood steadily working on that boat because he believed God. We can only imagine the mocking that he endured, but you and I have been so blessed at the end of this age to have understanding, just like Noah had, to believe God. God has given that ability to each one of us. We know that there's never been a time when God's people have had so much knowledge. It's never happened before. Some of us sitting in this room have witnessed this and some of you are a part of that awakening that took place. God has called some just in the past few years and that knowledge was given so quickly. That's why some of you are sitting here today.

The understanding that you believe God, that's what was given. We see it again where it will take place in the future, when that knowledge will be given quickly and many will begin to believe God. Once again, this is a time that Daniel wrote about, when knowledge would be increased. So when we look back in time at what God's people have had to do, what some have had to experience in their lives, God gives us a glimpse in this book and then we can compare it to our lives today. We will look at some of these today and what they endured. I hope you understand how blessed you are. We have not had to suffer persecutions as so many that have gone before you and me. Today we are in a real air conditioned building listening to a sermon on God's Sabbath day. But we are at the end of this age and it's not over yet. We know it will not be easy as Satan's world is put in their prison. We can see that violence is about to erupt upon this earth. We believe what God has written in this book.

So let's go back to the book of Hebrews. **Hebrews 11:7**, and it says, **By faith Noah**, the faith that God had given him to believe Him, **being warned of God of things not yet seen**, so God told Noah about things that were about to happen, but they were not yet seen. So you and I in the Church of God haven't seen certain things yet, but we do know about them. God has told us about them just as He told Noah. God has let you and me understand what is about to take place. There is one at the end of the age that is telling us about things not yet seen. We haven't seen the rest of the trumpet blasts yet, but we can see them on the horizon and we are being warned of God of things not yet seen, just as they were. And it says, **Noah moved with fear**.

So we are being warned about what is coming. Books have been written, *The Prophesied End-Time* has been written, *2008—God's Final Witness* has been written, and the book, *Prophecy Against the Nations*, has been written. This is a warning to the world and telling them about what is coming that is not yet seen.

I will quote what is written on the back of that book, *Prophecy Against the Nations*. Ron wrote:

Although end-time events were going to be fulfilled between 2008 and 2012, this book explains why God is now going to extend mercy to billions of people so that they can live into a new age that follows World War III.

God has sent many prophets to different nations throughout time. Only once did an entire nation take heed and listen, and as a result those people were spared total destruction.

Mankind is now at a stage in time that is often referred to as "the end-time." It is not the end of mankind, but it is an end to mankind's self-rule. If God would not intervene in this great nuclear war that is now at our front door, mankind would annihilate itself – so says Almighty God!

We are currently entering the last throes of civilization where the world is coming face to face with the reality that mankind cannot govern itself as it should. Billions are about to die in the worst of times in all human history. Who will listen and seek to save their lives?

Who will listen to God, brethren? We can see that Noah believed what God said in that God was telling him the truth. Noah believed that that water would come out of the sky and that the boat that he was building would float upon that water. Noah had the kind of fear to believe God. And it's not a fear of God; it's a fear to disobey God. That's what you and I have, that same fear. I hope everyone has that same fear. No one knew who God was and Noah knew that He was the great God of this universe and that God had created everything, including man. No one knew about the Garden of Eden. He knew what had happened to Adam and Eve. Noah saw the violence in the time that he lived in upon this earth and he saw what mankind had descended into. Noah's world had become so violent, so corrupt that God would now have to destroy all of mankind and start over. We think our world is violent. Can you imagine what Noah saw in his time, the violence, the perversion that was taking place, the lawlessness that was there? We can see it on a small scale even in America. We can see that lawlessness abounds even in America, even in one of the greatest nations that was once blessed by the great God of this universe because of the promises that were made to Abraham. So we can see that Noah believed God and Noah understood what God was about to do to man.

So what about you and me at the end of this age? I hope everyone understands where their ability to see and believe the truth comes from. It comes from God and His Son. We have to understand that God knows best, and we have to be just like Noah. When we put our self in Noah's situation, Noah knew that all of man was about to die. When we will look at our situation we know that all of man is not about to die, just as Ron wrote on the back of that book. Many will be given opportunity to believe God. How many will listen is yet to be seen, but when we look at our situation many are about to die. They are sitting in the shadow of death. Now some are beginning to see it. They see that shadow of death, but most of man does not even know what is taking place. We know that the great God of this universe is about to shake this earth like it has never been shaken before, just like Daniel told us about, and he told us about a time of trouble that would destroy every living thing upon this earth if God did not have this plan that you understand. You have understanding of what is about to take place. You know through the scriptures and through what God has revealed to your mind about what will take place upon this earth. You know that this is the way that it has to be. You believe God, that He knows best, just like Noah did. So we have to believe God, that God knows best. Many are about to be humbled upon this earth. That's what God says about man. So we believe God and His message and we believe what God gives to you and me through His Church.

It says, **Noah moved with fear and prepared an ark to the saving of his house.** So you and I have to move with fear, fear to disobey, just like he did. We have to believe God just as Noah did. We have to have the same kind of faith that these we are reading about today had. Noah understood what God was telling him and Noah knew that it was just his family at that time that would be saved. Noah was told that he was going into a new age, a new world for his family. You and I are being told about a new age. We are being told that some are being called to live into

that new age, a new world when Jesus Christ will be here. It will be a new age. It paints you and me a picture of God's plan.

God said in this book that **Noah prepared and ark for the saving of his house, his family, by the which he condemned the world.** So what is this saying, "by the which he condemned the world," talking about Noah? Noah believed God. It says here that Noah had faith in God and Noah believed what God was telling him was true. We just read in Daniel what must happen in our time. We know that we are at the end of an age. We know that Mr. Armstrong was used by God mightily and we know about Matthew 24:14 where Mr. Armstrong always stopped. He fulfilled his job upon this earth and we know that that was when the end-time would come upon man. That's the time that you and I live in, the time of the end. This world is condemned just as much as it was in Noah's day. It's written in this book and we believe it. We know that judgment has been given to this world. That's what God says. We believe it. So it says, "by the which he condemned." In other words, Noah agreed with God's judgment. Noah knew that all of mankind was about to die. We know what is about to happen in our time, but there is a Hundred-year period of time for those that will come up in a later time. That's why it was done, so God could save many of those that lived during Noah's time, the pre-flood. So there was no hope for them because of what they had descended into, in the condition that they had become. So it was merciful for all of them to die and be brought up in a different time, in a different age, in that Hundred-year period of time. So God was merciful to them and He will be merciful to those living at the end-time. God will bring them up in a different time with a just government, that Hundred-year period of time and we understand it. We understand that all of man is not lost, as the Catholic and Protestant world teaches, all those that were in Noah's time.

This says Noah **became heir**—and let's notice how it's written—**of the righteousness**—and let's notice how it's said—**which is by and through faith**, better said. "And therefore, he became heir of the righteousness which is by faith," (or through faith). So this is a beautiful scripture because you and I have to do the same thing. We are doing the same exact thing in our time if we are in agreement with the great God of this universe about what He is about to do to this world. I hope everyone is in agreement because this is the only way that it can be done. That is the way that God says it has to be done. We read about it in God's book, that this judgment was written about a long, long time ago. So we find our self at the end of an age where there is no other way for man. We can see it and we know that this is the only way that it can be done. We have that understanding. It is the great God of this universe that has opened your mind to that understanding.

Let's notice **verse 8—By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he would after receive for an inheritance**, and let's see what he did. We know the story. We know that Abraham obeyed. We know that Abraham believed God and he went out and he did what God said. It says, **not knowing where he was going**. Sometimes we just read through these scriptures and we don't grasp everything that is being said. Abraham did not have a clue where he was

going. He just picked up, took his family and he obeyed the great God of this universe and he believed what God said for him to do. Abraham did not know where he was going but he believed God and he went to that different location. It says, "By faith he believed God." So this is how he did it, by and through the faith. God says that He gave everyone that He has called and worked with a measure of faith. Abraham believed God and he obeyed God and **he journeyed in the land of promise, as in a foreign country—let's notice—dwelling in tabernacles and tents**, talking about temporary dwellings, as he moved around **with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise**. So we understand about the promises that were made and we know that from the lineage of David's seed there would be a single seed that would come out from that lineage, and we know it's talking about Jesus Christ. We know that is that single seed.

And it says, **Abraham looked for a city that has foundations—let's notice what type of city he was looking for—the one that God is building**. That's the city he was looking for, the one, same city that you and I are looking for, that City of Peace that is coming to this earth in just a short while where Abraham will be a part of that city. And we know that because of what is written in this book. He will be resurrected as a part of those 144,000 and he is looking for that city... **and maker that is of God**. He is part of that city now as we know it, the one that God is creating to bring peace to man, finally.

That is where God's focus is today, on that creation of His family, to be in this city that Abraham was talking about, the very city that Abraham could see in his mind just like you and I can see. We can see it in our mind. We can picture the 144,000 upon this earth as spirit beings, so we can see it just like Abraham could see it, the city that God is building. We know that the first phase of this will be the 144,000, that city.

It says in **verse 20—By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau—and let's notice what is being said—concerning things to come**. We know that story. **By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph**.

In **verse 24—By faith Moses, when he had come of years...** So this is talking about when Moses was grown. We know a lot about Moses' life. We know that he was raised in the palace with what we call in Georgia, "a silver spoon in his mouth." Moses grew up in a palace that our minds cannot comprehend the magnificence of what was there in his time upon this earth. We can see that Moses did not lack for anything in his life, but we know the story of how Moses was put in that basket and how he was raised in Pharaoh's palace.

But it says here Moses did something. **Moses refused to be called a son of Pharaoh's daughter**. So we read through a story and it shows us choices that have been made by many that have walked this earth before you and me. Moses chose—that's what it says. You and I have choices that we have to make once God calls us into His Church. Some of us have lost jobs, lost families, lost husbands, lost wives. Many have turned against you, but there are choices that you have to make to be in God's Church, to live God's way of life. We are reading about some that gave up

much. Ours is nothing compared to what many have given up during their time upon this earth. Many have had to suffer for this way of life.

Here we see Moses made the choice to obey God. He believed God and we read through this story that he refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. We know that God had a plan for Moses and it says Moses chose to suffer affliction. So it was by his choice and he believed God. **Moses chose to suffer with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season,** all those sins that he had at his fingertips, the things that he felt he could enjoy in the flesh. We can choose also. God does not force any of us to do anything. We have choice to believe or not to believe God. So we can read these examples that God had written in His book for you and me about those that have made the choice. Moses chose to suffer with the people of God. I'm sure God gave him understanding about one that would come as a Savior for mankind, that he would come back to this earth as a King of kings, and Lord of lords.

**Verse 26,** let's notice, **for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.** So what did Moses know about the reward? So we know that Moses had some understanding of what was in store for man and about that Savior that would come for man. It says, **By faith Moses forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king. For he endured—let's notice what he understood—as seeing Him who is invisible.** "As seeing Him who is unseen," better said. **Through faith he kept the Passover.** Moses believed God. He had faith that God was going to bring this about. ...**and the sprinkling of blood, so that He destroyed the firstborn and it would not touch them.** So Moses understood and believed what God had said and he believed that none of them would die if they obeyed God, if they believed what God was saying. Do you think being obedient was important at that time, when they were told to put that blood on the doorpost as God had said? We know that they did it, but they had a choice not to do it, but that's why their lives were saved - because they believed God.

**Verse 36—Others had trials of mockings and scourgings, moreover of bonds and imprisonment. They were stoned. They were sawn in two...** So when we think we suffer in God's Church there have been so many that have gone before you and me, that God says this world was not worthy of them. There have been so many atrocities against God's people down through time. We understand who is influencing those minds. We read about it in this book. We know about in the very beginning when one influenced the minds of man at the very beginning with Cain and Abel. The god of this world was there at the very beginning. The god of this world is here at the end. We know that God's people are not well liked because of what we believe. So that says much. Others had trial of mocking and scourging. In other words, they were beaten. They were locked up. They were imprisoned because of what they believed. **They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute,** and they were slain with the sword.

So it's pretty graphic about what some have gone through because they believed God. So we can see that it has not been pleasant for many that have walked this earth. There are not many of us going without in today's world in America. But it says, **these being destitute, afflicted,**

**tormented**, so they lived at a different time upon this earth. All of this is for a witness, brethren, of what man can do to man. Most of the governments of this world have been friendly to God's people. None of these governments are just. There is only one government that will be just, and it will be here in a short while.

It says of these that went before you and me **(of whom the world was not worthy)**, they **wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens**. When we look at what just Paul went through when he was upon this earth - let's bring it down to his time - they beat him until they thought he was dead. He was bitten by serpents, by snakes, by a snake. He was shipwrecked. Let's look at what they did to Peter, some of what he went through. They locked him up in a dungeon and put guards to guard him. We know that God rescued him and brought him out of that prison. So many have suffered down through time because of the very thing that you believe.

So when we go back in time and look even at Jeremiah and what they did to him, they put him in that well and some translations even say that they broke his teeth. You and I understand that it was because they did not like Jeremiah's message. They put him in that well so that they could not hear him, but it was about the message. So they persecuted the messenger, and it's the same today. Some of these governments have been very powerful down through time and they have persecuted and martyred God's people.

We don't even have to mention Jesus Christ and what he went through in that mock trial that he went through. It's a prime example of man's government upon this earth and what they can do to God's people. Jesus Christ is the ultimate example but there are many more that have gone before you and me that have suffered, like Daniel, Shadrach, and Abednego. They put Daniel in a lion's den. Can you imagine facing that lion? They put Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in a furnace of fire. I cannot comprehend going through what these young men went through. They were teenagers, brethren, when they were taken captive. They were just young men. You and I cannot imagine the type of government that they had in their day. We have lived in a relatively free nation all of our lives. They were slaves. If you made a misstep in their day you lost your head. They'd just kill you. We have progressed in time and mankind here in America cannot do that, but even though they may want to we do have a system in this country that is just a little more humane. But the oppression is still here for God's people and the motive is still here toward God's people, even to this day, even at the end of an age. God's people and man's governments just do not mix well.

Let's turn over to Acts 22, Acts 22. I will go back and do a little history on Paul and what his life was like when he was upon this earth. What Paul has written has been so distorted by the Catholic and Protestant world that I think it's good to go back and look at a little history about Paul and what his life was like and what he suffered. Paul was not always friendly to the people of God. So we will look at some of the things that he did. We know that he suffered because of what he did. We know that he persecuted God's people in the beginning, but then God got his attention.

So let's look at what it took for Paul, to get his attention. Paul was born to a wealthy family and he was born in Cilicia, which is the southern portion of Turkey. Saul's father had obtained citizenship and he was a Roman citizen. So Paul, his name was Saul in the beginning until God changed it, he was a Roman citizen by birth and they had certain rights just like you and me have in America.

In **Acts 22:26** we break into the story of where they found out that Paul was a Roman citizen. **And when the centurion heard that, he went in and told the commander, saying, Take care what you do, for this man is a Roman. Then the commander came and said to him, Tell me, are you a Roman? And he said, Yes. And the commander answered, With a great sum I obtained this citizenship.** Let's see what Paul said. He said that he was born a citizen. So those that were examining him became a little afraid because of the rights that Paul had as being a citizen. So that's the reason they were afraid, because of what they had done to Paul, and they had bound him. That's the reason they were afraid.

In verse 3 we see that he was a Roman citizen in his time upon this earth. When Paul was a teenager he was sent to Jerusalem to study the law of Moses and like his father he was a Pharisee. That was the largest sect at that time. Paul studied under Gamaliel, a well known and respected leader who was a teacher of the law.

**Verse 3, Paul said, I am indeed a Jew, born in Tarsus, of Cilicia, but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, taught according to the strictest of our father's law, and was zealous toward God, as you all are today.** So Paul was highly educated and he was very knowledgeable in the law of God. So we can see a little bit of why God could use Paul. He was really educated. And to give you the timeframe, Paul was born in 2 or 3 A.D., somewhere in that timeframe. When we come up to the year 31 A.D., we know about a mock trial that had been held by the Roman government and the Sanhedrin and their influences upon that government. We know about that trial that took place. We know about the false accusations that were made at that trial. We know that Jesus Christ was found guilty even though he was innocent of crimes. "Crimes worthy of death," is what they said against Jesus Christ. It was the Roman government that carried out that sentence even though it was influenced by the Sanhedrin. They hung Jesus Christ upon that pole. They killed him.

Let's turn over to Acts 8:3. That's when, the day of Pentecost, we know that 3,000 were added to God's Church. That was in A.D. 31. So we're breaking into the story and we see what's taking place. They were under the leadership of a fisherman named Peter and they were causing a lot of commotion (I guess that is what you would call it), upon the Jewish religions in Jerusalem, religious leaders in Jerusalem. They had killed Jesus Christ and Saul at that time thought that the followers of Jesus Christ, he thought that they were heretics.

Let's look at **Acts 8:3**. We see Paul coming upon the scene and we see where he was persecuting God's people. It says, **As for Saul, he made havoc of the Church, entering every house and**

**dragging off men and women committing them to prison.** So we can see that Paul had much authority when he lived upon this earth. Now, you and I don't have to live under these circumstances, but we can see that Paul was causing the people of God much persecution. I'm sure that he thought he was doing God a favor to do those things, to stamp out what he thought was a fanatical and false religion that was trying to discredit the great God of this universe. I'm sure that he thought it all belonged to those that were believing, believing God; he thought it was good for them to be imprisoned, even stoned to death. We know that because of some of his actions that he took.

So let's look at **Acts 7:54**. Ron alluded to this in the last sermon, about Stephen. We break into the story after Stephen had told them—let's see what it says, **verse 54**, Stephen the martyr — **And when they heard these things that Stephen said**, talking about the message. So they were attacking the messenger. **They were cut to the heart, and they gnashed at him with their teeth.** So they were very angry because of the message. They did not like that message that they heard from Stephen. **But he, talking about Stephen, being full of the holy spirit saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God.** So we understand that that's a true statement and that's where he's at today. **And he said, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing at the right hand of God.** So we can see that understanding that Stephen had.

**Then they cried out with a loud voice when he said these things, and stopped their ears.** It was more than they could take; the message was more than they could stand, **so they ran at him with one accord, and cast him out of the city, and stoned him,** because of the message. **And the witnesses laid down their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul. And they stoned Stephen as he was calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. Then he knelt down, and cried out with a loud voice, saying, Lord, do not charge them with this sin. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.** In other words, he died.

Let's notice **Acts 8:1**—**Saul was consenting to his death.** He thought it was a good thing that they killed Stephen, and he was in agreement at that time. We know that Saul was a part of the system of that day and he had much authority to do such a thing and we can see **at that time a great persecution rose against the Church... was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles. And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, to his funeral, and made great lamentation over him. As for Saul—let's notice what he did—he made havoc of the Church, entering houses and dragging off men and women committing them to prison.** So we can see that Saul was very hostile to the Church of God at that time, but something was about to happen to Saul; God was about to get his attention.

Let's see where God intervened in Saul's life and let's see how it was done. **Acts 9:1**—let's notice—**Then Saul—let's notice what he was doing—breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest.** So he was pretty irate, brethren, and he went to the highest authority and **asked letter of him to the synagogue of Damascus, so that if he found any who were of the way, the way that you believe, brethren, whether men or women, that he**

might bring them bound to Jerusalem. As he journeyed, he came near Damascus, and something happened to Saul. Suddenly a light shone around him from heaven. So we can see God intervening.

And then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, **Why are you persecuting me? And he said, Who are you, Lord? And the Lord said—let's notice who it was—I am Jesus whom you are persecuting. It is hard for you to kick against the goads. So he a trembling and astonished said...** Now, from what we know about Paul and what we just read, Paul was not a man that would fear most anything, to have that nature that he had, but this says that he was trembling, so God got his attention, and he was astonished because of what was taking place. So here is a man of Paul's stature, had much authority, and he was so violent against God's people, and he was fearless. We find that he is trembling with fear, so God had his attention. And he said, **Lord, what do you want me to do?** So Jesus Christ had his attention. **And then the Lord said to him, Arise, and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do. And the men who journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no one.** So he was the only one that saw what took place. **Then Saul arose from the ground; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no one.** So he was blind. Jesus Christ had blinded him. He was the only one that saw what took place. The rest just heard a noise. **So they led him by the hand, and brought him to Damascus. And he was there three days without sight, and neither ate nor drank for three days.**

Let's see what it took for Ananias to believe God. **Now, there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him the Lord said in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Here I am. And the Lord said to him, Arise, and go to the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for one named Saul, of Tarsus.** So we can see what is about to take place. **For, behold, he is praying, and in vision he has seen a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand upon him, so that he might receive his sight.** So to be praying he had to believe God.

Now, you and I know these stories, but I don't know that we've focused very much on what actually took place in the life of Paul, but Paul lived a violent life. Let's notice Ananias's response: **Ananias answered and said, Lord, I have heard from many about this man.** So Paul had a reputation and they knew who he was and let's notice what Ananias said. He said, **This man has done much harm to God's people.** They knew it. They knew his reputation and here he has authority from the chief priests to do pretty much whatever he wanted to do. **The chief priests had given Paul that authority to bind all who call on your name.** So Ananias recognized Saul as a dangerous man, and Ananias knew how dangerous he was.

**But the Lord said to him, Go, for he is a chosen vessel of mine to bear my name before gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel.** So we can see how God was about to use Saul. **For I will show him how many things he must suffer for my name's sake, and you and I are**

taking a look at Paul's life. We can see things that he had to suffer and things that he would have to face after God got his attention and after God chose him for His work.

**Ananias went his way and entered the house; and laying his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus—let's notice—who appeared to you on the road has come and sent me that you may receive your sight and be filled with the holy spirit.** So we can see that it was Jesus Christ dealing directly with Paul, or Saul at this time. **And immediately—let's notice—there fell from his eyes something like scales, and he received his sight. And he arose and was baptized. So when he had received food he was strengthened. Then Saul spent some days with the disciples at Damascus.**

We have to go to Galatians 1 (and you can be turning there). We can see that God is about to use Paul. We can see the story in **Galatians 1:15**, that's where we'll pick it up, and we find **when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me by his grace to reveal His Son in me, that I may preach him among the gentiles.** So we see Paul understanding what he would have to do. He understood what God had called him to go and do. He said, **I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood. Nor did I go to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went to Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus.**

And verse 18 we find the timeframe: **after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and remained with him fifteen days. But I saw none of the other apostles, except James the Lord's brother.** So we see that Paul went to Arabia and spent three years, during which he was taught by Jesus Christ. Paul knew the scriptures well already. He was a zealous student, as we know by these scriptures. He had knowledge of the Old Testament scriptures, but we know that he did not understand God's plan and the good news that Jesus Christ had brought to this earth, the gospel. But he was an astute student and he was a Pharisee, and he had not known about Jesus Christ as being the prophesied Messiah that would come to this earth. It took Jesus Christ's direct intervention into Paul's life for him to believe. We can see why, because of the mindset that he had, because of the type of person that he was. He was a very strong individual and it took Jesus Christ breaking him down on that journey with that light shining around him. So this is how Jesus Christ got Paul's attention. We see how Paul began to believe. He began to believe God. He began to believe what you believe. What Paul needed was an understanding of the scriptures that he knew so well. God had called him out of the government of his day and He has brought him into His Church, into God's government.

Let's go to 2 Corinthians 12:1 and it's where we find Paul speaking. **2 Corinthians 12:1.** Actually, Paul was speaking about himself and he's telling about how he learned the truth. He tells about how he was dealt with and it's Paul speaking about how Jesus Christ dealt with him. So let's read about what Paul is saying about himself. **It is necessary, not profitable for me to boast. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago...** So it's Paul talking about himself and what happened, and he's explaining to the best of his ability to tell those that were listening. **Whether in the body I do not know, or whether out of the**

**body I do not know...** So he does not know how to fully explain what had actually took place and what had happened to him. He said, **only God knows how it was done.** Paul says, **Such a one was caught up into the third heaven.** That's the way that Paul was explaining it. Let's notice—I know such a man, and he did, because it was him. He was talking about himself. **Whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, only God knows,** and the Protestant and Catholic world has so misused these scriptures, but you and I understand the truth of the matter. We know that Paul was speaking about himself. They used these scriptures to say that Paul went to heaven. They use the next verse, **how he was caught up into paradise and heard inexpressible words, which is not lawful for a man to utter.** So they use these words and they put their twist to them, brethren, but it is actually Paul telling about what happened to him on that road and what it took for Jesus Christ to get his attention.

**Verse 5—Of such a one I will boast, yet of myself I will not boast, except in my infirmities. For though I might desire to boast, I will not be a fool; for I will say the truth. But I will refrain, lest anyone should think of me above what he sees me to be or hears from me. And lest I should be exalted—let's notice what is being said—lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations,** because of what God had given him, that understanding that you have today. So we can see that he was taught God's truth directly by Jesus Christ and he already knew those scriptures because he was an astute student. Now Jesus Christ was filling him in on his mission, and the truth of the matter, and the meaning of those scriptures. So this was how Paul was brought to believe God.

Let's go back to the book of Acts, Acts 9:26. **Acts 9:26,** and this is where he came back to Jerusalem. It says, **When Saul had come to Jerusalem he tried to join the disciples.** So we can only put our self in that situation, if you had known about Paul and what he was doing, and what, maybe, he had done to your family. **They were afraid of him.** That's very understandable, why they would be afraid of him, because of what he had done. **...and they did not believe that he was a disciple.** So can you imagine dealing with a man like Paul when he had become a part of God's Church? So we can understand why they were afraid and why they didn't trust Paul at that time.

Let's notice **verse 27—Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles, and declared to them how he had seen the Lord on the road.** So that's what we just read about and what Paul just explained happened to him on that road and that Jesus Christ had spoken to him on that road, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus Christ. **So he was with them at Jerusalem, coming in and going out. And he spoke boldly in the name of Jesus, the Lord Jesus, and disputed against the Hellenists, but they attempted to kill him.** So now the shoe was on the other foot, so to speak. So now Paul was being threatened by those that wanted to kill him. **So when the brethren found out, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him out to Tarsus. Then the Churches throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and were edified. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the holy**

**spirit, they were multiplied.** So this is saying that the Church began to grow. We can see how God was about to use Saul. We know his name was changed to Paul, but Paul became like a man without a country, so to speak, because of how God was using him. He had persecuted God's people so severely that it was difficult for many to accept him at the beginning, and many did not believe that he was now a part of God's Church, but now he was preaching Jesus Christ in the synagogues. The Jews totally turned against him and they rejected him since he had turned from being a Pharisee and had embraced what they thought to be a bad, bad religion - the same that you and me have.

Let's look at **Acts 22:12** and let's pick up the story there. We can see how God was dealing with Paul. **Then a certain Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good testimony with all the Jews who dwelt there, came to me and stood and said to me, Brother Saul, receive your sight.** So we know that timeframe. **And at that same hour I looked up at him.** So here is Paul explaining. **And he said, The God of our fathers has chosen you that you should know His will, and see the Just One, and hear the voice of his mouth.** So we can see it explain how Jesus Christ dealt with Paul. **For you will be his witness—let's notice—to all men of what you have seen and heard,** and it's why it was done in the way that it was done.

So in verse 16—**Now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling upon the name of the Lord.**

And verse 17—**Now it happened, when I returned to Jerusalem, so we're back to Jerusalem, and was praying in the temple,** and he's telling about what took place, **that I was in a trance and saw him saying to me, Make haste and get out of Jerusalem quickly, for they will not receive your testimony concerning me.** So I said, **Lord, they know that in every synagogue I imprisoned and beat those that believe on you.** So, many of the believers, we know, did not trust him. **And when the blood of your martyr Stephen was shed, I was also standing by and consenting to his death, and guarding—let's notice what he was doing—guarding the clothes of those who were killing him.** So Paul had to live with this the rest of his life, things that he had done. He had to live with all of those that he had persecuted and imprisoned.

**Verse 21—Then he, talking about Jesus Christ, said to me, Depart, for I will send you far from here to the gentiles.** So that we can see that Jesus Christ was giving Paul his mission. We can see that God was getting ready to use Paul to go to the gentiles.

And in Acts 10 (you can be turning there) we will see how God revealed to Peter and how Peter had to now believe God. We will look at the way that that was done. This was a huge thing in that day, brethren. Peter was to prepare the way for Paul because up until this time just about every member of the Church of God was by Jewish birth. There were a few that had been previously converted, but it was just a few. God was getting ready to use Paul, so he used Peter now.

In Acts 10 we can find that this is where Cornelius sends a delegation. And there was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of what was called the Italian Regiment, a devout man and one who feared God with all his household, who gave alms generously to the people, and prayed to God always. And about the ninth hour of the day he saw clearly in a vision—so let's see how he was about to be used—he saw clearly in a vision an angel of God coming in and saying to him, Cornelius! And when he observed him, he was afraid, and said, What is it, lord? And he said, Your prayers and your alms have come up for a memorial before God. Now send men to Joppa, and send for Simon whose surname is Peter. He is lodging with Simon, a tanner, whose house is by the sea. And he will tell you what you must do. And when the angel who spoke to him had departed, Cornelius called two of his household servants and a devout soldier from among those who waited on him continually. And when he explained all *these things* to them, he sent them to Joppa.

Verse 9—The next day, as they went on their journey and drew near the city, Peter went up on the housetop to pray about the sixth hour. Then he became very hungry and wanted to eat; but while they made ready, he fell into a trance and saw heaven opened and an object like a great sheet bound at the four corners, descending to him and let down to earth. These scriptures have been used so mightily to distort the very meaning of what is being said. The Protestant world and the Catholic world have so distorted this message and they don't have a clue about what was taking place. They are oblivious to what this means. We know how they used these scriptures, and we will look at that. We will look at the truth of the matter in how God used it for others to believe, to believe what God was doing.

In it were all kinds of four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, and this is huge for Peter to say that he had never eaten any of these things that he was being shown, all these unclean things that he was being shown. This has been so distorted by the other religions of this world, and it's the Protestant and Catholics that have done such a number on this, to say that we can eat anything; we can eat unclean foods. But we will find the truth of the matter as we move through these scriptures.

Verse 17—While Peter wondered within himself what this vision which he had seen meant, behold, the men who were been sent from Cornelius made inquiry for Simon's house, and stood before the gate. And they called and asked whether Simon, whose surname was Peter, was lodging there. While Peter thought about the vision, the spirit said to him, Behold, three men are seeking you. Arise and go down and go with them, doubting nothing; for I have sent them. So why would he doubt? What was it about these men that he would doubt? Peter went down to the men who had been sent to him from Cornelius, and said, Yes, I am he whom you seek. For what reason have you come? And they said, Cornelius, a just man, one who fears God and has a good reputation among all the nations of the Jews—let's notice how it took place for them to believe—he was divinely instructed by a holy angel to summon you to his house,

and to hear words from you. Then he invited them in and lodged them. And on the next day Peter went away with them, and some brethren from Joppa accompanied him.

And the following day they entered Caesarea. Now Cornelius was waiting for them, and had called together his relatives and close friends. As Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him and fell down at his feet and worshiped him. But Peter, lifting him up, saying, Stand up; I myself am also a man. And as he talked with him he went in and found many who had come together. The Protestant world has so misused and distorted the vision that God gave to Peter to prepare the way for Paul. They use the scriptures to say that all food is clean to eat, but as we will see, it is not about the food. The vision that God gave Peter is not about the food, and he realized that God was showing him in that vision that it was not. It was about calling any man common or unclean. So we can see God using the vision for them to believe God.

**Verse 28.** You have to understand the times that Paul lived in and what was taking place and how they lived in that time, and the people that were there and in the Jewish nation at that time it was unlawful to even associate with people outside if they were not a Jew. It was unlawful. The gentiles. **And he said, You know how unlawful it is for a Jewish man to keep company with or go to one of another nation. But God has shown me that I should not call any man,** so this is the message, this is the truth of what took place, and this is what that vision was about, **I should not call any man common or unclean.** So we find the truth. Let's notice Peter's reaction. **Therefore, I came without objection...** He believed God. **Therefore, he came without objection as soon as he was sent for. And he said, What reason have you sent for me?**

Cornelius said, **Four days ago I was fasting...** So he's telling the story about what took place and he says, **When he comes, he will speak to you. So I sent to you immediately, and you have done well to come. Now, therefore, we are all present before God—let's notice—to hear all the things commanded you by God.** So they were ready to listen to what God had to say to them. I don't think we can understand how huge this was in their day. We find Peter preaching to Cornelius' household. We think the 50<sup>th</sup> Truth was huge, but this was a huge undertaking in their time.

**Then Peter opened his mouth and said: Of truth I perceive—let's notice what's being said—that God shows no partiality.** This was new truth for them and they believed it. They believed God and the message that God has sent to them.

**Verse 39—And we are all witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem, whom they killed by hanging upon a tree. Him God raised up the third day, and showed him openly.**

And let's notice **verse 41—not to all the people—let's notice what's being said—not to all the people.** Sometimes we can just read through and not grasp all that is being said. **Not to all the people, but to the witnesses—let's notice—chosen before by God.** The same as you and me at

the end of this age, chosen by God, witnesses chosen by God to believe the message. That's why you're here, to believe God and what He says, His message. Let's notice, **who ate and drank with him after he arose from the dead.** So they saw Jesus Christ after he arose from the dead. That's what's being said. So we can see that it was witnesses chosen by God, and some even witnessed him after he had died, after he was dead and had been risen. **And he commanded us to preach to the people, and to testify that it is he who is ordained by God to be Judge of the living and the dead.** So Jesus Christ will be here in just a little while to fulfil these verses as that judge, and to set up God's government upon this earth, a just government, to really be a just judge upon this earth, judge of the living and of the dead.

**Verse 44.** This is where the holy spirit was given to the gentiles. **And while Peter was still speaking these words, the holy spirit fell upon all those who heard the word.** And let's notice: **All those of the circumcision who believed**—and let's notice, because this was huge in what they believed, but God was moving His plan forward. **And those of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because the gift of the holy spirit had been poured out on the gentiles also.**

**Verse 48**—**And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord.** So we can see how these were used. Some of it was hard, brethren, because of the changes that had taken place. New truth. It's been hard for some that walked side by side with you and me in the Church of God that is preparing for the return of God's son back to this earth. They could not accept certain new truths. So it was huge. But we can see that it was getting time for Paul to be used.

The leading minister at this time from Jerusalem was Barnabas. So let's turn over to **Acts 11:25.** It's where **Barnabas departed for Tarsus to seek Saul.** In other words, that was the reason he was going, to seek him out. **And when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. So it was that for a whole year they assembled with the Church and taught a great many people. And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.** So we find that this is the first time that word is used. **And in these days prophets came from Jerusalem to Antioch. And one of them, named Agabus, stood up and showed by the spirit that there was going to be a great famine throughout the world, which also happened in the days of Claudius Caesar.** So this gives us a timeframe. **Then the disciples, each according to his ability, determined to send relief to the brethren dwelling in Judea. This they did also, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.** So we find them sending food to the brethren because of this famine that was in the land. And you know, you and I cannot comprehend a time of violence that they lived in, some that have walked before you and me. The Church of God suffered mightily in the times that they lived in upon this earth.

Let's go back to Hebrews 11. **Hebrews 11:39**—**All these, having obtained a good report**—so let's notice what's being said—**through faith, received not the promise.** There are some of you sitting in this room that will see that promise come to fruition and I hope you understand what you have been offered. You will see fruition, that City of Peace that Abraham talked about that God is

building, come to this earth. I hope you understand what you have been offered to see. Not everybody will see that. Only those living at that time. So there's some awesome sights ahead for the people of God.

God had it written that what you have is "more precious than gold that perishes, though it be tried by fire," and we've been reading about that fire that many went through today, "and that they may be found with praise, honor, and glory," when they are resurrected.

So, brethren, it is about believing the Great God of this universe and His Son and whether this plan is true. Jesus gave us an example and he said, "A woman, when she is in labor, has sorrow, because her hour has come," and that is a good example that was given. "But as soon as she has given birth to the child she no longer remembers the pain (the anguish), for joy that a human being has been born into the world. Therefore, you now have sorrow," and we do, "but I will see you again and your heart will rejoice." It will for many that walked before you and me.

We look so forward to that day when Jesus Christ will return to this earth and bring about that just government. That just government comes from God and He says and your joy no one will take from you when that takes place. Never again. Never again will anyone ever be persecuted for the truth of God once Jesus Christ sets his foot upon the Mount of Olives. If we believe these things that God has given to you and me we know that that is accounted as righteousness to us, just like it was Abraham. And it was written, all these things were written so that we can learn, so that we can be taught and understand what God is doing, what His plan is. We understand that the reason we can understand is because God gave to each one of us a measure of faith so that we can believe God, so that we can understand God's plan for man.

We have witnessed some of the sacrifices that was made today by some that were in the Church of God. We believe all these things that God had written. We believe about Paul and what he said, that Jesus Christ struck him down on that road. We believe Cornelius. We believe Noah. We believe that flood was here, but as Ron wrote, as Satan's world comes to an end, who will believe God, as Satan's world is destroyed? That will yet be to be seen.

Daniel wrote about that time of trouble that is coming, a time that has never been before, a time when man can destroy all human life upon this earth by just pushing a button. We live at that time, that time of trouble. Jesus Christ said in the world, talking about Satan's world, we will have tribulation, but Jesus also said something else. He said be of good cheer, that he had overcome Satan's world. He will be here in just a short while and he will take over all the governments of this world, brethren, all of them, and he will establish the government of God upon this earth to bring peace to man, peace that has so eluded mankind. But now peace will be here in a short while and I hope all of us believe it.