

Now that we've observed the Feast of Tabernacles and Last Great Day for 2020, we're going to return to the series we were in just before the Feast. Today will be *Part 5* of the series entitled *Called Into God's Government*. I'm working toward this being the last of this series, but you never know.

So, once again it's important to be reminded of what's been stated in every sermon in this series. We had the sermon about being called, and so it's an awesome thing here to see this process whereby God works with us and calls us into His family. That's what He's doing. He's calling us into His family when we're called into the Church and we begin that process of growth, of transformation, of what has to take place in the mind before that can happen.

Again, this process of being called into the Kingdom of God, into God's Family, is being called into God's government as well. We need to understand that because this is something that the Church has fallen short in through time, or people in the Church, not necessarily the Church. Because Mr. Armstrong understood that and taught that over and over again. It is the number one truth that he's recognized for establishing within the Church after the three that were in Sardis, and yet it is the primary one that people messed up on over and over again. The ministry never really understood. Well, they might have had it at times, but it began to be lost. It was a horrible thing that happened within God's Church.

That's what eventually led to the Apostasy, because of that one thing alone. Because it's about how you live life. Government is about what we choose that governs our life. It had better be, once God calls us, God, God's way, to do everything God's way, and to take it to heart and to realize that there are those things that are given to us, and sometimes just as a matter to test us, to see where our heart is, to see where our mind is.

Because we have to want this way of life and you have to fight for it. You have to fight, first of all, against self and to stand then for God's way, and if we don't do that zealously in our life, well, look at the past. Many have been called but very few have come through this in the last 2,000 years. I mean, that's quite incredible.

So again, it's a matter of God's government, and if we see that and understand that and understand how that takes place within the Church, to grasp then our attitude because it's not just about us and God, it's our attitude toward God's work, God's Church, God's, in this case, in some cases, most cases too, God's government that comes through His Church, the ministry. That's what it boils down to sometimes.

If we're not careful we can get wrapped up in personalities and little things here and there and familiarity can breed contempt and we fail then, after a time, to see God. We fail to recognize it's God's government, it's what God has established, and God supports it, backs it, gave it.

Maybe I'll make some comments as we go along. But it's something we really need to see with all of our being, how God's government works and to take those things to heart, things that are given to us even more seriously than what we have.

So, as we've been doing this we've been going through the story of Samuel and Saul, Saul being the first king of Israel, and going through this process of seeing what he did in his life, what he chose in his life. Because it's happened to vast numbers in God's Church. The example there for him, in that respect, is there of things that shouldn't be done that way with that spirit, with that mind, and to learn from that. Because those things are written for the Church. They're written there for us to learn from, and have been, obviously, for the last 2,000 years, for those who can glean those lessons from scripture by God's spirit, through God's spirit.

So, we went through Chapter 12—we're going to go back and just review a little bit of this toward the end. So, in Chapter 12, again here, Samuel repeated to Israel how God delivered them out of Egypt and brought them into their land. So this was this process of establishing the king, anointing a king and so forth, and explained to them that how throughout history they'd continually turned from God until some nation had come along to conquer them, to overthrow them and to destroy them, and then all of a sudden they would turn back to God again and want God's intervention to save them and how that this happened over and over and over again. The whole story of the judges is about that. Every time that's what it is, back and forth, back and forth, back and forth, and God intervening to deliver them at different times.

Then we began to cover Chapter 13 where the story begins to cover events of how Saul was established as king and the enemies that he confronted during that period of time and on. Since we ended up in this chapter in *Part 4*, we're going to pick it up again. I think it's just good to pick it up and go back and review some things.

1 Samuel 13:1. We'll go through this, hopefully, a little faster than I did the first time, or this will be another part.

Verse 1—Saul reigned for one year; and after he had reigned two years over Israel, Saul chose for himself three thousand men of Israel. Two thousand were with Saul in Michmash and in the mountains of Beth-el, and a thousand were with Jonathan in Gibeah of Benjamin.

So again, certain things continued to happen back and forth here and repeating themselves. Which brings up something else that my wife and I were talking about, I believe again this morning, that I'd mentioned at the Feast.

This thing of going back in time, 2008 and even beyond that, we need to grasp some things that are taking place right now, because we are in a time of final refining, if you will. We've been through a refining process, especially since 2013 and on, and it was speeded up at that time and certain things were made manifest and certain things were cleaned up. Then we've been

encouraged to do those things within the Church. But it's still going on, and has been mentioned all the way back then, it will happen until the time of Christ's coming.

We need to understand this, why these things are happening because of the condition the Church must be in when Christ does return, and those who will be allowed to continue on and those who will not be. Just as what happened with Israel when they came into the promised land. There's a spiritual type there for God's Church. Though we be small, it's a spiritual type, and exceedingly important.

Because there are far more being worked with now than what were being worked with back then. Please understand that God's molding and fashioning and giving opportunities for to live into a new age. So, if we grasp the importance that is to God then, hopefully, we take it even more seriously.

The point being is that some of the same things, we see this over and over again happening throughout the Church, some of the same things that people were addressing back then, as perhaps when they were being called or different battles they were having through a period of time there, some, almost identical things, are happening right now. And if you're not sure if that involves you or not or that could involve you, think back and ask are there some similarities to what you're going through now to what you were going through years ago, and what are they and how are you addressing them then? Because if you're not addressing them different then the same things can happen to you that didn't have the kind of progress they should have had back then, that they have to have now.

Because we have to address these things and go through this battle, final battle, if you will. That's the way I'm looking. It's a final battle to the end here, that's where we are, and things are coming speedily upon us.

...two thousand were with Saul in Michmash, and in the mountains of Beth-el, and a thousand were with Jonathan in Gibeah of Benjamin. The rest of the people he sent away, every man to his dwelling. Then Jonathan destroyed the garrison of the Philistines that was in Geba, and the Philistines heard about it. So, it was a quick response. Then Saul blew the trumpet, a call to arms.

I think of the Feast of Trumpets and what was said during the Feast of Trumpets and recognizing how that applies to us in our life, a call to arms. Because that's what God is giving to His Church right now! A call to arms to fight like you've never fought! We are in the end of this process, and my desire (which is small compared to God Almighty), is that everyone would hear that call and fight like they've never fought to come through this, to take these things more seriously.

If you're going into a battle, if you were going into a real, physical battle, you're going to be scared spitless when you see the army on the other side. When you recognize how great a force

can be. Some of these battles throughout the Old Testament or in a real war that screw up people's minds because of the kind of wars that are fought today.

We have blessings, God Almighty, that we can have that is on our side if we'll embrace that, that will help us and bless us in the battle. Because that's the only way to fight this battle. And so, we don't have to have that kind of fear. Though we should be mindful and have a kind of fear, a fear of not doing what God says, a fear of enjoying this world, the things in this world more than we ought to be, in the sense of that which leads to sin, in that which leads away from God, in that which interferes with our lives, some of the drama sometimes that interferes with our life so that we begin to let down in prayer and our conviction toward God Almighty and standing firm for God. Only you can make those choices.

So, I know why God is blessing me to cry out more, and I hope you do as well. Because this is where we are. It's the blowing of the trumpet to arm yourselves more than you ever have in your life to battle, to war, to fight this last part of this battle, to win it.

...and the Philistines heard about it. Okay, and then **Saul blew the trumpet**, called to arms, **throughout the land, saying, Let the Hebrews hear.** Respond, in other words, to the call. That's what's taking place. That's God's desire, that we all respond to everything we've been hearing, to the sermon of the Last Great Day, to the sermon today, to respond to do our part, to want this with all of our being.

I'm so looking forward to the next series here as well. It's very encouraging, very exciting. But here, we're learning about the things that we need to be on guard against, that we need to fight against, that we need to understand and draw closer to God in.

Verse 4—All Israel heard how Saul had attacked a garrison of the Philistines, and that Israel had now become a stench to the Philistines. So, the people were called together to Saul at Gilgal. Then the Philistines gathered together to fight with Israel with thirty thousand chariots.

Sometimes we don't see the war in front of us. We don't see the battle. We need to. We really need to take it seriously, to realize where we are, especially the powers that be out there that just can't wait for us to stumble at this end-time. Because stumbling now, not fighting now means life and death in a very powerful way, maybe life much later on again, but who wants to wait? Not that you're going to know you're waiting a thousand years, but who wants to go through that?

Then the Philistines gathered together to fight with Israel with thirty thousand chariots. Go through some of the story. I'm not going to read everything in the story here, but if you read the story Israel didn't have much of anything. Talks about how Saul and his son, Jonathan, had armor. Israel didn't. It talks about how that it had been set up that the blacksmiths in Israel were not there, were not allowed, in essence, without great battle and war, and that they took

all their farming equipment, things to be sharpened to the Philistines to take care of, to do. So, they didn't have swords and stuff that they could take to have sharpened.

Whatever took place, I don't understand it all, but that's what's recorded. Incredible. So, when you see thirty thousand chariots, that's about all that was needed in itself to fully destroy Israel. ...**six thousand horsemen**, huge compared to what Israel had, **and people**, meaning an army, **as the sand which was as the seashore in multitude**. To see it? Massive across the horizon.

Can we see what's in front of us? Because it's spiritual and it's a spiritual war.

...and they came up and encamped in Michmash, to the east of Beth-aven. Then when the men (the army) of Israel saw that they were besieged, in other words, they were pressed upon so much they were about to be captured. That was inevitable. That's what they saw. ... **(because the people were being pressed in)**, then they hid in caves, thickets, rocks, underground chambers, and in cisterns.

Can you imagine? To be so afraid? To see something so massive coming at you that this is your reaction, your response to save your life because you know you're going to be destroyed? By what you see, because you're looking at it physically, you're about to be destroyed. So, to go hide in a cistern, to go find a cave somewhere, anything where you can hide?

And it's not funny but, I mean, at that time I'm sure. But can you imagine different ones trying to get into the same place? "It's full!" "Cave is full! Go find something else."

Even some of the Hebrews crossed over the Jordan to the land of Gad and Gilead. As for Saul, he was still in Gilgal, and all the people following him were terrified. After he had waited seven days, according to the time set by Samuel... So again, this had happened more than once, and God had given instruction to him about what was to take place at different times.

Anyway, so it goes on to say, **and because Samuel had not yet come to Gilgal; and the people had scattered from him...** So, here he is, seeing people scatter. "Where is my army? Where is an army? What are we going to fight with? Look how massive this army is that's coming up against us." What do you do?

So, Saul said, Bring a burnt offering and peace offerings here to me. And he offered the burnt offering. So, when something this massive is coming up toward you, there's more of an inclination to turn to God. It shouldn't be that way. It should be something we do all the time. It shouldn't be the thing of a last-minute ditch effort when we're in huge trouble. But to go into battle knowing things about God, knowing that God is on our side strengthening us? If we do the things that are there, God will fight the battle for us.

So, all they could see is what was physical. So, he felt this pressure, so he said, **Bring a burnt offering, a peace offering here to me, and he offered the burnt offering. Now, it came to**

pass, that as soon as he had finished presenting the burnt offering, that Samuel came. So, Saul went out to meet him, so again, to greet him. We've gone through the story, but we're going through it again.

Then Samuel said, **What have you done?** It's amazing, things we can do sometimes to turn away from God because we have these solid reasons of why it's justified, why it's okay to do so. **What have you done?** And Saul replied, **When I saw that the people had scattered from me, and that you did not come within the days appointed...** So, I have reason here because you weren't here. What are we going to do? ...and because the Philistines gathered together in Michmash, then I said, **The Philistines will now come down on me at Gilgal, and I have not made supplication to the Eternal. So, I was pressured into offering a burnt offering.** "Nothing else I could do except this. That's the only thing that was in front of me to do. What else am I supposed to do?"

Then Samuel said to Saul... It's amazing how far we'll go sometimes with justification for things we do, as though it's still right. Because the more pressure that's there, the more justification that's there, what else is there to do? Justified.

And Samuel told Saul, **You have done foolishly. You have not kept the commandments of the Eternal your God, which He commanded you.** So, it really is a simple thing when it comes right down to it. Did you or did you not obey? There is nothing else. It's either obedience or it isn't. There is no justification. It's a yes or no, did I or did I not? That's why sometimes we may do things that seem to have some sense of carnal justification in it, but when there is an absolute sin, even more so for those of us in the Church, how do you deal with that? Yet there are times that people will somehow try to deal with that and somehow try to justify it.

For now the Eternal would have established your kingdom over Israel forever. This is an awesome thing. We've talked about this a little bit because it's along the lines of this thing of God is going to establish a kingly line to rule forever. The Messiah is going to come out of that lineage and rule forever. That's what it's about. The names of those and the names they will carry, going to be magnified. Awesome!

But he says, **But your kingdom will not continue.** "Because of what you've done." There are times of judgment where God just says no more. God is an incredibly merciful God. Incredibly patient God. We should know that. I don't want to go through the stories again but when the time has come upon you after all the time we've had, and the stress is put there of how important a decision is to be made in our lives, then it's time to rise to the occasion and do what we've been shown, to make choices that are absolute and not mess around anymore, not waver one way or the other, but to be resolute.

That is about sin as well. Better be resolute about sin, that whatever the sin is that's going on in one's life had just better come to an absolute screeching halt! No more fooling around! No more messing around with sin! Why do it? Why get into things of drama in one's life? Now is the time to flee from it like never before, to look to God.

“So now your kingdom will not continue.” Because sometimes we just come to a point, and we’re rapidly approaching that, and God has done that within the Church through time, but especially as small as we are, since 2013 again. I keep going back to that, things that were even determined before that in some people’s lives but made manifest by that time and on.

So certain things can happen in people’s life and God says, “That’s it. I’ll not forget.” You may continue on; you may continue to go through the motions but... So, while we have time to repent, the ability to, man, we should do that with all of our being.

The Eternal seeks for Himself a man after His own heart. Man, woman, a person, that’s what God looks for, that we have to have that kind of heart, that kind of a mind, that kind of thinking, that we want to please, so much so that we want to honor, so much so that we don’t want to bring shame to the name of God. Because that’s the first commandment, in essence, and on, that God is first in our life.

...and the Eternal has commanded him to be commander of His people, because you have not kept what the Eternal commanded you. So again, look at what we’ve been offered. To be in the Kingdom of God, to be in Elohim. It’s awesome beyond our comprehension. That should mean more to us than anything else in life, more than anyone else in life. Therein we’re tested, and we’re tried. Is it number one? Is God’s way? Is God? Is God’s Family number one in our life? Do we recognize the value, the importance of what’s being offered to us? Because it’s far beyond a kingly, physical line, of things that have been offered to people in times past. Far, far, far beyond those things.

So, since we’re not going to go over the entire story of Saul, but only going to go to those things that are more pertinent, lessons for us in God’s Church and following God’s government, looking to God’s government in our lives, and coming to understand it, and hopefully, in a deeper way than we have, we’re going to skip on down a little farther in the story here in Chapter 15:1.

1 Samuel 15:1—Samuel said to Saul, The Eternal sent me to anoint you king over His people, Israel. Now, therefore, heed the voice. So again, sometimes you have a story, you’re going into it and it covers certain things that happen, and then it goes back to the beginning and addresses certain things again as a reminder of what’s taking place and what was to happen, and so forth. That’s what is going on here throughout the book of Samuel.

Now, therefore, heed the voice of the words of the Eternal. That’s our life. That’s the way our life should be, to heed what God tells us and to understand how God tells us those things, how God gives us His word. **Thus says the Eternal of hosts, I will punish Amalek for what he did to Israel, how he ambushed him on the way when he came up from Egypt. Now, go and attack Amalek.**

Now, this is a long time later, long time. Talking about a few hundred years here of things that have gone by. This is almost in the middle of the 6,000-year period now of what we're taking about, of what's taking place here and the establishing of a king and a kingdom.

Now, go and attack Amalek and utterly destroy all that they have, and do not spare any.

Now, we know about this story but it's good to go through it and be reminded of what's said and how it applies to our life. ...and do not spare any, but kill both man and woman, infant and nursing child, ox and sheep, camel and donkey.

That's a tough one for human beings. That can be a tough one for human beings. That can be a tough one in God's Church, for us to think about what God told them back then even. I've known of people in God's Church who have battled with this, who can't grasp and understand why God did this out of love, out of mercy, out of great purpose. It's hard for us to grasp the timing of God and the purpose of God and how God carries out that purpose, and when God chooses to call individuals, to give people opportunity to become a part of His Kingdom, a part of His family.

For most through time it has not been for this time. It's been for the time to come in the hundred years. That's been God's purpose. And when you can see those things and recognize the kind of world that people are going to live in then and the purpose of God for that, then the death of infants and so forth... Sometimes it's hard for us to grasp how difficult it is, how polluted the mind becomes in human life and has been in this 6,000-year period. It's not the best thing. It's not the best arena of life, of human life to live in order to attain God's Kingdom and God's Family.

If we could only grasp that because of the polluting of the mind that happened, because of human beings and human life and the selfishness of human beings and the human life around us on a physical plane, it'd be easier to comprehend then the love of God, the mercy of God, and the plan of God, and the beauty of that plan, to see things in their proper light. But the tendency is, if we're not careful, is that we can actually end up judging God and not grasping God.

So, Saul gathered the people together and numbered them in Telaim, two hundred thousand foot soldiers, and ten thousand men of Judah. Awesome, what followed here, what began to take place. But still, not equipped as they should have been, as they could have been, I should say, as an army anyway, which you'd really call an army.

Saul came to the city of Amalek and lay in wait in the valley. It's amazing what they accomplished and what they did. God blessed them mightily for what they were able to do and how they were able to accomplish the things that they did.

Then Saul said to the Kenites, Go, depart, go down from among the Amalekites, unless I destroy you from them. For you showed kindness to all the children of Israel when they came out of Egypt. So, the Kenites departed from among the Amalekites. So, Saul

attacked the Amalekites from Havilah all the way to Shur, which is east of Egypt. He also took Agag, king of the Amalekites alive, and utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword.

So, already we've known this story. Do you remember the story? I'm sure. It's not the first time you've gone through it or read it. But it's awesome what took place here, it really is. To think what Saul did and the choices he made and what we're to learn from all this? It's quite incredible.

He also took Agag, king of the Amalekites, alive, and utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword. So Saul and the people spared Agag. Incredible. Didn't follow the instruction that was given to them. This is a very physical thing, but sometimes what we do spiritually is far, far worse than what Saul did here. Truly is. That's what we have to come to see. That's the challenge for us so often in our lives spiritually, is that we be able to see ourselves more clearly.

Because it's easy to see others sometimes and what they do. It's easy to find something that someone has done, to see the sin, and God not be in the equation of it all in what's taking place and what has to be addressed, especially in self. To grasp and understand how God calls us as a part of the Church. We're weak human beings. We have sin and there's a process that we're going through that's different from what they in Old Testament times went through. And so many of them, there were those that God worked with, but so many He wasn't working with in the sense of what we're called to, to be in God's Family early on, if you will.

So ... spared Agag, and the best of the sheep, and the oxen ... were unwilling to utterly destroy them. But everything despised and worthless, that they utterly destroyed.

So, sometimes we see things and it interferes with God, it interferes with what God tells us. We are doing or see something else that doesn't agree with what God tells us and how we're to do things, how we're to live our lives, and we want to hold on to something, we want something that's different from what God says is best for us. That's just the way of the carnal, human mind. So, it's easy to see what Saul did and find fault. It's hard to see self on a spiritual plane in choices we make. Truly is.

Now, the word of the Eternal came to Samuel, saying, I am... This is not the word for "repent," and in the King James, as it's used in the King James, and not really the word "regret" as in the New King James. That's not what it's about. We need to understand what it's about, how God looks upon our lives, the desire that God has for us, what God offers us. And so, basically, He's just saying, "I'm sorrowed." **I am sorrowed for having set up Saul as king.**

What is the issue here? Why would God feel this way? Because of the choices Saul made. That's why He sorrowed. Not that it was offered, but for the choices he made. Because it hurts. When you give something so great, so mighty to someone, like an offer, an invitation to be in His family, as He says, "In My family, Elohim," and He offers something of that magnitude, and we

don't grasp how great that really is, we don't value it as mightily as we should, and to grasp, what else is there? What else is there? What else in life could or should in any fashion or form interfere with that? Who or what can compare to that?

Sacrifice. What we want, what we desire, which is nothing, to attain to something on a physical plane, compared to what God is offering. It's a matter of seeing it in the mind spiritually. Only by doing that can we really value it for what it is. Because, then we can begin to see the scales tip in the right direction for what God offers us.

I love how it says it in the New Testament. Basically, as Paul was speaking, "What is going to separate us from the love of Christ?" That comes from Christ into our lives, it comes from God Almighty, to be offered to be in His family, what is going to separate us from that? Who? What? What battle? Satan, the demonic world? Someone else? Someone in the world? Someone in the Church who begins to turn away from what is true and right, and we go in that direction? Because many, many, many have gone down that road.

Or do we stand for what God has convicted us of from the beginning and shown us what is true and fight for that with all of our being? Because you can't have things your way as human beings. We can't take with us anyone else. You can't take with you anyone else. God and what God offers has to be that incredibly valuable to see that. Because we all belong to God Almighty. He is the Creator, and He will choose when to call, if He does, which is His desire and plan to call everyone, but not everyone will be because of choices they made throughout time. But for the vast numbers who do, God knows the time for them. And for most, we know what that time is, the Great White Throne.

So, sometimes because of choices we make we're not really choosing what God offers us, we don't value it as highly as we should, as we need to. Because, again, what is more important than that? And if truly in our heart and mind after a time we put some value on something else or someone else, which generally has been the case for people in God's Church who have left, who have turned their back on God, who have rejected the truth, but justify in their mind that they really haven't rejected the truth, they're just maybe going to go some place else and find something more palatable that they kind of agree with.

I think of the one who at one time came to hear that we are not in Philadelphia, we are not Philadelphians, and they wanted to go some place where they could be a Philadelphian, because they were being taught, "You're Philadelphians." Or the 144,000. Going to go someplace where I can be one of the 144,000. Incredible.

Again here, it's this relationship with God that God measures us by, that goes very, very deep into here. But only each one of us can answer and deal with between ourselves and God Almighty and His Son, Joshua. And therein is the battle.

It's easy to find fault with something that Saul did and how he justified it. But we in God's Church can justify things as well. Ever since I've been in God's Church, I've seen hundreds and

hundreds, and I would say into the thousands, of justifications for choices that people have made, for what they have done and held as being important. Wrong choices, but choices they made.

Verse 10—Now, the word of the Eternal came to Samuel, again here, so He says, I am sorrowed by having set up Saul as king, because of the choices he made. And when someone who has been given an opportunity, been baptized, come up out of the water, you think God isn't sorrowful when people make the wrong choices, when He's put everything in front of them? When His Son's very life was placed before them in order to bring them into His family, and then that blood is treated with contempt? That's something one has to see on a spiritual plane, that that's what sin is, that that's what wrong choices do, that that's what we're doing.

So again, sorrowful. We experience that in the Church when someone turns away from what is true. It hurts. God wasn't sorrowful for giving us the opportunity, God's not sorrowful for giving us the calling, but sorrowful for when we make the wrong choices and wrong decisions, just as much as we are, just as much as I am when someone makes a choice where the mind just isn't working right. Some of the hardest part of my job has always been when it comes down to that final point of saying, "You're no more a part of this fellowship."

For he has turned back from following Me. Horrible. And yet every time we sin this is what we're doing in the Church. So, that's where we have to remember the patience and the mercy of God Almighty as He works with us. When it's called "grace" in the Bible, man, it is grace alright, powerfully so.

But within that process there are occasions, there are times when we have to be at a certain point, where we have to make choices. All along the way we're making choices and God will give us a lot of time and He'll give us patience, He'll give patience to us and be merciful to us. But the mercy is the thing we should look to. To recognize that if I continue to fight because I want this, and I continue to repent and cry out for help to change and to think differently, to be in agreement with Him, to loathe and to hate the sin... I mean, to really come to hate the sin.

You have to hate sin to flee from it, and if it's still being messed around with in whatever way it is in our lives then we don't really hate it enough. You have to cry out to God for the help to do that and to fight this. Because it's more than what we are as physical human beings! And God will bless us in that. It's awesome, it really is.

For he has turned his back from following Me and has not followed My commandments. So, I go back to 1969 and I see people's faces, I just, my mind going through different Church areas I've been in, people that have turned away from God. Its painful!

This grieved Samuel; and he cried out to the Eternal all night. Because of what God said. Because Saul had a harder time with this, much harder, because he's carnal, he's physical, he's

a physical human being, God's prophet, God's servant. But we don't see things like God does. If we did then we're at one with Him. We have to grow in that. So, there's a big difference here.

God expressed something about Saul and Samuel knew what this meant; it's over with for Saul. Saul, his kingdom is not going to be established. Samuel had developed this relationship, this thinking toward Saul, of seeing the kingdom begin to be established and how God had worked this out.

Samuel saw how God was working to establish something. He knew that God's hand was in it, that God had purpose in what He was doing. And though Samuel in the beginning had taken this personally, he had changed in a lot of this and had begun to see what God was doing.

When you see God's hand working in people's lives and then, like baptism and so forth and the excitement for the truth, and then somewhere along the line certain sin enters in and wrong choices are made, that's hurtful. It's painful.

So, when Samuel rose early in the morning to meet Saul it was told to Samuel that Saul had gone to Carmel, and, indeed, he set up a monument for himself, and he has gone on around, passed by and gone down to Gilgal. Now, sometimes it's hard to receive out of a story all that's there. The point being is he didn't go back to Samuel. He knew what he had done. He knew that he hadn't followed what God gave him to do, what Samuel had given him to do.

So, what happens in situations like that. I've often mentioned that, that there are times when I know when people are having battles because they're not comfortable with talking to me or my wife. That's also with God's spirit that He gives in order to serve.

But with those kinds of things, again, it's a difficult thing because it's like this thing of Adam and Eve going to hide in the garden. He created you, He created everything around you, and you don't quite get it. Because they were very carnal minded, and they weren't being worked with on a spiritual plane in this matter. And somehow, they're going to go hide from God, they don't want to be in God's presence because God told them to do a certain thing. So, what do we as human beings do?

It's kind of like this thing, this goofy show on TV. They were showing these different colors in this how to give different colors. One was if you don't want, in corporations or whatever, if you use white, like, in the bathroom area, the coffee break area, people don't tend to stay around there. It's too bright. But other colors people are more subdued and it's kind of a nice atmosphere.

I think of the thing of dark and light, black and white, when it comes to certain kinds of colors and how we think when it comes to certain terms that are used there. And when you look at those kinds of things, about being in the darkness or being in the light, that's what we're talking about here. The darkness or the light is the best way of explaining this type of thing. That's what God uses throughout scripture, being in the darkness or being in the light. What do we want to be in? The light. But if you're sinning you don't really want to be in the light, you

want to hide somewhere. You don't want everything to be out in the open. You don't want to be seen for what you are. You want to be seen in a different way.

That's the worst thing about human nature so often, is we as human beings strive to portray something that we're really not. We want this image. Some people really have a battle with this in their lives. I did in the beginning of my calling. It was horrible. Because I wanted to be seen in a certain way. Because that's the way we are. Yet it takes time to grow to where we're able to be ourselves with God's spirit, to be genuine, to be a genuine article, if you will, because we have grown up with in life this façade, this image that we want others to see.

That's why, and please, if you have on, not today, but some time during the week you have a number with someone's name on it, please don't take this too far. I don't want you to become angry. But whether it be on clothing or, "What's the label?" It's something that people see on the side of glasses. I was looking at glasses the other day and I saw these names, and I didn't want the names. I don't want those names. And yet it sells because people like the name. "Oh, you have on..."

I remember when Audra was really small, and this was at a time when there was, whatever it was, Calvin Klein, and we were in a movie theater and here is this little kid and had on these jeans and I think they were even passed down. They weren't even... Anyway, given to her. The people were saying, "Oh, look. She has on Calvin Klein." It was like, "Woo!" They're blue jeans. But people are impressed by things like that sometimes and so people want to be seen in a certain light. We want to be with the winning team. People get into fights over such things. And on and on it goes.

That's why I don't like sports very much. Because they can be misused where people idolize individuals. When people start idolizing individuals, we idolize them so much let's just pay them millions because they're being idolized, and they're looked up to so much and they're so great. I hear these names on TV, of how great this certain football player is, and man, we can't have life without him! He's got to be out there! We've got to get our teams back and we've got to get this going again because of football, because of baseball, because of basketball, and if we don't have those we're going to go nuts!! I'm sorry, but that's basically how people are oftentimes. They idolize people, and they raise them up.

Now, there's a balance like that and it's fine to have a team and watch different teams play, so please understand I'm talking about having a balance as far as the Church is concerned. But in the world, it's not there. Too often this is what we bring in our lives. It's this thing of wanting to be associated with something that we admire, that we lift up.

What about admiring God Almighty and His Son? What about admiring the life we've been given in God's Church? What about admiring the fact that God has given us His spirit and gives us the ability to see His truth so that we can stand firm in it and have the blessing of being able to be an example in the world? To go to an employer and say, "That time of the year has come up again. Got to have a little over a week off," or whatever it might be, and standing firm in that

and being thankful for that, to be able to be that kind of a light, to be that kind of an example. To understand what's been given to us, to recognize it's not something you have to cower down about; it's not something you have to be embarrassed about.

And yet I've known of too many in God's Church who have been embarrassed to do these things! We shouldn't be embarrassed. We should stand there with our heads held high. Not to be obnoxious, because I've seen that too. "Oh, let me tell you about... I've got to have that week off because it says in Leviticus 23...! Do you want me to get the scriptures for you?" Anyway, you know what I'm saying. So, there's a balance in there.

And with God's spirit, with that kind of a right balance it's going to be done with humility, but it's going to be done with strength, to know what you represent, to know what you have. The greatest of wealth in the universe is the word of God, the mind of God that He's letting us have in the mind so that we can be in His family. And yet we struggle with esteeming that in our minds to the point that no sacrifice can compare with that. And so, God wants us to be willing to go through the fiery sacrifice of life, if you will, because we recognize the value of what He's offering us. The fire then doesn't mean diddly-squat.

Who cares! Who cares how hard it gets? So what? What's the worst anyone can do to you? Take your life. That's what our lives have to be like. It's God's. I treasure nothing more highly. What else is there? But that's the kind of mind we have to have, otherwise, we're not willing to sacrifice. I don't care what it is. You know, people have to make choices in life whether it be children, parents, mate, family, and those things have had to be done through time. Not that we want to, but that we're ready to if we have to. It's absolute in one's mind. And if everyone else knows that, as a whole, they're going to have a better relationship with you anyway, if there is the ability to have a good relationship. If not, have to question that.

So again, **It was told to Samuel that Saul and gone to Carmel, and indeed he set up a monument for himself.** That's great, isn't it? Pride. Being lifted up. "Look what we did! Look what I did as king! Whew! Awesome! Let's make me a monument." ...and he has gone on around. I hope we get the picture. "He didn't come to me; he went around." Amazing. **Passed by, and has gone down to Gilgal.** Crazy! Human nature.

Verse 13. So, notice how Saul responds to Samuel as soon as he does come face to face with him. **So, Samuel went to Saul, and Saul said to him, Blessed are you of the Eternal. I have performed the commandment of the Eternal.** So, went through the motions of showing some respect, but it wasn't real. It was this thing of wanting to be seen by Samuel in a certain way, to cover up certain things as well, to present himself as being right with God, being right with Samuel.

And so, "I have performed the commandment of the Eternal." This is the whole thing about a part of God's Church, is it isn't by going to Sabbath services, it isn't by going to the Feast, it isn't by tithing. That doesn't prove what we are inside. We can go through the motions of those kinds and have that out there, but it has to be inside. This is really what it amounts to.

So, “I have performed the commandment of the Eternal.” We may want to appear in a certain way, but is it inside of us with all of our being?

But Samuel said, Then what is this bleating of the sheep in my ears? Well said. “What is the noise? If you’ve killed everything, what is the sound of all these sheep **and the lowing of oxen which I hear?** So, it’s pretty clear he was trying to present something of himself that wasn’t true. And within God’s Church, in time, if we’re not striving for what is true it’ll come out. God will magnify it. God will make it known. We’re approaching the period of time when there is no more time in this age. There really isn’t.

It’s just as much as what I’ve told those two elders, and I’ll tell it over and over and over again because it’s the exact same sort of thing. There are times in life when the clock has run out and things have to be at a certain place. It’s just the way it is. So, it doesn’t mean there’s not more time for individuals to become a part of God’s Family. Some things might be in the Millennium, but most cases, in some of these judgments, it’ll have to be in the hundred years.

He clearly asked him here because Samuel stated what should have been so very clear. Sometimes I state things that are so very clear, that should reflect so quickly where we are in certain things in our life. Ours isn’t maybe the bleating of the sheep or the lowing of the oxen, the sound that should have been so evident to him, but there are some things that should be so clear, as I’ve talked about over and over again.

The things that are so obvious, things about tithing, things about giving of offerings. We’ve been in God’s Church for a long time. We don’t have to have a basket. That goes back a long, long time. And all these kinds of things that we don’t have to have anymore. We are responsible members of God’s Church and we have a relationship with God, and we know. We don’t have to repeat, like it used to be done in the Church. Every Holy Day Deuteronomy 16 was read, of what we’re to do once a year, to give an offering to God. We don’t have to be told that every Holy Day. And yet it was. It was! For years and years. All through my knowledge of Philadelphia, all through, as a whole, the period of Laodicea. Of course, by the time toward the end here I’m not sure what was being said in some of those things. But I think that custom was still there.

The reality is, it’s either in us or it isn’t. It should be so clear. And if we’re not doing those things, where are we? Where is our mind? Where is our thinking? This is minor compared to other things in our life. There should be certain sins that just ring out and scream at us. There are things we get involved in sometimes in drama where we begin to let down in our prayer life and our relationship with God that should scream out to us like all these sheep! But it doesn’t because we can’t hear it.

Just like Saul. He closed his ears off to the truth. And yet there it was, loud! For us spiritually, these things should be loud. Whatever sins that we continue to carry with us that are separating us from God, that are making us weaker in our lives, that should be a horrifying

sound to us right now. It truly should be. So, it's easy to find fault with him. What about ourselves? Because that's what we need to look at.

Saul responded, They have brought them from the Amalekites. Oh, that's a great one. It's like Adam, "It's the woman You gave me. It's the woman! It's the woman You made for me, she made me do it." Oh, where did you leave your mind? That's the way it is with any of us. Where did we park our mind? We all have personal responsibilities in life and who else can be responsible for our decisions? Nobody. So, we're responsible alone before God for every choice we make in life. It's that simple.

For the people spared the best of the sheep and the oxen to sacrifice to the Eternal. That's a really good thing. Isn't that a good thing? So, they spared them in order to sacrifice. Doesn't God want that? Isn't that what God wants? And sometimes we do things like that in our lives on a spiritual plane, that we can deceive ourselves so much to thinking this is okay with God.

...to sacrifice to the Eternal your God; and the rest we have utterly destroyed. Then Samuel said to Saul, Stay... Now, there is more to this word and it's translated as "Be quiet!" in the New King James. It's translated as "Stop!" in the NRS, in the NSV, trying to think what that is now, New Standard Version. So, anyway, these different things that are translated in different ways, this is more along the lines of saying, "Just listen." "Stop. Won't you stop?" It's like saying that sort of thing to someone, "Quit going on with this. Just stop and listen, listen to what is being said because you're missing everything." So, basically, that's what he's telling him.

So, Just listen... And that's what God tells us at different times in our life. We need to listen. A call, the sound of the trumpet, need to take it to heart....**and I will tell you what the Eternal said to me last night. Then he said to him, Tell me.**

Verse 17—So, Samuel said, When you were little in your own eyes... Something we can never lose. We should be able to see that we started with humility, because we were nothing until God called us, and then look how much God lifted us up with the truth, with His word, with a purpose to be a part of the Church of God, the Body of Christ in order to become part of God's Family. Look how much God lifts us up.

I love the scriptures that talk about, in essence, if we will humble ourselves and the need to do so, and to look to God, God will lift us up. We're not to lift ourselves up. What is true and right because of living it, because of being in unity and oneness with God, it's God lifting us up. There should always be a matter of humility in that then ourselves because we know what we are, especially in this human form now. Incredible.

When you were little in your own eyes, were you head of the tribes of Israel? So, when we were little in our own eyes were we not blessed to be called into God's Church? We saw what we were being offered, to recognize that we are a part of something that is so incredible?

Being offered to be begotten into God's own family? And those things have moved us. But if we're not careful, we can lose some of those things.

...and did not the Eternal anoint you king over Israel? Didn't God call you to be a king and a priest? That's what He's done! To be a king and a priest to serve Him in His family, in His kingdom. Awesome!

Now, the Eternal sent you on a mission... In other words, so much higher than what we have in this human life that can't begin to be compared. But here is where we have to learn it.

Now, the Eternal sent you on a mission... God gives us different things that we're to do. "This is the way, walk you in it." Over and over again, things that might happen to us within the Church, things that we're told within the Church, like Feasts and how to have a Feast, that we're only going to have it for four days at an organized location and the other four days you will be on your own. Whooeee! A little flashback on that one.

There are those who just didn't like that. Tough. Tough! What can I say? We either hear what God tells us, know how God works with us, know how God gives us the truth and are convicted of that, or we're not. Those are the kinds of decisions that we make whereby we can grow and be blessed more and more as time goes forward and become stronger in what God has given to us in the first place. But again, that's a personal thing in a relationship between us and God. But human beings can easily see something else in the midst of all that and lose sight and steer away from what is true.

Kind of like this year. I still can't get over some who were upset with what Cincinnati gets to do. "But Cincinnati gets to do this! Why can't we?" I hope those individuals have learned their lesson out there, and because they were so vocal about that murmuring behind the back of others. Because they didn't say it to me. They didn't come and ask me and complain to me about a decision that I made for God's Church. So, where did it come from?

Well, even if it wasn't God involved, there is God's government. And you know what? I know what God says when He says, "Whatever is bound on earth is bound in heaven," in His government. Are there different choices that could have been made? Absolutely. But that's the one that was made.

It's kind of like make-up. On, off, on, off, and God bound that. It wasn't from God, but it was bound and people were judged accordingly by how they reacted to God's government. Incredible.

So, we go through these different experiences to learn, and some did, some few...actually, very few when it's all said and done. Awesome. How blessed are you if you've learned?

God sent you on a mission and said, Go and utterly destroy the sinners, the Amalekites, and fight against them until they are consumed.

Now, I've told this story before, but it epitomizes something I can't help that came into my mind when we were down in Florida. After the Feast we drove to Orlando, and I was shocked, to be honest with you, how many people were in Orlando! Restaurants were packed! I thought we'd be able to go over there that evening, go out and have a meal and it wouldn't be that hard to get into a restaurant, we wouldn't be in a crowded location. But there were so many people in some areas we didn't even want to get in those areas because it's like this is COVID Alley, you know? And with the young people going around without masks in some places like that and some just don't care, I really don't want to be in that area anyway.

So, eventually, did find a place. It was much better although there were a lot of young children there. It reminded me of Chuckie Cheese. But anyway. But that was a lot better than being around all the COVID stuff. But as we were driving along going up International Drive, some of you who have been in the area of Orlando, you know the area I'm talking about. As you go north along International Drive, all the restaurants, all the things of entertainment that people come see this attraction, whatever, it might be, the upside-down building. Anyway, all the kinds of things that are along there. These things you can get strapped into and be shot up into the air, "Ahhh!" All the different things along International Drive.

But anyway, it took me back and then when I was reading this I couldn't help but be taken back to that again because there have been so many things that happen in God's Church on a regular basis and so often there are things of government within the Church that people have missed out on and haven't grasped. God doesn't take these things in a light manner at all. But too many in time have done that.

That's why through time I have cringed when I was a part of Philadelphia and the Worldwide Church of God and heard people complaining and finding fault with Herbert W. Armstrong. Because I knew who he was, and to hear people make those kinds of comments, it's like, "I don't want to be in those shoes." So dangerous to speak against God's anointed like that, against decisions that are made. Yet it was happening in headquarters and we didn't even know this till years later. But there were evangelists that had been doing this for a long, long time, working against God's apostle, doing different things than what they'd been instructed to do.

That's why it's no wonder what happened, before he even died, with so many of them, that it was manifested they are not a part. Then later on it became far more manifested as the Apostasy approached and finally took place. In time, all those things come to light.

Anyway, as we were driving up International Drive I remembered back at a time when my wife and I had invited some leading ministers in the Church down to that area. The primary purpose was not to choose a Feast site, though that was a part of what was given to the group to do, to go out and have part in doing that, to find a location. But it was to have all those individuals together. Because something that God has shown through time is that it's so important for God's leadership to be close. Because, if it's not close and faithful within the Body the Body is not going to be served properly. It will be hurt.

That history is wild throughout the Church during Philadelphia because there wasn't that kind of cohesion as there should have been, that kind of unity and oneness where everybody was exceedingly close because of the bond they had and a purpose they had together in God's service, in God's work.

So, here is a young group striving to reorganize, striving to continue on with what God had given, had (we didn't know it at that time), but had been brought together as the Church of God - PKG, in that respect. God had established the remnant Church at this time.

And so, coming together I divided the group up. I explained to some, "Okay, here is what we're doing. We're going to strive to find a place, a location that we can go and have a site, a Feast site, and look for the hotels that have the capacity to take care of what we need. But one thing, do not go north of Sand Lake Road" (if you know where that is).

Because at that time, especially, there was crime. The things that were up there, it's better today than what it was back then, but to me still not the best place. But anyway, clear distinction of a line here that don't go north of that because it's not good and we're not, in essence, going to have God's people meeting there in that kind of a location no matter how nice it might be or what it is that's up there. Which there wasn't anything that nice. Anyway.

And what happened? Incredible. That evening, I believe it was that evening when we all got back together again, there was an excitement because there was this hotel north of Sand Lake Road that would be a good location with good rates. Oh, it wasn't going to happen. It didn't happen. But that was just the beginning of some problems. Because something else came out at that time too, and that was that fault was being found that I had brought all together there at that location at the expense that I had of God's Church, of the tithes that were being used to whether it be fly or drive or have hotel rooms and food and so forth. I thought, "What a horrible thing." Totally missed the understanding of what's taking place and the purpose behind it. It's God's money. There are things that are more important in life. To understand the things that are important to God that is not a matter of a judgment of someone else to make but as to how God gives it.

I hope you understand what I'm saying. That that kind of criticism was highly unfounded because they were just wrong. Because someone has to decide where God's money is spent. And if someone is being faithful to God and loyal to God and serving God that isn't going to be something that's taken lightly by any measure and those things will have been measured out and prayed about.

So, where is God and where is God working, and we always have to go back to those things. How did I learn the truth? Where did I learn the truth? And so forth. Because that's always the focal point of it all. If that's not there then where is God's Church? Because if it's not there it has to be somewhere else. That's what people have to judge and have had to judge through time.

Only one brought that to my attention that's with us to this day. All the rest gone by the wayside. I believe with all my being all that was judged at that moment in time, though some of it didn't come out for years and years later.

So, we're judged by and measured by different things and God gives us things to do in how to live our lives. And so, that comes into a matter of how we live our life concerning sin or things that we do or don't do toward God, toward God's Church, and then there are things that happen within God's Church, administrative things.

People in God's Church through time, and especially through Philadelphia and Laodicea, have had a very difficult time grasping some of this and haven't really been taught some of these things. That although it's a matter of sin and the things that we have been told as far as tithing, as an example, or other kinds of things that take place in life that people are judge by, by their choices, so are things that happen in God's Church, like I mentioned, make-up, no make-up. Because it's a matter of seeing God. It's a matter of recognizing God's Church. It's a matter of recognizing how God works, and if those things aren't in our mind then we're missing the mark.

Saul should have known, should have seen, should have experienced well enough by this time to recognize what he was given when he was small in his own eyes, of when Samuel, God's servant came to him and told him the things he did, to know full well where God was working. Yet he did some things that he knew, because he went around and he didn't want to have to face it then, because he had the bleating sheep and the lowing of the cattle, the moo's, whatever, and all this noise that was there. Because he knew full well what was taking place and what had happened. But justified it before Samuel, may have made it up at that moment in time, "Well, they brought them back to offer them up as sacrifices."

Because I really, really don't believe that all the people brought all these things back to give it all to God. Doesn't quite fit the scenario of carnal human nature. The other things that they didn't destroy? Sure, they're bringing it all back to put in God's treasury, give it all to God. I believe that one.

So again, we're judged by things sometimes we don't grasp. How to keep the Feast. Some did exceptionally well this year and some did not. Everyone has to judge themselves in these matters and to understand that if you see an error in certain thinking that it's something to be repented of and to understand the importance of. That sometimes what we might consider to be small and little is not so small and little before God. It truly isn't.

When you're talking about the finer things of life, so often those are the things that reflect who we really are. Some big things in life, okay, but sometimes it's the smaller things in life, what we might consider to be the smaller things in life that reflect what's deep, deep down inside of us in our heart and our mind as to how we think about God and how God has worked with us.

He said here, in essence, what took place, what had happened. Explained to him that he was sent on a mission. He said, **Go and utterly destroy the sinners, the Amalekites, and fight against them until they are consumed.**

Verse 19—Therefore, why didn't you obey the voice of the Eternal? Why did you swoop down, and this is like a bird of prey swooping down, swooping in, as it talks about here, **on the spoil?** Because, you see, something else became more important in their thinking, in his thinking and what he allowed to take place here. It was about the spoil. It became more important than what God had commanded. Going north of that line and saving some money, because this is a better deal, but a dangerous place for God's people was missed.

Candidly, sometimes we don't grasp how God works to help us understand where danger is and where danger isn't.

Why then did you swoop down on the spoil? In other words, as a bird of prey does for itself. Because it's about selfishness. That's what's being shown here. It was all about yourself and it was about themselves and what they wanted out of all this. Because they were the victors. No, God was. God gave them the victory, told them He was going to give them the victory, and told them what to do.

...on the spoil, and do evil in the sight of the Eternal? And Saul said to Samuel, But I have obeyed the voice of the Eternal. "We found a place and it's good value." **...and gone on the mission which the Eternal sent me.** No, you didn't. You did something else that you were told explicitly not to do. This is what you were told to do. We listen closely to the instructions given to us. We strive to learn from it. We strive to understand God's government.

I'm still appalled by how we have people in God's Church who look down upon God's ministers. I'm appalled by it! Still going on! I'm appalled sometimes how some men still look upon women and treat them, or how by bypassing certain ones go right to the top, try to. See, there's an order in every Church area of how things are handled. And yet sometimes we think our situation is special and so we bypass someone in a local area because we don't respect them like we should! Because we don't recognize God's government like we should! See?

Some of that I saw at the Feast of Tabernacles, heard about that at the Feast of Tabernacles this year. It shouldn't be that way. Okay? There's an order to how things are done for a purpose and for a reason in God's Church, and if we do it for different reasons then we need to examine why we did things the way we did it. What's it about? Is it really about self, or something maybe there rather than what really is happening or what took place? What is it about? I want to know. Well, I already know. I have the answer. It comes from Almighty God. I've seen this over and over and over again.

So, do we have things to repent of in God's Church right now today? Absolutely. Are there things we need to clean up in our lives? Because we're almost there.

The news is shocking! It really is. We should be moved by what's going on in this world. We are so close to things taking place in the world, truly.

And Saul said to Samuel, But I have obeyed the voice of the Eternal and gone on the mission which the Eternal sent me, and brought back Agag, the king of Amalek. I have utterly destroyed the Amalekites. But the people took the plunder, sheep and oxen, the best of the things which would have been utterly destroyed to sacrifice to the Eternal your God in Gilgal.

Well, what about the Eternal my God in Gilgal? Is that what he's seeing? Is he seeing God in the picture? Is God first? Is what God says first? Is what He says more important than what the people say or someone else says?

So many people in times past have left God because of one person! Made a choice for God's way of life, to discard it, to discard the offer to become a part of Elohim for another human being. That's a choice. You can have that choice. But is that really a smart idea? What are you giving up? Do you recognize what you're giving up?

You're able to have something else for now. Right now, we're at the end of things, so how long are you going to get to have this, whatever it is you want to have? How long are you going to hold on to it? Another few weeks? Another few months? I don't know. What's left? We have to see things in that light.

I'm just crying out with a desire to see people respond, to grow, to change, to repent where repentance is needed, to work to get our lives in order because time is slipping through our fingers right now quickly and we need to be at one, truly at one with God more than ever before.

Verse 22—Then Samuel said, Has the Eternal as great a delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Eternal? It's what it's about. So, we have to know how we hear God. It isn't a personal thing. The things that God has taught us, the things that God teaches us, it's not something that God just put into your mind as a separate entity between you and Him only. It didn't come that way. It never has in the Church. It's come through God's servants. When a new truth, something that's come along, it's come from God's servants.

It's how God works. We have to make those kinds of choices and be able to see those kinds of things in the small things and in the big things.

Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to listen. That means not just letting it go in the mind and then somehow escaping through the mouth. It means to receive it, listen, to hear, to respond properly to what is given, **and to listen than the fat of rams. For rebellion,** rebellion, refusing God's government, refusing how God works in our lives, going past Sandy Lake Road, **is as the sin of witchcraft.** It's what it was.

I'll tell you what, as God's servant, I saw it exactly as that. I knew what it was. I knew what had happened.

For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness, to insist on our own ways, to go ahead and do our own thing, whatever that might be, to continue to try to hold on to something that takes us away from God, is as wickedness and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the Eternal, He has also rejected you from being king. This thing has happened on a spiritual plane to thousands and thousands and tens of thousands who have been called into God's Church through time, and even in this end-time.

Then Saul said to Samuel, I have sinned. So, after hearing this it's like, "I've sinned. You're right, I didn't do what was said." Now, I can tell you this wasn't very deeply felt. It was just an acknowledgement. It's like, "Okay, you caught me. You caught me. I'm red-handed. These sheep, these oxen, yep, you're right."

I have sinned, for I have transgressed the commandment of the Eternal and your words because I feared the people. Bull! But you know, that's human nature, isn't it? Isn't that amazing how we can think sometimes? "I feared the people." What is it that we fear sometimes? What do we use as an excuse? "I fear this," or "I fear that" and **I feared the people and obeyed their voice.**

Why do we make some of the decisions we do sometimes? We fear losing someone or something and it's more valuable than God or God's word and standing firm for God.

Now, therefore, please pardon my sin and return with me, that I may worship the Eternal. Even in all this he was haughty as all get out. That's a horrible thing! Even in all this he was playing games with Samuel. The human mind sometimes is really so sick and if we're not careful we can fall into that trap. Because there is still sin in the body that needs to be rooted out.

Now, therefore, please pardon my sin and return with me that I may worship the Eternal. It wasn't about that at all. Not at all! **Instead, Samuel said to Saul, I will not return with you, for you have rejected the word of the Eternal, and the Eternal has rejected you from being king over Israel. As Samuel turned around to go away, Saul seized the edge of his robe and it tore. So, Samuel said to him, The Eternal has torn the kingdom of Israel from you today.**

I think, what a horrible thing, and see, it's happened to so many in time's past. If we come to a certain point and it's like, "Not now. It's not going to happen." As long as God has given us the ability and the time to repent, it's what we need to be doing, to be doing that more and more in our lives, to really be searching out our lives.

...and has given it to another who is better than you. So, it's because of choices. I think of things that have happened in times past, some things that have been shifted in time, candidly, for God's Church and God teaching us lessons from all this that goes back to the example of one

of the eras of Revelation there when it says, “Don’t let anyone take your crown.” And yet, it’s happened over and over and over again. The crown. What is it about?

And also, the Strength of Israel does not deal falsely. So again here, this “Strength of Israel,” it’s talking about God Almighty. **And also, the Strength of Israel does not deal falsely.** In other words, God doesn’t go against His word. When He says something, this is the way it’s going to be. ...nor be sorrowful. In other words, when it comes time to execute judgment.

God doesn’t want to see us suffer. God doesn’t want to have to come to a point in time where a judgment has to be made where we’re going to have to go through a suffering like He was sorrowful for having given this to Saul, that He’d given him that opportunity, because of the choices he made. Sometimes that happens to people in God’s Church. There comes a time when judgment has to be executed.

For He is not a man that He should remain sorrowful. So, something unique is being brought out about God here as well, that the power, the might of Almighty God, He’s going to accomplish and perform what He accomplishes and there are times for the execution of judgment. We’re coming up to a time here of things of being judged that are down to the wire now. We’re a part of that in a very big way at a moment at time, because it has to end. And so, it’s expedient for us to respond to that kind of thing even more so.

Again here, it’s showing things about God not being a man that He should remain sorrowful. In other words, God doesn’t want to see us suffer but His plan is going to go forward, and if something has to be executed in judgment and some are judged, “This is the end for you in this part; have opportunity in the Great White Throne, but you’re not going to have it anymore now.” God makes those kinds of judgments because there’s a plan and a purpose that He works out. He doesn’t continue to be sorrowful like Samuel was, because Samuel continue on being sorrowful for what was happening and what had happened to Saul.

It’s making a distinction here that God is not like that. God continues to move forward with His plan, and we have a opportunity to be a part of it. And if we don’t, time will go on until it’s completed. It will go on until there are exactly 144,000. What an incredible thing to one day learn, if that’s what we end up learning when it’s all said and done, that this was a struggle in the end because of how we are as human beings. That even then, not just 2008, and I hope it doesn’t happen more.

Because God can continue to allow this to be prolonged as long as it needs to be prolonged and hold back a great war until it’s time to let it loose. We have to be ready. 144,000 have to be ready, let alone anyone else who’s going to go in. But that one there is a little bit easier there to deal with, those who are going to be allowed to continue on into the Millennial period, because it’s either yes or no.

Verse 30—Then he said, I have sinned. Please, honor me now before the elders of my people and before Israel. That’s what it was about. “Please, I don’t want to have to go back

and have to deal with this without you and not be shown that this power and recognition is still there.” Basically, he was told the kingdom is being taken from him. It’s going to be given to another now. “If Samuel is not with me, this isn’t going to look good.” It’s about himself. Where was the humility?

What an incredible lesson. We can never lose humility. We are what we are and we need to be open before God with that and to repent of sin as it’s brought to the surface, and even pray along those lines, “Show me what I can’t see so that I can repent of it. Help me to repent. Draw me to repentance.” Because there are things we can’t see until God shows us because of this nature we have that justifies. If we’re justifying something there are times where we just really can’t see it until God helps us because it’s a spiritual thing in the mind to break through.

He says, **Please honor me now before the elders of my people and before Israel and turn with me that I may worship the Eternal your God.** That wasn’t what it was about. **So, Samuel turned back after Saul; and Saul worshipped the Eternal.** Samuel gave into that though he knew exactly what God had said, the kingdom is taken from him. It’s going to be given to someone else.

Then Samuel said... But he stepped up and did what needed to be done because Saul didn’t have it in himself to do this. **Bring Agag, the king of the Amalekites here to me.** Saul should have done this. Should have done it a long time ago but he didn’t do it. He should have done it immediately when he returned, but he didn’t do it. Samuel did.

So, Agag came to him cautiously. And Agag said, Surely the bitterness of death is past. All the destruction that’s taken place, all of the kingdom that you’ve destroyed, surely that suffices it now. In other words, he’s basically pleading for his life. That’s what he wanted. Which is understandable.

But Samuel said, As your sword has made women childless, so shall your mother be childless among women. And Samuel, and it means what it says...**And Samuel hacked Agag in pieces before the Eternal in Gilgal.** Now, that’s sometimes is hard for us in God’s Church, some people in God’s Church sometimes to grasp something like this of this magnitude that was done.

I think of Elijah and what he did. He hacked a whole bunch of them, false prophets, false teachers before God. Different age, a different time, but a willingness to stand for what was important and understanding the value of human life, that without God it really has no value.

Now, that’s a tough thing to come to understand. God is what it’s all about and when God gives us the opportunity for life, we choose God, His way of life, His truth, His family. We don’t want to see harm come to anyone else in human life, but neither can they take us away from Him. Choices, and a willingness to stand for that. Because I’ve seen it over and over and over again in God’s Church. This is where some of the greatest battles of life can come from. Don’t let

anyone take you from God's Church, from God's truth, from God's offer to be a part of His family.

Because I will tell you, it's going to happen. It's continuing on and this will happen again. Just as I mentioned at the Feast, all will not be at the next Feast.

And Samuel hacked Agag in pieces before the Eternal in Gilgal. God was first. What God commanded was first to Samuel and he was willing to do what is hard for human beings to do sometimes. But you do what is right and just before God because you stand firm for God's way.

That's why it's not so hard to go into an employer. That's why no one has to be ashamed to go in before an employer and talk about the eight days that they need off. Because you're going to do it. You don't want to do it in a bad way because you want to keep your employment, but you're going to do it unashamed.

I know of so many people in times past who have been ashamed to stand for God's truth, to stand up for what is right before God because we have to esteem that highly and recognize the value of it.

Then Samuel went to Ramah; and Saul went up to the house of Gibeah of Saul. Interesting verse: **Then Samuel did not go to see Saul anymore until the day of his death,** when he and Jonathan and I believe some other sons had died as well in a battle with the Philistines, when he was killed in battle.

Nevertheless, Samuel mourned for Saul. Because of the choices he made. That's a hard thing in God's Church when you value and esteem it as you do, to see others who make choices that aren't a part of that. There's been a lot of hurt in our past. Truly, a lot of hurt. Especially if you've gone through the Apostasy. Only God can lift you up and strengthen you. But those things still hurt.

They truly carry a lot of hurt with them, but you look forward to the day they have the opportunity of being awakened from that if they have that opportunity. Because sadly, some have committed the unpardonable sin. But God has a plan, and everything fits into it of a time when those things of human thought and human feelings go by the wayside. Because what's most important and that which you'll be able to rejoice in forever is what God is offering.

You can't in human life. There is a lot of misery in human life, there really is. I've seen some things here recently. I think of a movie we watched and think of the suffering people have gone through in through time. I think about talking about a mother, basically, you go back to Genesis, how that she will give birth, basically in pain and suffering.

The point is missed. It's not about the pain of the actual birth itself; it's about what one will see in life. There is a lot of pain and suffering in family in human life because we live this human life and in this world there's just a lot of drama, which is pain and suffering. A lot of times that people are hurt. That's hard to deal with without God.

How blessed are we that we have God and have God's plan and purpose and know what it's all about? Awesome! It really is.

So, Samuel mourned for Saul. And the Eternal was sorrowful that He had made Saul king over Israel. In other words, again, going back to this, to see the kind of choices that he made. But he made them. But God's plan goes on.

1 Samuel 16:1 to end. Now the Eternal said to Samuel, How long will you mourn for Saul? It's one thing to mourn, it's one thing to feel badly about choices that people have made, but you're to move forward and esteem God's purpose and God's plan and look forward to the time, just as I mentioned, where those things have opportunity to be made right. But it's in time, and it's in God's time, and it's a beautiful plan, beautiful.

How long will you mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from being king over Israel...or from reigning over Israel? Fill your horn with oil. It's good for us to understand how we are to live our lives and understanding the spirit of God, that we're to fill our lives with the spirit of God and constantly move forward and put everything else aside but God and God's purpose, and God's plan. That gives excitement and fulness of life. It truly does and the other things we'll be able to deal with.

Fill your horn with oil, and go, I am sending you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided Myself a king among his sons. Beautiful. And when I think of that I think of David. I think of what God's purpose was in having a king over Israel in the first place. Because it was always God's purpose that a king would be established over Israel for the very purpose in time that the Messiah would come out of that lineage.

It's beautiful. Beautiful purpose, beautiful plan that God has. The more that we can see that in our lives and what God's doing in our lives and embrace that more fully, the more exciting God's purpose and God's plan becomes to us, and the easier it is to fight against the things that we need to fight against. After a time, they're not so important, the things that we esteem against God.

So, we're to embrace God with all of our being, with all of our might. Time is not on our side.