

We're now going to continue in the series *Strengthened in Might* with this being *Part 2*.

As was mentioned in *Part 1*, as we draw closer to the time when God grants greater power to a spirit realm to lead this world into a final world war we know that we're going to need to be strengthened as well more and more in the power of God's might that only comes from Him. That's been the focus of what we've been going through, to realize there are so many things we need to do as we continue to seek to draw closer to God, to be filled with strength from Him, because what we're getting ready to go into when these things really begin in earnest is nothing we can really grasp nor imagine, and not to be fearful of, but to understand that it's going to try us. It's going to test us in manners, in ways that we really never have been, in that regard, as far as reliance upon God, looking to God, crying out to God. Not just for ourselves but for others around us as we see these things unfold.

It was also mentioned that as Satan and demons who have followed Satan's way exert greater power on this earth then we know that we're going to be confronted with greater stress and pressure, if you will. I don't know how to put it except that there is a kind of a stress and pressure that sometimes that we can sense, that we feel, that we know is out there that kind of comes our way. You have to realize that it's from that world and they want to do that to us. They want us to react to that kind of thing in a negative way not in a positive one. That's what we have to keep focused on, that we have a battle in front of us even in that area because they know their time is short. The more that things happen on this earth, the more that things are speeding up, as they are speeding up right now, they're stirred up as well in a very powerful way.

We focused on what the archangel, Gabriel, told Daniel in **Daniel 10:18-19**. I'm going to read those again. You don't have to turn there. He said, **Then again, the one having the appearance of a man**, or it states here, **The one having the appearance of a man touched me and gave me strength. And he said, You are one greatly beloved**, or as the word means, "delighted in," or "desired." We spent a little bit of time on that to help us to think about that's us. Really a lot of this message that is written here about Daniel is very much for us at this particular time, as it has been for God's people all through time, but even more so at this end-time. It's an awesome thing here that he carried this particular message to Daniel and told him, in essence, "You are greatly beloved, delighted in. God is delighted in you. God has great desire for you." That's why we went through and discussed those things about how that when God calls us that's how He feels towards us. Sometimes it's difficult for us to keep that in mind, to understand that God has an incredible love toward each and every one of us. He calls us to succeed, not to fail. He calls us to be able to come through this successfully, the calling that He's given to us.

That's why I think it's such a horrible thing when we look at the reality that many have been called and few have been chosen because many go by the wayside. They make bad choices, wrong

choices. I think of all times that we live in right now, especially for us to be confronted with what we are, what all have desired to see who have been worked with by God since the beginning with Abel, have desired to see this time, and we get to see it. We get to live in it. We get to be a part of it. That's an awesome thing that God has offered to us.

Again, for people to give up at this time, to me just boggles my mind, or to do something different than what God says we should do, to live something different, to live a lie, to live something fake or false before God. We don't get by with anything before God.

He does love us with incredible love. Far more than we can grasp and comprehend because, basically, all we know is human love and various forms of that when it comes to brotherly love, care, and concern for one another on a human scale, but we understand that's still a selfish kind of love. That's difficult for the human mind to see and to understand, but God gives us the ability to see that as He gives us the ability to begin to see and understand a different kind of love, one that's from Him, one that's willing to sacrifice, a sacrificing kind of love for the sake of others. We sacrifice for ourselves, but we don't tend to think about sacrificing for others. It's about serving. It's about giving. It's about sacrificing self for others.

God lets us experience that to different levels and different depths at different times in our life. We aren't able to do it all the time. We have to fight this in order to work toward that, to experience that.

So anyway, he went on. So he said you're greatly loved of God. God has great desire toward you, a great delight in you. So he said, **don't fear!** What do we have to fear? We're going to go into a fearful time in front of us. We have experienced times in our life where maybe we've been confronted with a type of fear, but nothing on the scale on a physical plane, which affects us mentally and can affect us spiritually, of what we're getting ready to go into. He just says, "Don't fear!" This message that was being given to Daniel was very much about the end-time. That's what it's all about.

He said, **Peace be to you.** God's desire for us is that we have peace. That's why we went through a series talking about drama because it's the exact opposite of peace. Human drama, drama of human life is the exact opposite of peace. We have to work toward peace. Drama comes easy because that's just natural for us. That's the bad thing about human nature; it's just natural for us because it's a selfish kind of thing. Peace, on the other hand, you have to work for it.

That's why it boggles my mind sometimes when people in God's own Church don't get along, can't work things out because we've been called to be able to work through things. We've been called to sacrifice of self for the sake of someone else, to give the benefit of the doubt, or whatever it might be, or to give time or to be longsuffering, or whatever it might be. We know the tools for bringing about peace, of being able to go to people and talking to them and getting things out in the open, not to try to get our own side. Anyway, I don't want to get into that, but I think you understand what I'm saying. We have the tools for peace. God's given those to us.

He said, **Peace be to you!** Then he said, **Be strong, yes, be strong!** So we have this ability, and this is not anything about physical strength. It's about what's in the mind. It's about purpose and direction, of being strong in God's purpose and what He's revealing to us, being strong in what He's placed before us. Be confident and bold in it. That's what it's about. Again, that comes from God. It's something that comes from God, not that we can work up. It's not about that. He wasn't telling Daniel to work up some kind of physical strength or strength of mind on his own. It's about a relationship with God.

He went on to say, **So when he spoke to me I was strengthened, and said, Now you may speak, my lord, for you have strengthened me.** I think of how this is written in a very unique way. Basically, he's telling him, "I am weak and I need help. I need strength." So something that happened on a physical plane teaches us something on a spiritual plane; we are weak as human beings and we need the might, the strength of Almighty God in our lives very powerfully so. That comes through a close relationship with God, through prayer.

That's why I've been trying to encourage people to make sure day by day you have a relationship with God. He wants to hear from you. He wants to know what's going on in the mind, what you desire, what you want. Not just the "gets" - "I want 'this' and I want 'that.'" But if we do desire certain things they better be the right things. That's why we're to pray for God's spirit day by day. We want His spirit so that we can be strong, so that we can think right, so that we can fight this war that goes on. It's a matter of relying on God.

It's like him saying, "You strengthen me; speak on because now I can hear you." Even there, to be able to hear God, what God gives to us Sabbath by Sabbath, whatever God's gives to us in life, the ability to hold on to it. The truths that we have and the strength of those in our lives depend upon that relationship with God. We have to be strong in God's spirit because it's not something you can go through, as an example, and just read on your own, like the 10 Commandments. You know, the world can have those to a level, to a degree, but they read into it whatever they want. They see whatever they want, whatever their mind of prejudice comes up with. Ours? It's a matter of the truth and being able to see it.

That's the way it is with 57 Truths +1. I don't know any other way to put it. I've been thinking about that one, how do we deal with that one. So we're going to leave it as just plus one. It's a great bonus at the end-time, it really is, to set things straight, to finally set it all as far as traditional Christianity is concerned, and we're totally, totally removed from it, in that respect. Awesome!

He went on to tell about, basically here, how one is strengthened, because Gabriel's message was how this was to be accomplished. In **verse 21** it says, **And I will tell you what is noted (inscribed) in the writing of truth.** That is how we're made strong, the more that God gives to us of our purpose, of our calling, of why He's working with us, of what work is before us, of what we're to do, just as Daniel was being given charge of certain things he was to do. Everyone whom God has ever worked with is shown what they must work toward, what they must work at, what they must

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focus upon. Basically it's about God's word. It's about the Word of God, the mind of God, the being of God, the truth of God that He gives us to understand.

So we also focused on what God said to Daniel and what He says to us in the sense of our hearts, setting our hearts to seek God in understanding. Gabriel reminded Daniel that he was, again, one who was greatly beloved. So that's why we went into Jude. I want to read a couple of those scriptures again.

**Jude :20 says, Beloved, building (build) yourselves up on your most holy faith...** Faith is a belief that God gives us, the ability to believe the truth. Again, it goes back to the truth. This is how we're able to be made strong. We know these things, but we need to be reminded of them from time to time. So it says, "Build yourself up on this faith, this most holy faith," because it comes from God. The ability to believe the truths that God has given to us comes from God.

So periodically it's good to go back and review some of those, to think about some of those things, to pray about some of those things. Just because you've gone through them in the past doesn't mean they stay with you. The reality is if you go back and go through them they give you more strength; they give you better focus. So it's good to do that from time to time.

**Build yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the holy spirit.** So what do we pray about? See, it's praying in the holy spirit. It's a relationship with God. He strengthens us. ...**keep yourselves in the love of God...** That means to keep yourselves in a right relationship with God. Don't play games.

Still, we have too many sometimes playing games with God out here. You can't do it. God knows everything about every motivation we have. Every thought that's in our minds, God knows it. That should be an eye opener and a scary thought in itself because all of our thoughts as human beings are not good thoughts. We have to fight because it's from the thoughts that come actions. See, it isn't enough just to have 10 Commandments and to do them physically, it's the spirit of it. It comes from the thinking and the mind and so we have to be on guard with this. That's a matter of crying out to God for help to do so.

So, "keep yourselves in the love of God." That's about a relationship with God so that we can continue to receive of His love, not quench God's spirit, and be strengthened. As it says here, **looking for the mercy of our Lord Joshua the Christ unto eternal life.**

Then we read **2 John :1-3—The elder to the elect lady and her children, whom I love in the truth...** There are reasons why these things are stated. We tend, as we sometimes read scripture, just to read through it as a story. No, there's a lot here. Right here in the first, what it's saying to us, on a spiritual plane. He says, **whom I love**, he didn't stop there, **in the truth!** That's the only thing that gives us a right fellowship or relationship with one another within the Body, and with God, and with Christ. ...**and not only I, but also all those who have known the truth, because**

**of the truth which abides in us and will be with us forever.** If we continue to abide in it, in other words, if we continue to live in that relationship with God.

**Grace, mercy, and peace will be with you from God the Father...** It comes from God. You can't work these things up. Now, were to work at them, just like I mentioned about peace, but you have the right tools because you know the truth and you know what needs to be done, so you do what scripture says in order to make relationships right, in order to fight against self. That's the biggest battle right there. If we just fight against self, fight against this stuff that comes out of the mouth, that sometimes just blubbers out of our mouths and we offend and we cause problems and we say things we shouldn't. We have to watch that first (starts in the mind), let alone then how to resolve things between one another within the Body.

**...grace, mercy, and peace be with you from God the Father and from the Lord Joshua the Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love.** It's amazing how often that pops out, in truth and love, because they go hand in hand. The truth is the love of God. It comes from God. It's the mind of God. It's the being of God.

In *Part 3 of A Mind of Thankfulness* that we had a series in, we went through part of 1 Chronicles 28 and 29 as we focused on the subject of thankfulness. But there are a few verses that fit in well with what we're covering here in this series (and this was in the account of where David was speaking about building of the temple), and I want to go through this right now, just a couple of verses here.

**1 Chronicles 29:10-11—Therefore, David blessed (thanked, as it is here) the Eternal before all the congregation; and David said: Blessed are You...** In other words, "You are thanked." **We thank You, LORD Eternal God of Israel, our Father, forever and ever. O Eternal, Yours is the greatness the power...** That's what we need in our life, that power, that might, that strength that God can give to us, wants to give to us. **...and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in the heaven and the earth; Yours is the Kingdom, O Eternal, and You are exalted as head above all.** So again, to understand our calling and that Kingdom which is very soon to come here now.

**Verse 12—Both riches and honor come from You.** I can't help but think so often in prayers anymore, even more so to think about where we are in time, what has been placed before us, and the wealth, the incredible wealth that God has given to us above all people who have ever been called - just because of the timing of where we live in time and God's purpose for what He's revealing at this time before that Kingdom is established. We've been given the greatest of wealth.

The mind is what you take with you when you die. The physical wealth you don't. It means nothing. It's a means to an end. It's all God's; it all belongs to God. It has to do with how we think about all these things. Awesome!

**...both riches and honor come from You, and You reign over all. And in Your hand is power and might. And in Your hand is the power to make great.** That's what God is doing to us. We should be able to see that and understand that. God called us. I think of Corinthians when I think of this, when it says, "Not many mighty, not many noble, the like, are called," but God called the weak of the earth for a purpose. It's to make us great, to confound and dumbfound those who think they're great in the world around us. One day it all comes out. For those who are a part of the first fruits in the first resurrection, one day it'll all come out. For those who are still alive and live through it all and those who are resurrected after the thousand years, who have never known them, it's going to dumbfound them what God did, what God gave to them, to us. It's in God's power **to make great and to give strength unto all.** So what we have to go through we can go through it exceedingly successfully.

**Now, therefore, our God, we thank You and praise Your glorious name.** That should ever be on our lips.

Well, there are many stories written about how God intervened over and over again for His people to make them great, to encourage or to give courage to them. I think of what He told Joshua, what He told different ones even in Deuteronomy when He told to Israel, "Be strong and of good courage." Those things come from God. It's about a relationship with God. They didn't understand that in Israel. Joshua and others whom God has called did understand that, what it meant. Daniel understood what was being told to him. We understand what was being said to them.

So again, we have a lot of stories here that we can read but there are some we're going to spend some time on and there are lessons spiritually as well as we go through some of them. I think it's good that we do that at this particular time because of where we're headed. At least that's what God has given.

**...to make them great, to encourage them mightily...** Obviously then, to give strength of moving forward and closer as we move closer to Christ's coming.

But before I did that I wanted to read through some news articles. Some said that they really enjoyed going through some of these and some don't get these so I'm just going to read a few things. Because things are really speeding up, okay? That's evident, too, by what I know God has even given in writing of those, rewriting of some of those things for the websites. There are things I've learned ever since God began to work with me in this end-time going all the way back to the Apostasy and afterward. There are certain things when God gives it in understanding or writing or sermons or whatever, it says a lot, because God gives things in a timely fashion and He inspires things in a timely fashion. It really reveals more about where we are, what is taking place, what God is doing, and what He's wanting us to focus upon.

So much of what's taking place out there right now, it is incredible! You couldn't go through things like this a year ago, two years ago, three years ago. These types of articles would be few

and far between. Some of them don't even come close to some of the things being said now. They're almost biblical in nature in some of the headlines and there's a reason for that. It reminds me, again, of what I think I said in *Part 1*, the scripture that talks about, "Who can help but prophesy?" It's like when people really report what they see happening in truth (not fake news), what's really happening in the world, and they see certain things that are taking place and they report it for what it is it's as though they can't help but say certain things because of what's taking place prophetically. They don't understand that fully, but they can't help themselves because of what they feel.

Something else that's really awesome. You know God works with us in a very powerful way on a spiritual plane to teach us, to lead and guide and direct us. He has great ability in working with millions and billions of people. He is doing that right now to prepare them for a time when finally they're going to begin to be drawn to the truth, if they'll receive it. They're going to have that ability. Because as God's Kingdom gets closer, closer to Christ's coming, there is that which God is going to open up to this world in ways that have never been done yet.

I couldn't help but think about the other day, about people who go out and they proselyte and they try to get people to join their Church or they think they've got to go out and have people say the name of Jesus or whatever it might be in the world. You think, that's not what God is doing. We know that. Never has been doing that, yet God has a plan to reach out to the world, but in His time. We're at that time. It's going to be hundreds of millions, hopefully into the billions that are all of a sudden going to have the ability to begin to grasp and see things in a way that they never could. Just like when you were called; you began to see things and understand things all of a sudden that opened up to you, a light going on. It was God doing it.

For many of us we had to go through different things. I've used the expression before; I had to get smacked here and literally broke my jaw open and had a few other things have to happen to me before I'd even listen. And if those things hadn't happened to me? I know me at that time in life, and I would never have listened. I would have thought anybody in this Church is nuttier than a fruitcake. That's a reality. But when you can't see what you can't see that's how you think.

That's why the world thinks the way it does so often towards us. "You don't believe in Christmas. You don't believe in Easter. You believe in the Old Testament what? Feast of what? Tabernacles? What on earth are you talking about? Day of Atonement?" Words you've never even heard, and on and on it goes. But to us when God opens our minds it's like, "wow," we see a plan, we see a purpose. To think that we're at a point in time where we're going to have the opportunity to experience that happening to millions upon millions of people? We really don't grasp that yet. That's something you have to experience. We're going to experience it in ways that are going to dumbfound us!

So I want to read a few articles before we look at some of those scriptures and talk about them. But we live in some incredible times. It just takes one spark, just like this one here, a powder

keg. They're all over the world right now and one will lead to the other quickly. It's just like dominoes, wham, wham, wham, wham.

### This article says: **New Satellite Imagery Shows Hundreds Of Russian Battle Tanks Amassing On Ukraine Border.**<sup>1</sup>

“Ukraine's president has recently warned Russian tanks are amassing along the border between the two countries amid increasing tensions. The comments came late last month after three Ukrainian naval boats were seized in the Kerch Strait by Russia.”

“President Petro Poroshenko has allegedly shown images of what he claims to be hundreds of tanks preparing for an invasion. ... Satellite imagery from Google Earth taken sometime in November from the Defense Blog has verified Poroshenko claims. Photos show hundreds of Russian main battle tanks at a new military installation in the Kamensk-Shakhtinsky region.”

“The Russian base is about 18 kilometers (11.1 miles) away from the rebel-held territory in eastern Ukraine. Images show hundreds of main battle tanks, with thousands of military trucks, support systems, artillery pieces, tankers, and troop transport vehicles.”

They show some of these pictures and I tell you, it just kind of sends chills; one of these with just rows and rows of Russian tanks. Incredible.

“Russia has been quietly building up its forces near the border with Ukraine since late summer and now has a military force greater than 2014, the year Moscow annexed Crimea, Viktor Muzhenko, the commander of Ukrainian armed forces, told Reuters in an interview last week. ‘This (the Kerch Strait incident) was an act of aggression from regular forces, the border service (of the Russian Federation) in relation to the Ukrainian armed forces,’ Muzhenko added.”

“Eric Zuesse via The Strategic Culture Foundation, made a great point in October that **Washington is now treating Ukraine as if it were a NATO member, donating warships and military equipment to the country for use against Russia.** This is the latest indication that America's military-industrial complex is shifting to Ukraine as the epicenter to start World War III, and from which the nuclear war is to be sparked against Russia.”

“**There is a reason why Russia is amassing hundreds of main battle tanks on the Ukrainian border,** that is because the next geopolitical flare-up is right around the corner, likely to occur during the next global recession.”

Now, sometimes people don't realize what they're saying, but that's exactly what will lead into a war. It's the economy. As things go south and they realize they can't save this then people will act and that's exactly what's going to take place. They hit the nail on the head.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.zerohedge.com/news/2018-12-09/new-satellite-imagery-shows-hundreds-russian-battle-tanks-amassing-ukraine-border>

Here is another one: **EU Army? France Riot Control Vehicles Bearing EU Flag Stoke Fear, Confusion.**<sup>2</sup>

So this has been in the news now, crazy things going on in Paris. It might seem small, but it isn't, what's taking place in Europe and what's taking place in leader's minds, like this one here as well because they have something they're working toward. Their mind is they're not going to let the EU falter. They're going to do what they can in their minds to save it. They want it strengthened anyway. So if they really feel like it's faltering and failing they are going to go to extremes, and that's where we are in time right now.

So it says here: *“rather than bearing the French Tricolore flag, **the vehicles bore the distinct starred EU flag**, which critics have said is a sign an EU Army is drawing closer to existence’ -Daily Star.”*

Well, it's there as far as they're concerned. So again, article after article like this. Continue on. Here is another one: **Italy, the EU, and the Fall of the Roman Empire.**<sup>3</sup>

Awesome! Because basically biblically that's what it's all about. It's going to be a seventh and last revival and then its fall, but there's going to be a war before it falls, but that's where we are. For them to even say that, again, those verses, “Who can help but prophesy?” That's what's in front of people. They see some of these things in the world. They don't understand it; they don't even know what they're saying in many cases. I'm not going to go through any of that, but anyway.

Another one: **EU MELTDOWN? German and French economy in SHOCK SLOWDOWN as euro currency PLUNGES.**<sup>4</sup>

“THE European Union economy has hit a shock slowdown sparking fears of a continent-wide meltdown as the surprise news caused a dramatic slump in the value of the euro. Economists in the European Union are scrambling to fix an impending economic meltdown following a shock plunge in Germany and France. The two leading EU countries suffered a dramatic economic slump after a business survey of the two countries was released. Emmanuel Macron and Angela Merkel were hit by weaker than expected figures, with fears that the two so-called ‘engines of Europe...’”

So if these two, who are the “engines of the EU,” are having difficulties and things are not looking good for them this is boding really badly for Europe because all the bunch of the other countries like Italy and some others are in such poor straits, that the focus has been on them, that they're going to drag it down, but the whole system is iron and clay. It's barely holding together and they're going to fight to make it hold together. That's what they're going to feel. That's what they're being pressured into right now. It's already happening. It's in front of our eyes.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.zerohedge.com/news/2018-12-09/eu-army-france-riot-control-vehicles-bearing-eu-flag-stoke-speculation-over>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.strategic-culture.org/news/2018/12/03/italy-eu-and-fall-of-roman-empire.html>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.express.co.uk/news/world/1059375/EU-eurozone-Germany-France-Merkel-Macron-economy>

How much longer will Macron have the ability to be in office? How long would Angela Merkel continue in office? How long will Putin be able to continue in office? People are getting older and there are certain people who have been molded and framed into acting in certain ways and they have certain reputations right now. So how long would things have to go on if they all have to be replaced? Well, I don't think we're going to have to worry about that. They're on the scene. The people are there. They're already working. Macron, sometimes some of the things that some people say, you would think they never would, are dumbfounding. It's because of what they want.

Then we get to the U.S. I want to read this one here. I can't help it. It's about EMP attack. Finally, someone is writing about something that is the most logical, the easiest way to cripple this nation. People wonder how on earth could this nation at the end-time become crippled? Well, this tells a part of the story but not all of it.

### **Military warns EMP attack could wipe out America, 'democracy, world order.'**<sup>5</sup>

“In an extraordinary and sobering report meant to educate the nation on a growing threat, a new military study warns that an electromagnetic pulse weapon attack such as those developed by North Korea, Russia, and Iran could essentially challenge the United States and displace millions.”

Well, they have no idea. Anyway, farther down: “Consider just some of the warnings in the report from the United States Air Force Air University and the Curtis E. LeMay Center for Doctrine Development and Education. Citing figures from the Union of Concerned Scientists, the report: (It's just some things stated here.)

- 99 nuclear reactors would likely melt down without electricity to cool them.
- 4.1 million would be displaced from areas around the nuclear plants as the radioactive cloud spread.
- Military and commercial jets, such as those built by Airbus, could be degraded. ‘Alarmingly, aircraft designed to carry large numbers of people and sizable cargo are allowed to operate without certainty about their level of resilience.’
- Bases would be cut off, making defense and counter-attacks impossible.
- Civil unrest would start in ‘hours.’
- Power and GPS could go dark. ‘An EMP would cause instantaneous and simultaneous loss of many technologies reliant on electrical power and computer circuit boards, such as cell phones and GPS devices.’
- ‘Failures may include long-term loss of electrical power (due to loss of emergency generators), sewage, fresh water, banking, landlines, cellular service, and vehicles.’

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/washington-secrets/military-warns-emp-attack-could-wipe-out-america-democracy-world-order>

- 18 months or more are required to replace key elements of the electric grid that would be damaged or knocked out.”

Well, we know things aren’t going to go on that long. They wouldn’t have the time to do it. A lot more is going to happen besides this, but anyway.

“Figuring out just which country launched an attack would be difficult since certain weapons could be delivered in a satellite.”

There are some satellites shooting around already that some have speculated they already have those in them, and all they have to do is let it go over Nebraska, and this country has this effect on it already. We are so foolish sometimes. But only a little bit here and there does some of this come out. Some of this we’ve known about for years, that these are the likely ways, the easy ways for some of these things to come about.

Another article here says (it’s kind of a play on words here): **American’t: From Midterms to End Times.**<sup>6</sup>

“Truly great disasters come like a thief in the night. How many foresaw Rome’s sacking in 410 A.D., her collapse 66 years later, WWI or WWII? As for today, how many see that the United States is at what some call a tipping point, what others may call a Fourth Turning? Whatever you call it, the American republic is in its last days. This is too scary for many to contemplate, but there’s something far scarier: playing ostrich and not being prepared for things to come.”

That’s what’s happening; things that are taking place. I remember going through the Holocaust Museum in Jerusalem and seeing all the newspapers on the walls that talked about things that governments knew way ahead of time and chose not to address, nor address it with the public. The desire was, basically, a desire to keep people blind or ignorant of certain things because they didn’t want to become involved. They didn’t want to be a part with it. It just lingered and went on and on and on. Incredible, some of the history we have of things that have taken place in times past, things that are actually taking place right now again.

Another one: **The Coming Bankruptcy of the American Empire.**<sup>7</sup>

These kinds of articles weren’t out there a year or two ago and now they’re popping up week after week after week. I’m not even going to go into that one.

Another one (this is good): **The Psychological Bubble That Has Been Propping Up The U.S. Economy Is Starting To Implode.**<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> [https://www.americanthinker.com/articles/2018/11/american\\_from\\_midterms\\_to\\_end\\_times.html](https://www.americanthinker.com/articles/2018/11/american_from_midterms_to_end_times.html)

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.theamericanconservative.com/articles/the-coming-bankruptcy-of-the-american-empire/>

<sup>8</sup> <http://theeconomiccollapseblog.com/archives/the-psychological-bubble-that-has-been-propping-up-the-u-s-economy-is-starting-to-implode>

“Optimism can be a very powerful thing. For a long time Americans believed that things would get better, and that caused them to take action to make things better, and that actually resulted in things moving in a positive direction.”

I hope we understand that’s exactly what’s taken place. It’s about how people feel and think about something that can motivate, as an example, an economy. If enough of them believe a certain thing, others want to get on the bandwagon because they don’t want to lose out. You know, when things are going up, up, up you’re a fool (in the sight of the world, in sight of people in the world) if you don’t jump in there, because you’re going to lose out. It’s greed. Incredible things of the human mind.

Anyway, going on. I love the way this addresses some of this because it’s about the thinking of people.

“But now things have abruptly shifted. In late 2018, an increasing number of Americans believe that an economic downturn is coming, and they are taking actions consistent with that belief. As a result, they are actually helping to produce the result that they fear. And without a doubt...”

Because our system is not based on things that are absolute. It’s not based on actual gold anymore. It just isn’t. It’s based on faith. It’s based on how people think and how they feel.

“...an increasing number of Americans ... are actually helping to produce the result that they fear. And without a doubt, any rational person should be able to see that signs that the U.S. economy is slowing down are all around us. So it isn’t as if those that are preparing for the worst are being irrational. It is just that when large numbers of people all start to move in the same direction, it has a very powerful effect. We witnessed this in the stock market in recent years when people just kept buying stocks even though they were massively overvalued. The collective belief that there was money to be made in the stock market became a self-fulfilling prophecy which pushed stock prices up to absurd heights. But now that process is beginning to reverse as well, and ultimately the unwinding of that bubble will be quite painful.”

I hope some of you realize what’s happening out there with some of the things up and down. I saw that one other time (that I know of), that it happened so powerfully back and forth. It was in 2008 and all through that period of time and when that starts happening it shows how people are thinking and the uncertainties that exist out there. They don’t want to fully lose out, but if there’s something to be made then they want to jump back in, and that’s a powerful thing in the human mind, the greedy human mind.

“Over the past couple of years the dominant economic narrative that the mainstream media was pushing was that the U.S. economy was ‘booming,’ and this encouraged businesses to expand and consumers to go out and spend money.”

“But now the dominant economic narrative has changed, and businesses are starting to take actions that are consistent with the new narrative. In the retail industry, if executives truly believed we would see an economic boom in the years ahead they would be expanding, but instead stores are being closed at a record pace...”

So they go through all these different ones, of what's really taking place out there.

*“Mall and shopping center owners across the U.S. are preparing to be hit by more store closures, following a **brutal year** that included department store chains like Bon-Ton and Sears going bankrupt, Toys R Us liquidating and even Walmart shutting dozens of its club stores. Now, a slew of specialty retailers like Gap and L Brands **are getting serious about downsizing**, which will leave more vacant storefronts within malls until landlords are able to replace tenants.”*

Then it goes on and talks about General Motors and Ford and the problems going on there, agriculture and the things going on there. People are taking a second look and they're backing off right now.

Another article out on Monday: **BofA Head Of Global Rates: "I Have Not Been This Worried Since 2008."**<sup>9</sup>

This just comes up over and over and over again, comparisons being made to that period of time.

“At roughly the same time Bank of America's bearish Chief Investment Strategist, Michael Hartnett laid out 9 signals that the market has finally bottomed, and another 5 that the bottom is a lot lower, one of his BofA peers, David Woo, head of the bank's global rates and currency and EM fixed income and econ research, revealed an even more dismal outlook, telling Bloomberg TV that he is the most worried about volatility in global markets - particularly in the developing world - since the 2008 financial crisis.”

Again, interesting article. I'm not going to go through it all, but it shows you what's going on out there in the thinking.

Another article here. This is today says: **“Something Is Wrong Here”: U.S. Stocks Plunge Again And Are Having Their Worst Quarter In 7 Years.**<sup>10</sup>

“The Dow Jones Industrial Average plummeted another 496 points on Friday as panicked investors continue to pull billions of dollars out of the stock market. With less than two weeks to go until Christmas, the markets are not supposed to be experiencing this kind of turmoil, but it is happening and there is no end in sight. During the fourth quarter of 2018, we have already seen the S&P 500 fall 11 percent. Even if it doesn't go down any further, that will be the worst quarter in 7 years. And of course the S&P 500 is not alone – at this point all of the major indexes are officially in correction territory. Things are certainly getting quite frightening on Wall Street, and many believe that the worst is yet to come.”

So when that kind of thinking starts entering in you have more panic - if they really start believing these things. And they will. Dropping on down toward the end of the article. They go through all kinds of things that are happening out here.

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<sup>9</sup> <https://www.zerohedge.com/news/2018-12-10/bofa-head-global-rates-i-have-not-been-worried-2008>

<sup>10</sup> <http://theeconomiccollapseblog.com/archives/something-is-wrong-here-u-s-stocks-plunge-again-and-are-having-their-worst-quarter-in-7-years>

“... Over the past few years, a lot of Americans have become deeply complacent...”

Can you imagine that one? Complacent. Reminds me of the Church and what happened that led up to the Apostasy. Some of the things that happened to the Church are similar kinds of things that are happening in the world on a spiritual plane as well. They don't understand that though.

“Over the past few years, a lot of Americans have become deeply complacent, and that is a huge mistake. Just because our long-term financial problems were delayed does not mean that they were cancelled. The truth is that nothing has changed as far as the long-term outlook is concerned. Without a doubt we will pay a very great price for our mistakes, and a day of reckoning is inevitably coming.”

So people are starting to prepare themselves for some bad times. The point is, if you put all these things together and see what's taking place in the news now it is scary. It really is. We look for a time when things are going to begin happening. We want things to happen so that God's Kingdom can be established, so that Christ will return, but the reality is we don't recognize, we don't really grasp what's in front of us. It's not a pleasant thing what we have to go through and what we have to experience in this world. Thankfully, it's not for a long time whenever it does begin. But whether it be now or a short distance after this, we're about to see some incredible things take place.

Anyway, let's turn over to Joshua 7. We're going to spend quite a bit of time in Joshua in this section and the next as well, in this portion of the sermon. A lot of things to be learned from some of these things that have taken place but I want to set some of the history here of what was taking place, of what was happening in their lives as they came into the area of the promised land that God had told them about and some of the things they encountered and what was happening, and where they failed and where they were blessed by God when they turned around and went the right direction.

Again, this was soon after the destruction of Jericho. We come in on **Joshua 7:1** now, and it says, **Then the children of Israel...** Now, some of these translations are not too good. It says **“committed a trespass,”** but literally the word in Hebrew just means, **“were unfaithful.”** So, yes, they sinned, but then the part that goes on it says, **regarding the accursed thing,** and they refer to this accursed thing. Well, what does that mean? Well, it has to do with what God said they could have for themselves and what God said they couldn't have for themselves; it was to be dedicated to God, whether it was to be destroyed or dedicated to God. There were things that they were to keep and in this case here dedicated to God.

It says here, it just equates, puts them all in the same boat, if you will. It says, **The children of Israel were unfaithful concerning those things set apart by the Eternal.** That's what it means here. So, God had set apart certain things so something was done here that was a matter of being unfaithful, and it goes on to explain it: **for Achan the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took of those things that were set apart; so the anger of the Eternal burned against the children of Israel.**

Now Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which *is* beside Beth Aven, on the east side of Bethel, and spoke to them, saying, Go up and spy out the country. So the men went up and spied out Ai. And they returned to Joshua and said to him, Do not have all the people go up, but let about two or three thousand men go up and strike down (conquer) Ai. In other words, “It’s not that big a thing. Just send two or three thousand up to kind of clean this up.”

Do not have all the people labor at this, for they are a few. In other words, what they were going up against. So about three thousand men went up there from the people, and they fled before the men of Ai. Once they went up there to attack them it says they fled before them. And the men of Ai struck down about thirty-six men, for they chased them.... See, for them now this is a great contrast from something that had just happened when they came in and they saw the walls of Jericho come down. They marched around it all those days and they had an incredible victory where no one died and they conquered an entirely great and powerful city state, if you will, right there at that point. Now they had this confidence that we don’t need very many to go up there. They’re not very many at all to go up against and yet now they run the opposite direction and several lost their lives - thirty-six of them it says.

For they chased them from before the gate as far as Shebarim, and struck them down on their descent; therefore, the hearts of the people melted and became like water. So it’s like, “What’s happened now?” They had all this confidence and now they don’t. It says their hearts melted so it’s just showing here that they were fearful now, whereas before they were over-confident, in one respect.

Then in verse 6 it goes on to say, Then Joshua ripped his clothes, and fell to the earth on his face before the ark of the Eternal until evening, he and the elders of Israel; and they put dust on their heads.

It says, “and they put dust on their heads.” So they wanted to know why has this happened? Why have You taken favor from us and some of our own people have been killed now? That’s basically what they were asking God. So again here, they humbled themselves mightily trying to find out what the answer was.

We do the same kinds of things in our life if we’re smart. You know, when things don’t go well, when something happens that we don’t understand. That’s why the tool of fasting is so powerful, to get back on a right track, in one respect, to be refocused or make sure our focus is sharp. Again here, I encourage people to think about that in the times we’re in, in the times going forward here, that we think about a closer relationship with God because you need His help to become stronger than what you are and God wants to give that help to you.

Verse 7—And Joshua said, Alas, LORD Eternal, why have You brought this people over the Jordan at all—to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us? That’s pretty strong. I’m not sure that’s 100% accurate in the way it’s exactly said, but again, he was wanting to know why. Why have we had this success in front of us and coming into this area, Jericho, all the things

we've experienced, coming over the Jordan as we did, stopping the water as You did, walking across and showing all this power and might to us and Your presence with us - why has this happened? Why are we experiencing this now?

**Oh, that we had been content and dwelt on the other side of Jordan!** Well, when you're in a time of doubt like that sometimes things can come out of your mouth. You've got to be careful of what you say. This isn't the best thing to say to God, frankly, because the fault is never God's. The fault is always ours.

This is a learning process for them. This is new for Joshua as well. He hadn't experienced different things. But again, how far he went with some of these things in what he said, again, we don't know, but again, understandable. So, a concern, a desire for the people and why they were coming in here to do this, with the belief that indeed everything would be laid flat in front of them, but something was wrong. God's going to show him what's wrong.

**O LORD, what shall I say when Israel turns its back before its enemies? For the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of this land will hear it, and surround us, and cut off our name from the earth.** They would! If they get an inkling here that all of a sudden now they don't have this kind of favor that they had when they came in before Jericho, and they're then bolstered in confidence to go against them because look what this little area of Ai did against the Israelites.

God basically asked him then, **Why are you lying on your face like this? Israel has sinned.** Isn't that amazing? That's so often the problem we have in life. It's hard for us to see ourselves. It's hard for us to grasp things in ourselves that so often in life, well, there are things that just happen, period, time and chance. Bad comes our way at different times and we address those things. But there are times that we are to blame ourselves. That's why it's better to go before God then with a humble spirit and ask, "Is there something I need to see? Is there something I'm not understanding properly? Is there something here?" Oftentimes people know anyway.

But anyway, **Israel has sinned as they have broken My covenant which I commanded them. For they have even taken some of those things that were set apart, and have both stolen and deceived.** So that's what took place. It says Achan did this. He took, he stole from what was dedicated, set apart, not for the Israelites, but he took for himself and he deceived everyone around him. His motive then was to deceive people around him, that he's the same, he's just like the rest of them.

That's why I marvel when people do not do what they're supposed to do before God when it comes to some of the most basic commands about tithing and offerings before God. It's this same exact spirit - stealing from God and seeking to deceive from that point on because you begin living a lie. You continue to have fellowship with others. You continue to come together in Sabbath services and you're a liar and you're deceitful - and your time has run out. Just to let you know. Those who participate in those things just boggle my mind sometimes, especially after

everything that I have said, after everything that I have done, after every opportunity - patience, mercy that's been given to some - and they come back and continue to do those things?

How do you think God's going to address that? Just like this. Just. Like. This. Because sin, lying, and stealing from God is not a small thing. It's a great spiritual perversion of the mind. I would be scared to death of that. Talk about fear! Where is fearing to disobey God? Yet we should. Sometimes people don't and they get themselves in pickles and they do things they know they shouldn't be doing, but they go ahead and do it. After a time the mind kind of becomes seared to that and it's like it's okay, and they live deceit as though that's a way of life. Not in God's Church it's not. It's just a lie. It's deceit. Stealing is stealing. Stealing is one thing, but stealing from God? That's incredible!

So, anyway, **For they have taken of those things that are set apart...** You know, again, I can't help but think of this. Let's see now, 1<sup>st</sup> tithe is set apart. Hmm. It's nothing new. Holy day offerings, we are to set those apart as we choose in life from holy day to holy day, and there should never ever have to anything be said about that. So those things are set apart.

That which was never lost by the Church, tithing. The Sardis Church never lost that one. They never lost the name of the Church, the Church of God. They never lost the weekly Sabbath. They never lost the thing about tithing. Let's see now, 2<sup>nd</sup> tithe. That's set apart too, isn't it? Amazing! For one's use at the Feast of Tabernacles, primarily, or at a holy day, an annual day, to come together. A person could use that for Unleavened Bread or Pentecost, or whatever, but mostly it's reserved for, saved for the period of the Feast of Tabernacles so we can come together in a larger group and rejoice before God in a very unique way, where we're able to be away from the world for eight days totally and be fed every day. It's an awesome time!

So, yeah, that's set apart too. So sometimes people aren't even faithful in doing that. I fear too many have not been faithful in doing that. God comes first. God should always be first.

Now, I can understand more, obviously, here how Achan did that on a physical plane because they were very physical carnal people. They didn't have God's holy spirit. But what's harder to understand is when God has impregnated us with His holy spirit after baptism. We go down in the watery grave and we want to bury the old self, if that's our intent, if that's our desire, if we're being truthful to God and truthful to ourselves, and we come up out of that watery grave wanting to walk in newness of life living God's way of life and not our own anymore. So we have that struggle and we have that battle and it's there and we fight it, and we want to put God, have God first in our life. We have hands laid upon us and God gives us, which very few on the earth have ever had that opportunity, to have hands layed upon them and be begotten of God's holy spirit.

That's why I marvel when God revealed to us the truth that the angelic realm doesn't have God's holy spirit. They've never had it. They've never been offered that. They've never been given that. That is something that is of God and the God Family only and yet we have opportunity for such an incredible thing. And how do we use that?

So it blows my mind when people lie and lie and lie. I put myself in there and think, “lie to me,” yes, but that’s not what counts. It’s lying to God. That’s what counts...even though they lie to me too.

**Verse 12—It is because of this that the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies...** So I wonder what will happen in time (and I’m being facetious here) for people who don’t put God first, who come into the temple, or think they’re coming into the temple and act like they’re walking around in the temple and they’re actually out in the courtyard and they really can’t come in the temple. They won’t come into the temple because they have sin and that’s keeping them out of the temple, so they play this game as though they’re in the temple and they still have fellowship with others because they know them and they spend time with them and they don’t want the others to know that they’re liars and cheaters and that they steal from God. They don’t want everybody else in the Church to know that. They don’t want everybody in the congregation that they go visit with, like they are this Sabbath today, visiting in some places, where they’re actually coming together and they’re visiting with others and, like, “I’m okay. I’m a part of the Church,” and lying, because they’re not. The first time they stole from God they cut themselves off from God’s spirit. They put themselves out of the Church that day. They don’t have God’s spirit running through their minds, their beings. They’re just playing games. Lying, cheating games! Whew! So how is God going to deal with that?

**It’s because of this that the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies.** Some tough times are coming for some. I mean, you live at a time where tough times are coming. You had everything offered to you—everything!—to be able to live into a new age, and you won’t.

**...but turned their backs before their enemies, because they were set apart,** speaking of those things that were set apart. They were set apart. God set His people apart to be different, to have victory, to win, to go into any battle and have incredible victory. God is there to fight the battles. But when sin comes in God’s showing in a very physical story here, in that regard, what happens when that isn’t the case. So that which is set apart can suffer.

Do you realize that the entire Church can suffer, though God has set us all apart, when someone is in it or in the midst of it who is lying and cheating? That’s why I have no qualms about saying sayonara, auf wiedersehen, dasvidaniya, good-bye. Because it hurts the Body! It hurts the Body and either God brings certain things to light and I have to deal with them or it’s going to come down to the case (which I know is going to be the case) that God’s going to deal in some situations directly.

**Neither will I be with you anymore...** When we sin God is not with us and if we become so hardened and continue in something for so long and are deceitful for a long period of time, though God has granted us mercy and time, there comes a time when He says no more. **Neither will I be with you anymore, unless you destroy those things that were set apart from the midst of you.** He’s telling all of Israel, “I will not be with you if you do not set apart,” basically, in essence what He’s saying here, “that which is sin against Me.”

So that's why I take these responsibilities very seriously, of doing what I hate to do, but will do whenever it's needed. Granting mercy and patience in time, praying to God for guidance and direction of when and how to deal with various matters, but I do not hesitate one iota to follow through because it's for the Body. We don't grasp sometimes how we can be hurt spiritually as a Body if we don't do our part.

That's why there are people out here who know of some others' sins. I think of a case here just recently, not too long ago now, where I had to deal with another situation, and yet others knew what was going on and they did not come to any of the ministry and tell them. They did not stand up and say, "No more of this because it's hurting!" It's not only just hurting the person it's hurting others. It's hurting those who won't follow through with their responsibility to say, "This is wrong and can't be tolerated in God's Church. I can't condone it." So I'm not the only one that has to stand and deal with things because I don't know all things. I don't know everyone. I'm not around you week by week.

But if there is absolute sin, and I'm not talking about thinking it's sin or suspecting something. If you have absolute knowledge then you have a responsibility toward God and it's in the scriptures and I don't know why I'd even have to talk about it. Did you go to the person alone and tell them? "No." Why not? Why not do your responsibility? God says how to have peace in His Church! If someone sins and you're aware of it you know you have a responsibility before God to go and discuss it with them and say, "Hey. I saw this. I'm aware of this. This has to be addressed." Depending on what level it is, what it is, how serious it is depends upon whether the ministry has to be involved in it as well. Or the individual can say, "Yes, you're right, and that's the end of it. It's corrected right now. Don't worry. God's first." There are people who repent like that. I'm excited when I see that kind of repentance in the Church. I've seen that recently, of different ones who had certain things addressed in their lives and they have reacted to fear, in the sense of fearing of sinning against God. They repented beautifully. Awesome attitudes! It's very evident in their life.

So again, **Neither will I be with you anymore, unless you destroy those things that were set apart from the midst of you. Get up, sanctify the people, and say, Sanctify yourselves for tomorrow, because thus says the Eternal God of Israel: There is in your midst that which had been set apart, O Israel; you cannot stand before your enemies until you take away from your midst that which had been set apart.** So, better find it or seek to find it. This has to change. Something has to be addressed here.

He went on to make it even clearer what was going to take place: **So in the morning, you shall be brought forward according to your tribes. And the tribe which the Eternal seizes upon shall come according to families; and the family which the Eternal seizes upon will come by household.** So whatever method it was that they were called out God inspired it and said, "Here it is, this family. Bring them forward." It's the whole family of Judah, bring them forward. Within

their family, bring them forward. Within that, bring them forward out of them. So it's like just keep coming forward and others stayed behind.

**...and the household which the Eternal seizes upon shall come man by man. Then it shall be *that* the one who is seized upon who has that which has been set apart shall be burned with fire, he and all that he has.** Think God takes sin seriously? Sometimes we just don't think that way. We don't realize that that's the penalty for sin. It's death.

That's why Joshua the Christ came, so that we could be forgiven of sin and if we don't use that in a right way and we treat that with disdain, with mockery (which is what happens when people continue in certain sin because they won't repent), the sacrifice, all that he did, what was it about? It was for the purpose that we can be forgiven of sin and have God dwell in us because God will not dwell in sin. We want God to dwell within us individually and collectively as a Body, powerfully so.

**... shall be burned with fire, he and all that he has.** You think that didn't put some fear in the rest of Israel from that point forward for a long time? **...because he has transgressed the covenant of the Eternal, and because he has done a disgraceful thing in Israel.** Why cheat and lie to God? Why rob from God? "Well, because I can't do this bill or I can't take care of that bill." Well, how did you get in that pickle? Did someone put you in that? Did you do that? Did this come upon you? Did you not have any ability to deal with this in your life? What have you been doing in your life? Why? Why is this happening? Sometimes there are things we need to see in our own lives and grasp in our own lives and work to turn around.

I'd rather live in a little corner with a little wall around it (if I could have the wall that's nice), and go out and work, whatever I have to work at, give God all that's His, joyfully so, and be content there, sleeping on the floor, than I would be to feel like I have to have a new car. "Got to have a new car. Oh, man, I can't make the bills. Where am I going to get money?" Because this is exactly what's happened out there at different times.

Or, "I want to live in this place as opposed to that place over there, as opposed to that little corner on the floor. I want a nicer place. One that I really can't afford, but I believe that God will bless me." If that's what you think you're nuttier than a fruitcake. Sorry, it doesn't work that way. You work within reason with what you have, with what you have to that point in time and how you're blessed in your life.

So who do we have to blame? God, for things that we don't have, things we think we ought to have that we need? I marvel sometimes in thinking about other people in other parts of the world. We don't grasp sometimes how blessed we are in this age, in this time. I think of people who come up here and work like mad. They will work when those who are here won't work! People are so lazy today they don't like to work. "You mean I might have to work more than forty hours in a week? Oh, what am I going to do?" You may have to work 45 hours to pay some bills.

May have to work 50 hours in a week. That's just the way it is until you get things taken care of. Any other thinking than that blows my mind! Truly does.

So why don't some of you out there work? Why aren't you working? Nobody has an excuse. There's not one person who doesn't have an excuse. I don't care if you have to flip burgers down at Burger King. That's a noble thing to do to pay your bills, to be able to tithe to God Almighty, as to sit at home doing nothing. I'm sorry, and yet I'm not. Some things just need to be said.

**...and because he has done a disgraceful thing in Israel. So Joshua rose up early in the morning and brought Israel by their tribes, and the tribe of Judah was brought forward. He brought the family of Judah, and he seized upon the family of the Zarahites; and he brought the family of the Zarahites man by man...** So each time here fewer and fewer are stepping forward, but they're still stepping forward because God is letting them know - and again, I don't know the method used at that time, whether it was just given to him to say this is who it is, I don't know.

**...and the Zarahites man by man, and Zabdi was seized upon. Then he brought his household man by man, and Achan the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, was taken.** Finally, here is the man. Here is the one who has lived deceitfully and robbed God, stolen from God that which was set apart for God's use and God's purpose.

**Now Joshua said unto Achan, My son, Give honor to the Eternal God of Israel, and give thanksgiving to Him, and acknowledge what you have done and do not conceal it.** Don't try to conceal it. You're here standing right here now so respond properly to God. **So Achan answered Joshua and said, Truly I have sinned against the Eternal God of Israel, and this is what I have done...** Sometimes we can come to a point where we have to acknowledge indeed, yes, I did do that. But you have to suffer through with what you've done. There are times that God does not remove penalties, though He may even forgive you, in that respect, of sins if you repent mightily. Sometimes the answer is "Not now, but you'll be exceedingly blessed in the Great White Throne."

Everyone who's resurrected in the Great White Throne is exceedingly blessed because then they're going to have opportunity in an incredible world that we can't even begin to grasp nor understand, and to be able to live for a hundred years with guarantee, with good health to live that long and to have access to God's holy spirit and to then, after that's over with, to be able to be born into the Family of God, spirit. Awesome!

But for us, we can have that now if we hold on to what God has offered to us.

So he went on to say. **When I saw among the spoils a beautiful Babylonian garment...** "When I saw that car..." "When I saw that apartment..." "When I saw that house..." "When I saw 'this' or I saw 'that' and I had to have it..." That's exactly what's going on out here. That's exactly why some people are in trouble out there. That's exactly why they're not paying their first tithes or their second tithes because they chose not to live in a little corner box, or whatever it takes,

thanking God that they're able to do that in safety and security and go out and work until they're able to get something better. You've got to start some place. We all have.

So he says, **I saw among the spoils a beautiful Babylonian garment, two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold weighing fifty shekels; I coveted them and took them. "I signed the contract." Who is to blame? And they are hidden in the earth in the midst of my tent, with the silver under it.**

**So Joshua sent messengers, and they ran to the tent; and there it was, hidden in his tent, with the silver under it. And they took them from the midst of the tent, brought them to Joshua and to all the children of Israel, and laid them out before the Eternal. Here is that which was set apart.**

**Then Joshua, and all Israel with him, took Achan the son of Zerah, the silver, the garment, the wedge of gold, his sons, his daughters, his oxen, his donkeys, his sheep, his tent, and all that he had, and they brought them to the Valley of Achor. And Joshua said, Why did you bring trouble upon us? "Why did you bring such trouble upon us? Thirty-six have died because of that. We've fled before our enemies and all the other nations are going to hear about it. Why have you brought such trouble upon us and made this task much, much more difficult?"**

**Today the Eternal will bring trouble upon you. So Israel stoned him with stones; and they burned them with fire. So, in other words, they killed them first. They put them to death by stoning. Doesn't take very long. It's quick. It happens quickly. Then everything they burned with fire.**

**...and they stoned them with stones. Then they raised over him a great pile of stones that is still there to this day. So the Eternal turned away the burning of His anger. Therefore, the name of the place has been called the Valley of Achor. Literally, the Valley of Trouble, because he troubled Israel and God troubled him.**

So again, once great sin within Israel was addressed then God sent them forward again to show to them that it is He who gives true courage, strength, favor, and greatness to His people, because He was with them again. He was ready to fight their battles for them again, to lead them into battle again, to give them victory again, to raise them up again. But sin hurts. Sometimes we don't realize how much it hurts.

I have lived through long periods of time of great sin in God's Church and it just got worse and worse and worse until we all were asleep. Sin was all around, things that shouldn't have been there in the lives of so many, and so much of it within the ministry. Horrible what we went through in the Apostasy. We had to go through a lot to get where we are today. By God's great mercy, that's why we're here; that's how we're able to be here. We are incredibly blessed.

**Joshua 8:1, going on, Then the Eternal said to Joshua: Fear not. "Don't fear." There is nothing to fear when you're placing God first. You know, when you place God first God's there. He loves**

us. He's called us to succeed. He calls us to win. He calls us to have victory, to be able to conquer. That's why I love that word "overcome." It means "to conquer," in the New Testament. That's what it means, "to conquer." It's about a battle; it's about a war that's being fought.

**Neither be discouraged...** In other words, we're to be strong and of good courage. It comes from God. ...**and take all of the people of war with you, and stand and go up to Ai. See how I have given unto your hand the king of Ai, and his people, and his city, and his land.** So He's saying, now take them up with you and go against them because now it's yours. Awesome! Last time they had to high tail it away. They ran in fear. Thirty-six men were killed. This time God says go up there and I'm going to give it all to you.

I think I want to stop there because we're going to get into other things here that I don't have time to build upon, but this kind of sets the stage for where we're going. I hope we're learning along the way here that God gives us physical things like this, stories that really have spiritual intent and teaching for God's people and especially now considering where we are and all that we've gone through for several years now.

That's why I marvel at those scriptures in Revelation that talk about a cleansing of the temple and a measuring of the temple because the measuring is twofold, as we've talked about many a time. It's to bring to the forefront those who are not obeying God, those who will not obey God, and to have that taken care of outside the temple. Then within the temple to strengthen us, to bring us up to a measure that God can use us. Just like in building anything, you use measuring tools to measure and to cut into shape so it fits perfectly. That's what God is doing with us if we respond properly and yield ourselves to what He's doing.

So again here, so many things that we can learn as we go through this, but the big one today is to realize that we all have responsibility in the cleansing of the temple. And see, it's not just about us. It's about the whole family and whether or not everyone is indeed in the whole family. That doesn't mean you go out and look for anything, but if you are aware, if you know of really bad, heinous sin, sick sin, then you should have gone to your brother alone and need to. If you don't do it you're liable to share in the exact same thing. If I don't do my job I know what will happen. I don't even think about that. I'm going to do it. I want to do whatever it takes. I'm going to address them. I'm going to strive to do so faithfully, righteously before God with mercy and grace, but with strength as well, whatever is needed, whatever that measure is as God reveals it. That's what our attitudes should be.

So again, it's about a desire we should have for each and every person within the Body. You know somebody is committing adultery, you don't close your eyes to it. If you know somebody is committing fornication, you don't close your eyes to it. If you know somebody is stealing and robbing, you don't close your eyes to it. You have a responsibility to God to address it.

So that's what the story is here today because when we don't do that it affects the whole body and God pulls away from the whole Body. We can suffer because of other people's sins. God

allows that within a Church organization. I've seen it over and over and over again. So let's strive to be thoroughly cleansed individually, and let's strive to be cleansed collectively as well.