

We're covering a series entitled *Pursuing A Heart Like David's*, and this is *Part 4*.

Last Sabbath we ended after focusing on how Saul's jealousy, his envy, and hatred toward David had become so great that he had Ahimelech, a priest of God, actually, eighty-five priests in total in one day, had them killed.

It's incredible. You read some of these stories and sometimes it's hard for us to place ourselves or think of that experience and how it applies to us, people in the Church. Because these are so far out there as far as something that happened on a national scale with Israel, with the first king of Israel, in that regard. We see some of these stories and they're such an extreme, it's like it's hard for us sometimes in God's Church to relate to that. It's difficult for us to learn the lessons we need to learn from it. But it's important, and I hope that this series is bringing that out more and more, it's important that we strive to do that because that's why they're written.

They're written for us to learn from and to be able to understand the spirit of something. Not just some physical manifestation and how far those things can go, God wants us to grasp the spirit of a matter so we can understand what's taking place in the mind. Just like this matter of Saul's jealousy, his envy toward David that turned into an extreme hatred.

People tend to think that they don't hate anyone. In God's Church, that's how people think as a whole, have ever since I've been in the Church, don't think in the terms of hating someone. "Well, I don't hate 'so and so.'" But jealousy and envy stirs up that spirit. Whether you recognize it or not it exists.

It is not love; it's going the other way. And if something isn't love, God wants us to understand, especially in what's written in the New Testament it becomes very clear, it's a matter of murder. It's a spirit of murder. It goes in the area of hatred. So, yes, hatred is in there and it can lead to murder. Just like Saul was trying to murder (kill) David, and so enraged that he murdered, had murdered eighty-five priests in one day.

So, we can look at something like that and say, "Oh, how horrifying that a human being could do something like that!" Yet what has happened in God's Church that I have seen since 1969, since being baptized, is that there's been a lot of murdering going on, that spirit. That's far, far worse than what happened here, far worse.

Because the reality is, if we can grasp it on a spiritual plane and what God has given to us, the opportunity in time to become a part of His family, to become a part of Elohim, if we can grasp the difference in that on a spiritual plane, that's what this is all about. It's learning the lessons we need to learn so that we can see those things, so that we can grasp them on a spiritual plane and recognize how horrifying it is, how evil it is when the smallest amount in our thinking and

mind begins to become envious of any other person, jealous toward any other person, disliking something.

You can dislike some things in life but to dislike someone? To begin to find fault with them? To begin to tear them down? To begin to talk about them? People don't realize what they're doing. What comes into effect then is judging, judging other people. We don't realize how serious that is. Because we're told (which should be enough), who are we to judge God's people? ...in the sense of condemning.

It's a hard enough job being in the ministry sometimes then in coming to a point where someone has to be separated from the Body. That's a matter of judgment that God gives as a responsibility, and it's a very unpleasant thing. But the desire is still, hoping and desiring that they may come to repentance. That's what should be the main focus on those things. Hating the choices people make but not hating them. Big difference. But sometimes it's hard for us as human beings to make that difference.

So, continuing in the story we then come to when Saul sent out an army to pursue David, but had to instead engage in a battle with the Philistines. That's what we come to next. He's distracted from that pursuit, he's already in that pursuit, but now has to go in and engage the Philistines. So, he does that.

Then after that's taken care of, on his way back, the biggest thing on his mind? Go after David again. So, he pursues David again. Here we enter into the story in **1 Samuel 24:1—Now it happened, when Saul had returned from following the Philistines, that it was told to him that David was in the Wilderness of En Gedi. Then Saul took three thousand chosen men... Now, that was the army he had with him, showing the number of people here, to go out after David and those who were with him, who had aligned with David. ...three thousand chosen men from all Israel. In other words, this was the elite of the military. They were with Saul. ...and went to seek David and his men on the Rocks of the Wild Goats. So, he came to the sheepfolds, in other words, where they were penned, kept, the sheep, by the road, where there was a cave; and Saul went in to relieve himself. (Now, David and his men were staying in the recesses of that cave.)**

Now, these aren't just coincidences. They didn't just happen this way. God works with people and there are circumstances and situations that God works with and works out. This is an incredible thing then when you begin to grasp how God works with His creation, especially when there are lessons that are going to be written, recorded for a purpose, for people to learn from for hundreds, and even from here, thousands of years to follow.

That's what this is about. Because God is a master designer, creator, planner, and He plans far into the future. These aren't things that are just happening and then God deals with them as they happen. There are things that happen, and God deals with them and works with human beings as they make choices, but these are by design for purpose.

Just as the first king of Israel was by design; it didn't just happen. God allowed circumstances to happen in such a way that God knows what human beings will choose. How? Because of their selfishness! Because of their selfishness, because of their selfish nature. God knows what they're choices are going to be. He doesn't agree with those choices, but He knows exactly what we're going to choose. He works with circumstances, with nations, with people, with leaders to lead, guide and direct, and to work out His plan. He doesn't force us to do these things, it's just our nature. It's what we do.

God knows what we're going to do when circumstances are a certain way around us. He knew exactly what Saul was going to do as He began to work with David. It wasn't a mystery. It wasn't like, "Oh, now what am I going to do?"

It's like when Adam and Eve first sinned. I still remember some of those kind of debates in classes over in Bricket Wood in England when we were going through some of the things about Adam and Eve and it's like some had this concept, this idea, the thinking that oh, you know, once they sin it's like God hitting Himself in the forehead and saying, "What am I going to do now? They've sinned! They've rejected what I've offered them! What are we going to do with the plan for the next 7,100 years?"

So stupid. That was really stupid. But it was not understanding at that point in time fully by any measure the greatness and the power and the might of Almighty God to plan and prepare things for 7,100 years later. It's not by happenstance. God doesn't have anything like that happen by that. He lets human beings do certain things that happen by chance, and so forth, and people get into accidents or different things happen, but that's another matter.

And so, Saul, just happened to be at a time when he needed to relieve himself, and he just happened to be at this cave, just happened to be that David and the soldiers were back in the recesses—it had to be a pretty big cave, but they were back in there. Well, what a coincidence.

Verse 4—Then the men with David said to him, This is the day, I mean, can you imagine being there? Sometimes we as human beings, even in God's Church, tend to try or tend to read God into various things and we come up with the wrong conclusion of what we see or what we think we see. This is a very dangerous thing. It's wise to be careful of such things, reading God into certain things that we're doing, like, "God gave me 'this' and I'm unique and special and I see something that others don't see."

I've seen this since the beginning in God's Church, where different ones wanted to get up and teach different things or whatever it might be because they had this special insight that they wanted to share with everyone else. It wasn't about what they were seeing, it was about them. They couldn't see that. It's a spiritual thing.

So, again here, **The men said to David, This is the day in which the Eternal is saying to you,** and He wasn't, but this is how they took it, this is how they perceived it, **Look, I will deliver your enemy into your hand so that you may do to him as it seems good to you.** Now, partially

there's a little bit of truth in this. What is David going to do? God knew David. He already knew what David was like. He made it clear to Samuel long before here that, "I am looking for a man after My own heart." He'd already been molding and fashioning him from a young person. He knew what he was like; He had molded and fashioned him to be a man after His own heart. Worked with him. Perhaps in the womb, perhaps as soon as he was born, perhaps certain things in his makeup.

So again, **I will deliver your enemy into your hand and do with him what seems... Then David arose and secretly cut off the corner of Saul's robe. Now, it happened afterward that David's heart troubled him because he had cut off Saul's robe.** So, he wasn't going to take his life. Because the others were encouraging, basically, to do so. That's what they were pushing him toward. "Here is the one who's out to kill you. He's out to destroy you and to kill us for being with you," because that's what Saul would have done, killed them all, and several hundred men, obviously. I believe it was right at 600 at this point in time. Saul would have killed them all. That was his aim.

But again here, so what would be the common carnal thinking? "Look! This is not by chance." Now, they knew that. "How could this be a coincidence, that of all the places Saul could have gone, he stops right here at this cave, comes in here by himself, and we're back in here. God has delivered him to you." Basically, what they were insinuating was to kill him, to take his life. "He's yours to have so he's not pursuing us anymore, so that this is over with."

David's mind wasn't like that and God knew that. He still went ahead and cut off part of his robe here, as it says here, the corner of Saul's robe. So, this began to trouble David. What a mind! What a heart! Pursuing a heart like David's. That because he had done this, though Saul was after him unjustly so, and he knew that, and knew that he was out to kill him, and he knew that he hadn't done anything against Saul and had always, always been striving in his life to uphold Saul. That's the way he was. Went out to fight the Philistines, put his life on the line many times for Saul because he was his king.

"The Eternal's Anointed." That's how he looked at him. Not just because he was his king but because he was the Eternal's anointed. It was that relationship with God that guided and directed his thinking. What a thing to have, that in what we do and what we pursue in our life that God, God's way is at the forefront of our mind in our choices and decision making.

Boy, what a life we would have if we were able to do that one hundred percent from the time we were called to the time we finish this. But we don't and we can't because there are many things we have to learn along the way. What a unique mind here to strive to have, to pray about, to desire and want with all of our being.

It was troubling him that he'd cut off part of his robe. Because this was, the way he looked at him, his lord, in essence. Not the Eternal, not LORD God Almighty, but his boss, if you would, if you want to look at it that way, the one that was leading him in a physical way because he was set aside by God to rule Israel.

So, he said to his men, The Eternal forbid that I should do anything to my master, the Eternal's anointed, to stretch out my hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the Eternal.

Now, what can we learn from this on a physical plane? Well, spiritual plane, I should say, of what happened there physically? God sets aside people to lead and guide and direct, whether it be something in a physical carnal nation like that, still had priests that were established to lead and guide on a spiritual plane if people would look there. But as a whole they didn't tend to.

Then with the Church we should understand that. That's why we've had different sermons leading up to this point in time about government and the like. To realize that God has an order about things, and He has within the Church, always has had within the Church. It's been one of the primary failings of God's people to recognize that or to keep that in the mind.

I think of scriptures like when Paul told others to be mindful of, remember how you have learned these things. Never forget, basically. Where did you learn it from? How did you learn the truth? Did you just come to it on your own out here or did you pick up a *Plain Truth* some where, a *Tomorrow's World*? Did you hear *The World Tomorrow* on the radio? How did you pick it up? What happened? Did you see an ad?

I think, when I think of that one there, I think of a big ole city in Texas where an individual said he knew that he saw the ad for the book and he went back looking for the ad; never could find it again. We never advertised there so I don't know what happened. But anyway, this was what was in his mind, of how he came to see the first book.

Different people have had different things. That's why I love stories, used to love hearing people at the Feast of Tabernacles especially when you'd meet new people that you didn't know. Here, we're so small everybody has heard most of the stories. But not all the time. It's good to talk about some of those things sometimes. It's a remembrance going back and thinking about the journey. Go back to the point God called us.

I've known of situations where *Plain Truths* have blown up out of the street, hit somebody in the chest and they grabbed it and they started reading the thing. Came into the Church later because of that. Someone who was working on a diesel truck one time and took that top of the section and lying in there was a *Plain Truth* magazine. Stories like that that are just incredible sometimes, of how if God's going to work with you, He's going to reach you.

Anyway, stories like that, to me, are exciting, when you hear different things. In a telephone booth. In a laundromat. I remember seeing *The Plain Truth* in a laundromat when I was going to college long before I was called, but I just didn't know what it was all about. I found it interesting at that point in time, read a few things, but it wasn't my time, it wasn't time for me to be called because I had to go through a few things first, like getting this 4 X 4 up on the forehead, smacked good so I'd really listen when the time came.

But anyway, we go through different things, and so, it's this mindset as we go through the story here and it's the thinking of for us to learn from this that people should be so afraid to speak against God's ministry. Yet it still goes on. Still happens. You might think it's small, what you're complaining about, what you have to say to someone else, but it's just flat evil. Evil, evil, evil. Even if they've done something that's wrong, be careful. There are ways of dealing with things that are wrong if something like that were to even happen. Which, in times past, if we go back a way, don't have to go back too far, but there are things out here that have happened that are wrong. But there are ways to deal with them.

David epitomizes some of this as we're going to see—not today, but probably in the next sermon here—of the proper course to follow, the proper way to think of matters like this, because if you're thinking is, “The Eternal's anointed,” this is why, if we can think that way, we're going to think differently and grow in a right thinking toward everyone in God's Church. Because you'll see every person as one set aside, sanctified for holy use and purpose, called.

Again, I think of all these series we've had to lead us up to this point, to learn, to grow in, called, to be ever so careful in how we think and speak of anyone in God's Church, and if we're not afraid of that, then we go to the next point where we're not afraid to speak wrong or badly, in a wrong way, toward the ministry. That magnifies it. Because that brings in something that we should be able to more clearly see, just as we should be able to see in a physical story like this, how wrong it was to kill eighty-five priests in one day. How horrifying!

If we can't see, then, that to speak against someone in the Church, how evil and wrong that is, it's a thing, evil spirit of judgment and so forth that is not ours to bear, to do it with someone in the ministry magnifies that. If we can't see that, we can't see it. Because if we can't see that one, we have really gone off base.

That's why when that's done within the Church, and I hear something like that take place, I do a little burn inside and it riles me up because I see. I know what it is. I know what it is. The person doing it doesn't see how evil, how wrong it is, and how they're destroying themselves and the opportunity that God has been granting them.

That's why this bothered him so much, that he even cut off a piece of the robe. So, even saying the slightest thing in a negative way about one of God's anointed is really hideously wrong to do. But it's hard for human beings with carnal human nature to see that. That's why it requires God's spirit to see that for what it is.

Even when you're being done wrong! I could give you story after story of what it's like to be done wrong. You have to be very, very careful how you handle those things.

Verse 6—So, he said to the man, The Eternal forbid that I should do anything to my master, the Eternal's anointed, to stretch out my hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the Eternal. That was his mind.

That's why I think in times past, during Worldwide when Herbert Armstrong was the apostle, of people who were not afraid to say things about him, of him, judging him. I would just cringe at times. You hear certain things and it's like, "You don't know what you're saying. You don't know what you're doing to yourself or to others!" Because you can infect others, and God calls that murder.

Because, if you begin to hurt them on a spiritual plane to where they begin to lose out, to where they begin to make wrong choices because they begin to join in in your same, rotten, stinking thinking and become weak because they get cut off from God's spirit when they start doing that—that's what happens, because it's sin—then God looks at that in a stronger way than having killed the eighty-five priests who are going to be resurrected later on.

When you start messing around with and influencing others on a spiritual plane, that it can affect their eternal life, that's a whole different thing, isn't it? That's the way we must think and understand about God setting apart His people and how we should think toward one another.

So, David restrained his servants with these words and did not allow them to rise up against Saul. He didn't let them go in and kill him. He held them back. Because he felt bad enough about taking off a part of the robe, but they still wanted more. They wanted Saul's life.

Then Saul got up from the cave and went on his way. David also arose afterward, went out of the cave, and called out to Saul, saying, My lord the king! So, when Saul... And you've got to understand how this affected Saul. Here is David brave enough to come out and do something like this knowing that an army is out there, is out there. They're in a cave. All they have to do is put people out there for a long while, keeping you from coming out, and they've got you. Cut off your supplies. It wouldn't take long.

So, he called out to him, My lord the king! So, when Saul looked behind him, David stooped with his face to the earth, and bowed down. Total of a humble spirit and Saul saw that, and it pricked him in the heart for that moment. Didn't last a long time but at that moment it pricked him in the heart. Because he saw David, whom he knew and what he had done in times past, and that he'd gone out against the Philistines over and over again, had put his life on the line many a time for Saul.

To see then that he came out of that same cave he was in and then what he had to say? He listened. He's bowing down, in essence, to his king. Stooped down, I should say, with his face to the earth and a humble spirit.

Then David said to Saul... Now, that's an attitude. See, that's something he did because of God. That's his thinking. That's why he did what he did.

Why do you listen to the words of men who say, Indeed David seeks your harm? Because this is what was happening. This little chirping in the background, "David's trying to kill you." "David wants to take your life." "David wants to be king! That's what David wants! All these people talking about the thousands David has killed, his ten thousands...and you?" That's what they're

saying. “And David has this army now and they’re going to rise up. Their aim is to kill you.” That’s what a gentile was telling him, and likely some others as well.

You remember the one? I can’t think of his name of the top of my head right now, but the one who was out there, basically, in the background and, you know, over the household? Saul had stupidly, sadly, put him in charge because of jealousies and so forth, because his household, the servants there all looked up to David. They admired David. So, he put a harsh individual over them.

Verse 10—Look, this day your eyes have seen... I think about this as things like this happen. This little chirping in the background. It only takes a little bit. This has happened in the history of God’s Church ever since I’ve been in it. Sometimes people will say just little things, like they did toward Herbert Armstrong, as they did toward some in the ministry locally and whatever, or toward a regional pastor, whatever it might be, something they could find fault in.

Then if that isn’t enough, then it begins to be said by the ministers, “So and so’ over there, do you see how they’re conducting their choir? Do you see how we’re doing ours?” “Do you see how the Y.O.U. is doing their basketball team? Do you see how we’re doing ours?” I mean, “See, we’re seeing it right, and they can’t see that. They’re wrong,” basically. This is what was being done!

What a horrible thing when it gets to that point where then it’s happening by the ministry because then what happens? Then it spreads through the Church. The Church starts feeling the same way. “Yeah, look at ‘so and so’ over there, how he’s doing things,” and looking down on them, looking down on an entire church, and then that church looking down on that other church. That really reflects God’s Church, doesn’t it?

We have to learn from those things, how evil those things are. It’s exceedingly evil then when it’s done by the ministry, but it’s evil when it’s done by anyone in God’s Church. That’s where we need to first start seeing it, when those things happen and when they pop up. Because they still happen. They are still happening. Toward me, as well. Because, in essence, that’s what they’re saying.

Because a lot of decisions go out concerning the functioning of the Church, different things we do and how we do it, and if we don’t agree with how something is happening you don’t have to say the person’s name. If you don’t agree with how something is done, “Well, why can’t we do it like somebody else?” “Why do we have to do this? We’ve always been doing this.” It’s like, you don’t get the picture, do you? And who are you really saying it against, if you understand? Candidly, it isn’t even me, it’s God Almighty. If we could see that on a spiritual plane.

These things are still going on in God’s Church. I could tell you a lot more, but I don’t want to at this point. Enough said. In other words, we still have work to do. We still have growth to make, don’t we? That’s always before us as human beings because we always have selfish, human, carnal nature.

The more we can learn about things like this from a series like this, the better off we are, if we can apply them to our lives and become more faithful to God Almighty. That's what it's about, more faithful and having the mind of David to consider God in the matter. What is God's will? What is God's purpose? What is Christ doing in the Church?

So, he said here, **Look, this day your eyes have seen that the Eternal delivered you today into my hands in the cave, and I was urged to kill you. But I spared you, and I answered, I will not stretch out my hand against my lord, for he is the Eternal's anointed.** That was primary in his mind, and so, he shut his mouth or shut his actions, if you will. There are times when we need to shut our mouth. But he shut off his actions, of what he was going to do. If we do open our mouth it needs to be in support.

To be in unity and oneness, you know what? You just jump in and do it even though you may not see it or understand it. There are reasons for certain things. If we just do it for the sake of cooperation alone, unity and oneness, that's a pleasing thing to God. Because that's what it's all about, to be in unity and oneness of mind.

Because this is how, this is our arena in life, how God has given us to learn these things. He wants us, this is ultimately then, to become at one with Him, in unity and harmony with Him. But if we can't do it in the little things, we cannot do it in the bigger things. Absolutely cannot do it in the bigger things!

That's why God teaches us in these things of life, the smaller things of life. Because if it's in the smaller things and that's our mindset, when it comes to something big God knows what we're going to do. But if we can't do it in the smaller things, He knows then exactly what will happen later. We can't do it there either. It's spiritual. It's spiritual. Awesome to learn that.

But I spared you, and I answered, I will not stretch out my hand against my lord, for he is the Eternal's anointed. Moreover, my father, see! Yes, see the corner of your robe in my hand! For in that I cut off the corner of your robe and did not kill you. "I have the ability," he's telling him. "Could have killed you. That's not in my heart. That's not my desire toward you."

...know and see that there is neither evil nor rebellion in my hand. "I'm not out to get you. I'm not out to kill you. If I were, and these people that are telling you this, if I were, I would have done it right there. That's not what I'm doing." What an incredible thing for Saul to hear. Now, it pricked him in the heart for just a little bit. **...and I have not sinned against you.**

Yet you hunt for my life, to take it. Big difference here. "You're out to kill me." **Let the Eternal judge between you and me, and let the Eternal avenge me on you. But my hand will not be against you.** Awesome, what David had to say here.

Verse 13—As the proverb of the ancients says, Wickedness proceeds from the wicked. But my hand shall not be against you. In other words, "That's not my heart. That's not my mind." **After whom has the king of Israel come out? Whom do you pursue? "Who are you after?" A dead dog?**

David has a very humble spirit here. “Who am I?” **A flea?** “A small insect? Who am I that the king should come out to take my life?”

Therefore, let the Eternal be judge. Oh, if we could say that always in our life, if we could think that way all the time. “Let the Eternal judge.” In other words, it’s a matter of God’s judgment, not ours. Not how we see it. Not how we think it should be. Not how we believe someone should do something, “the way I see it.” But how does the Eternal see it? How does it fit into God’s purpose and God’s plan?

Therefore, let the Eternal be judge, and judge between you and me, and see and plead my case, and deliver me out of your hand. So it was, when David had finished speaking these words to Saul, that Saul said, That is your voice, my son David. Then Saul lifted up his voice and wept. So, again here, it’s this thinking in his mind. He heard the words. He knew who it was, his response, the way he felt inside. Saul is responding here now and saying he knows it’s David and he was pricked in his heart and he wept. He cried because he was very moved by what just took place.

And so, he said to David, You are more righteous than I am. So, he came to a moment of clarity. He didn’t have much of that as you go through these stories. But at times like this, when something of this magnitude happened where he could have been killed easily inside the cave and he didn’t do it and he sees this attitude of David, and David comes out, has the boldness to talk to him, but does so in an incredibly humble spirit of meekness, it’s very moving.

You are more righteous than I; for you have rewarded me with good, whereas I have rewarded you with evil. What could be said? It’s a moment of clarity. It’s all out in the open. Should be pretty plain to see. God allowed them to be able to, for Saul to be able to see that.

Verse 18—You have shown me this day how you have dealt with me; for when the Eternal delivered me into your hand, you did not kill me. For if a man finds his enemy, will he let him go away safely? So, it’s like this conversation going on and the clarity at the moment. If there is an enemy out to kill you and you treat someone this way, who supposedly is your enemy, and basically puts his life in your hands, who does that? That’s basically what he’s saying here. Who is going to let him get away safely?

Therefore, may the Eternal reward you with good for what you have done to me this day. Now I know indeed that you shall surely be king. Why did he think that way? Well, his own son had given David the robe, his robe, when David was made ruler, or, if you will, over the entire army of Israel. That’s a lot. That’s right under the king. The people, how they looked up to David then.

This was evident to Saul at a moment of clarity, and so, he’s addressing some of that. That’s what he’s saying here, that this is where this is all leading, that even his son would look at him as being over him. So, what’s going to happen in time here? He sees this, he has this moment of clarity that candidly, even God blessed him to be able to grasp and to see.

Now I know indeed that you shall surely be king and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in your hand. Awesome, what he said. But God brought him to this point, to where he could admit that, acknowledge that. But again, it didn't last long. Carnal nature. Human nature, it gets in there very quickly and everything is destroyed of something that's given momentarily like that. That kind of clarity is not, was not by his own human nature.

Therefore, promise me now by the Eternal... So, now he's talking about God. How incredible that you can kill eighty-five priests of the Eternal, turn right around and then talk about God and what God can do. It's kind of mind boggling, the human mind.

I can't help when I go through something like this, and think about people in God's Church over and over again, when they made decisions and they begin going astray and the mind goes, the ability to see things goes, the truth begins to go. They can't hold on to it. Because without God's spirit you can't have a sound mind.

This is reflected in part here. They may have moments of clarity, but it doesn't last for very long. Perhaps when they're challenged about a certain thing or whatever it might be, something will come back into their thinking of the past and what they knew, and sometimes God blesses people with that. But if they're not willing to repent and change it goes, it's gone.

He goes on and asks. He says, **Therefore, promise me now by the Eternal that you will not cut off my descendants after me.** So, he sees this in David, this mind that David has. He's seen it over and over again in what David has said, this thinking he has toward the Eternal. He acknowledges, in essence here, that David, the one who went up against Goliath, the Eternal is working with him. There is no other way these things could happen like this except the Eternal has blessed him. So again, moments of clarity.

So, he's asking here **...by the name of the Eternal**, by your truth toward God, your word toward God, **that you will not cut off my descendants after me.** Because they had enough experience to see what had happened in nations around them and they know exactly how things happen. This is what takes place, people kill people in their own families in order to have rulership, and let alone someone else, someone else gains power and kills someone else.

Today, people would kill each other if they could get by with it. But they can't get by with it. So, that's the way human nature is. We live in a little bit better, more civilized society, but that's breaking down. Incredible.

So, he said, **promise me by the Eternal that you will not cut off my descendants after me and that you will not destroy my name from my father's house. So, David promised Saul. Isn't that incredible? And Saul went home, but David and his men went up to the stronghold.** David had enough experience to already realize, to already know that that this wasn't going to last long. Because he saw Saul on many other occasions and what Saul was like and pretty much knew exactly what was going to follow.

Chapter 25. Now, this mind and attitude - I love this - because this attitude of David towards God was epitomized by someone who was his, basically his enemy, trying to kill him, and yet he recognized "he's the Eternal's anointed. I am not going to stretch out my hand against him." What he saw was it's God's responsibility. He belongs to God and God will do with him what He wills.

Sometimes some things happen and are allowed because it's God's will - even bad things. But if it's something that God has allowed and given you wait on God and God will work it out. Always, always, always, always, and if one's mind is right, it will always work out. Truly.

So, incredible story here in this of what we saw. But something is repeated a little bit later again. I thought about going past that because we're spending quite a bit of time in the story of David, but there are so many things here to learn from that we're going to continue on as long as I believe that's what we're supposed to do, and deciding which chapters we already did, went ahead a little bit here, but there's another chapter coming up and it's very close to what just happened here.

I kind of marvel at that, thinking about some of those things, and realized that what an incredible thing, that God gives another example to drive this home even more, of how important this is to Him of how we think toward the Eternal's anointed in God's Church. That's what this is about.

Because what it boils down to is how we think toward God. But it's hard for us to think that way as human beings, and if we can't grasp that on a little plane, on a small plane of something physical, in many ways to us, because we're physical, to be able to see spirit, we can't. To see God, we can't. But to see what is true, God has given us that. How we respond to that is done in this arena of life on a physical plane as to how we apply things spiritually.

So, it's repeated again a little bit later. Awesome! Beautiful, really. Truly awesome, awesome, awesome, what comes up.

1 Samuel 25:1—Now, Samuel died; and the Israelites gathered together and mourned for him and buried him at his home in Ramah. And David arose and went down to the Wilderness of Paran.

There was a man in Maon, it's a city of Judah, Maon, whose business was in Carmel, and the man was very rich. He had three thousand sheep and a thousand goats. This is big. This is big in anyone's terms, but back then at that point in time, that was big. It took a lot to take care of, a lot of servants, and they depended on a lot of servants in order to be able to do something like this. Then you had to provide for all those servants, to be able to do all this. He was a rich man every way.

So, it says here, And he was very rich. He had three thousand sheep and a thousand goats. And he was shearing his sheep in Carmel. The name of the man was Nabal, and the name of his wife was Abigail. And she was a woman of good understanding and of beautiful

appearance; but the man, who was a descendant of Caleb, was harsh and evil in the things he did. So again, it shows his lineage.

What an incredible thing, of Israelites to be of the lineage of Caleb. That would be something that you would think that one would treat better than what he did, but he didn't have the ability or the mind to do so. Caleb, going all the way back to Joshua.

Verse 4—Now, when David heard that in the wilderness Nabal was shearing sheep, David sent ten young men. So, his reputation was out there. David knew of what was taking place here. The word came to him. You have to understand some of the things that aren't always brought out in the stories here, and it comes out as time goes along as you continue to read. But basically here, it says here, David sent out ten young men, in the beginning here, of something he wanted to do, basically, to give protection.

Because when you're wealthy like that and you're out here in an area like this, in a wilderness type of area doing something like this of this magnitude, there are bad people and they're going to take advantage. There are people who might come in not only to steal what you have but to kill. David was doing something very noble, in that respect.

Sometimes it's hard for us when we read through a story like this to recognize what all really took place here because it's not a small thing, but it's written in a very awkward way, in the sense of how it's translated, and the full blunt of the story sometimes is difficult to get across in the sense of understanding because of how it's translated.

So anyway, **He sent out ten young men, and David said to the young men, Go up to Carmel, go to Nabal, and greet him in my name. Thus you shall say to him... It's like saying, Long life and peace be to you, peace to your house, and peace to all that you have! Now, I have heard that you have shearers. Your shepherds were with us, and we did not hurt them.**

So again here, what's in the story here is what they had already done and this comes out in the story. That's why it's kind of awkward. But just to jump ahead so you can see what's taking place here a little bit, and then we'll come to it.

So, he's sending out ten young men to go to Nabal to indeed tell him already what had taken place. So, even me getting into part of the story here, have to shift gears a little bit. But he's going to tell him what happened out in the wilderness there and how they protected them from bandits, from others that might come along and steal. This is the story of what we're seeing here. So, he sent out these, kind of like emissaries to greet him and to request help, payment, recognition for what they had done, in essence.

You say, well, that's kind of backward, isn't it? I mean, how could you do something without having been hired to do so? Well, he hadn't offered anything for protection for his people out there or he hadn't set anything out there in essence for the ones who were doing the work out there. He just sent them out there. This was pretty negligent on his part, on Nabal's part, and for someone to step in to offer that protection, as he did, it was a big thing. It was a big thing to the

people who were out there. Otherwise, there would have been problems. That's just the way it was at that time in those days.

Again here, he told them what to say. **Now, I have heard that you have shearers. Your shepherds were with us, and we did not hurt them.** Seems to also indicate that they had watched over them, no harm would come to them. This comes out again later in the story. So, this is kind of awkward, the way it's done.

...nor was there anything missing from them. Again, prevented anything from happening to them so that nothing would be taken from them. In other words, they gave protection, his group of men and him when they were out there. **... all the while they were in Carmel. Ask your young men, and they will tell you.**

David was telling them what to say. They said, ask the young men to see if we haven't given this service to you to help you out, to protect your men while they're out there in the wilderness, to protect your sheep while they were there, and to protect your riches. We offered this.

Therefore, let my young men find favor in your eyes. This is the way it was at that particular time, and something that was more of an accepted type of thing, that if somebody offered something like this. It's different than our society is today. Here was a nation, in essence, that's just getting started and it wasn't filled with the establishment of all peace in all parts of the land by any measure. They still had Philistines coming in from different areas attacking and doing things and they'd have to go out and meet them at times, as far as the army was concerned. Sometimes there would just be different hordes, small groups come in and ravage and so forth. So, they had this to contend with during the days of Saul.

Therefore, let my young men find favor in your eyes, for we are coming upon a feast day. Please give whatever comes to your mind to your servants and to your son David. "Your servant," basically, is what he's saying here. We've served you.

Basically here, "son" can be used in different ways here. Obviously, not his son. Again, a little bit awkward because of the way we speak today. Could be an expression here of showing kinship that since Nabal was of the lineage of Caleb, who was of Judah, and David's lineage as well, there's this kinship here. That's what he's basically telling him.

So, when David's young men came, they spoke to Nabal according to all the words in the name of David and waited. Then Nabal answered David's servants, and said, Who is David, and who is the son of Jesse? Similar to saying, "Who does he think he is?" That's basically what he's asking him, "Who does David think he is?" **There are many servants nowadays who are breaking away from their master.** This is just a common thing. Basically, "This is what David has done. Look at what's taking place here. Saul is after him." They knew what was going on out there.

Verse 11—Shall I take my bread, my water, and my meat that I have killed, in other words, dressed out, speaking of animals here, **for my shearers, and give it to men when I do not know**

where they are from? So, David's young men turned on their heels and returned back. And they went and told him all these words, told David what had taken place.

Then David said to his men, Every man gird on his sword. So again here, it's hard for us to grasp what was taking place here by what's happening. It's like, well, why did David get so worked up that he's ready to go out now to kill him? That's what he's saying. He's basically telling his men, "Gird on your sword. Look at how we've been treated after what we have done, the service we have given neighbor to neighbor." Again, this thing of neighbor to neighbor, how people treated each other.

Especially in the Middle East there are certain customs that go down to this day, that when someone comes into an area you offer them food, you invite them into your house. To decline it is a slap in the face. There's different kind of thinking then, basically, to how we are here. Some of that still exists to this day. It's a thinking that's been ingrained in them for hundreds of years.

This is kind of a bit of what we're talking about here, of how people treated each other, especially in regions like that in the beginning, even more so, because it was necessary, and people watching out neighbor for neighbor. They helped each other.

It was to offer food, to give something like that on a small scale like this, that's what was being said. "Do you have some livestock, something you can offer so that we can be able to have that on a feast day." So, it was the right thing to have asked. Need to understand that. It wasn't something out of place that David was doing or asking for here, and because of the response that Nabal had it doesn't come across in the writing here as ugly and as bad as it really was. Because what Nabal did here, in this particular case here, was really, really bad in the sense of his attitude, his thinking toward David, how he treated the men. People just didn't do things like that in that region. To turn them away like he did shows a flaw in character in an incredible way, it truly did.

So, this is why David was so worked up, because of this happening like this, and in many rights in every way that's what would have happened in most cases, people doing something like this. They would have gone and killed them.

Then David said to his men, Every man gird on his sword. So, every man girded on his sword, and David also girded on his sword. So, about four hundred men went with David. It's not a small thing. He's taking four hundred with him now. ...and two hundred stayed with the supplies. So, two hundred stayed back to guard what they had.

Why? Because that was the land they lived in. People would come along and raid and steal. The Philistines were coming in on different sides at different times. So, this is why this becomes a bigger thing of the sheep being out there where they were, being sheared out there and being protected by David and his six hundred men. It wasn't a small thing. Something that Nabal should have known about and probably had heard about already.

Verse 14—Now, one of the young men told Abigail, Nabal’s wife, saying, Look, David sent messengers from the wilderness to greet our master; and he reviled them. So, now it’s getting into more of the story here, how Nabal really treated them, disrespected, the kind of disrespect that was shown. This word is from a Hebrew word that means “to shout or scream at.” So, it wasn’t something done mildly, it was something done forcefully and angrily, if you will, and nastily, nasty. Nasty how he did it. He was shouting, basically, like talking about “shouting insults and to express disdain and contempt.” That’s what his attitude was and that’s what’s coming out in the story now.

But the men were very good to us, and we were not hurt, nor was anything... Not by David and his men, but by others. That’s what he’s talking about. “We were safe out there because of his men. We were protected. Nothing was lost.” That’s what he’s telling Abigail. This is what was told to Nabal, but he rejected. Not only rejected them but slandered them, in essence, and mocked and made fun of and reviled them. This is what’s being said.

Nor was anything taken from us as long as we were with them, when we were in the fields. They were a wall... They were a wall to us both by day and by night. So, they knew they were protected. This was known by the whole group that was out there, the shearers, the ones who were watching the sheep. He’s saying, “It’s like this wall of protection.” That’s how the word is used in other places in Old Testament there. It’s like God putting a wall around us - same kind of expression. So, a matter of protection.

He’s saying, telling Abigail here, **they were a wall to us by day and by night. We were protected all the time and didn’t lose a thing, no one was ever hurt.** That was a big thing because in their minds otherwise they would have been. They would have been. Possibly loss of life let alone loss of animals and so forth and things taken. Because that’s the way the country was, the countryside in different areas.

So again, **They were a wall to us both by day and night. All the time we were with them keeping the sheep.**

Verse 17—Therefore, know this and think about what you should do, because harm is determined against our master and against all his household. For he is ill tempered that no one can talk to him about this. It’s like you can’t reason with the man. He’s gone and done this now to David.

Again, it’s hard for us, sometimes you read a story like this, to realize in the society and the world at that time, how evil and disgusting this was, of what Nabal did. So much so that the servants knew exactly what would take place when he did this to these ten men and sent them away empty handed. They knew what Nabal should have done. But Nabal wouldn’t do the right thing as a matter of respect and gratitude that was a part of that society at that time.

The servants knew they were likely going to lose their life, that David's going to come now in retribution for what has happened because of what Nabal has done, how he's treated them. So, they said, "Because harm is determined against our master and against all his household."

So, **verse 18—Then Abigail acted quickly and took two hundred loaves of bread, two skins of wine, five sheep already dressed...** That's all David was asking for, just one day, a feast day, to make it a little bit special, in essence, "For all that we did that was worth far more than that." Here Abigail realizes this and what's five sheep compared to the thousand, all the things he had! He's incredibly rich. This is a drop in the bucket.

But Abigail recognized here the seriousness of what was taking place and what her servants had said. **She acted quickly and took two hundred loaves of bread, two skins of wine, five sheep already dressed...** So, they had a lot of servants, so to do this, she was able to do this quickly. Because these are things they had to have on hand to take care of all their servants and everyone that they had. **...five measures of roasted grain, one hundred clusters of raisins, and two hundred cakes of figs, and loaded them on donkeys. She then said to her servants, Go on before me; and I will follow after you. But she did not tell her husband Nabal.**

So, she rode on a donkey and went down under cover of the hill to where David and his men were coming down toward her, and she met them. Now, David had said, Surely in vain I have protected all that this man has in the wilderness, so that nothing was taken of all that belongs to him, and he has repaid me evil for good.

So, this is how it was seen. This is why the servants were able to recognize that this evil that Nabal had done now. That's how it was looked at in reality. It's hard for us to grasp this in our kind of society today.

Verse 22—May God do so, and more also, to the enemies of David, if by morning light I have left one male of all who belong to him. So, the servants knew what was coming, and sure enough, this is what David was determined to do. If by morning light, if they're not all dead, all his servants... This is not a small thing, and for David to get that worked up knowing his kind of mind, his kind of heart toward God?

Now, when Abigail saw David, she quickly dismounted from the donkey, fell on her face before David, and bowed down to the ground. Again, David recognized that attitude because this was David's attitude toward Saul. And so, when she did this, he respected that. Here is an individual showing respect, filled with humility. To do this requires a great deal of humility.

Good lesson for all of us. No matter what kind of circumstances and situations we come up to in life, and candidly, the more difficult they are, the more we should apply this matter of humility in our approach to things. It's a matter of looking to God to work those things out in those matters, being of a humble spirit and looking to God to fight our battles, doing things that we do in a humble way. Hopefully, this will come out more in the story as we go along.

So, she fell at his feet and said, **My lord, let this iniquity be on me!** Incredible, the attitude of mind here. So, this is something that hit David in his heart, because what she was saying was very moving to him. He could relate to that very easily so. He recognized the attitude and spirit that she had and that's why he had such respect toward that.

Please let your maidservant speak in your ears, and hear the words of your maidservant. Please, do not take to heart, Nabal, what he's done, what he's said. For as his name is, so he is. Nabal is his name, and foolishness is in him! But I, your maidservant, did not see the young men and my lord whom you sent. So again here, she's speaking in a way, in a fashion that he definitely is about to see where she's coming from.

Now, therefore, my lord—now, notice what she says—as the Eternal lives and as you yourself live, since the Eternal has held you back from coming to bloodshed and from avenging yourself... Wow! Hit David pretty hard with this.

Now, you have to realize here, it becomes very apparent as you're reading the story, she didn't do this by her own ability. God gave her the help, to say the words that she needed to speak.

I think of scriptures that talk about that very thing, "Don't worry when you come into certain situations in your life about what you're going to speak and how you're going to say it. God Almighty will give you the words to speak." And He will. When you're in different kinds of situations, if you're looking to God, if your mind is toward God and you're striving to do something the right way, God will give you the right words to speak and not to have to work things out your way.

That's a matter of humility, again, of looking to God and exercising that kind of faith because of what we believe, because of what you believe, that God will help you.

You don't have to plan out how it's said and what's said, because sometimes if you're not careful in doing that, you're going to say thing that self is going to be too much in the way. That's not good. Because then you're going to bring things in about your own judgment and how you perceive a wrong or something else and the judgment. But if it comes from God it's going to be of a right spirit and a right thinking.

Again here, she said something that's quite profound, because he hadn't carried things out yet. This is where we are, so there's still time, and we're looking to God, the Eternal. **As the Eternal lives, and as you yourself live, since the Eternal has held you back from coming to bloodshed and from avenging yourself by your own hand, now then, let your enemies and those who seek harm to my lord be as Nabal.** In other words, as foolish as he is.

Now, do you think she didn't already know about Saul? Do you think the whole country didn't know about Saul and how Saul is out to kill him? He's sending the army out constantly. Everyone in the nation, as a whole, knows Saul, and that he's out to get David, and stories had to be going out as well that how Saul felt that David was out to kill him. That's just the way it was. So, people

around are going to know those things and know of those things that are happening. It wasn't done in some dark corner.

And so, she's talking here about "avenging yourself." Now, this hit David as well because he hadn't stopped yet and thought of this. He didn't think it through. Sometimes we get caught up in something and we don't think it all the way through and we don't realize what we're doing. Yet somewhere along the way oftentimes you'll find that God intervenes to help us. A moment, perhaps, to stop and consider something. It's a matter of whether or not we're going to be of a mindset to listen to what we really know should be done the way God says it should be done or whether we do it our way.

Because as a whole, especially in the Church, we know. One of the things is you don't avenge yourself. You don't go out and do something because you have got to make something right, because of an injustice, such an injustice. You've got to make it right no matter what it means and how it's administered toward someone else. Those are things we have to watch out for in our lives.

She's telling him these things on a very physical plane, knowing why he's coming, what's going to take place, and she's trying to intercede for herself and for her servants. She knows what Nabal has done. She knows why David is riled up - justifiably so, in many ways, but not to take a life and not to avenge himself.

She made this personal. God was working with David on a spiritual plane and David was able to grasp and understand what God had given to Abigail to give to him. That's how he heard it, that's how he received it, and he reacted accordingly. David's character was always to listen to others and consider how God might possibly be guiding them. It's just the way he thought because God was in the picture. God was always in the picture with him, as a whole.

Did he mess up, do things according to his own human nature? Sure did. But then he addressed those things in the right way. It's hard for us sometimes to grasp when we can read stories of something physical like this on such a physical scale, like in David's life, and not judge improperly as far as the Church is concerned. We miss a lot in that because we don't understand the difference of how God was working with David and how He's working with us.

God, especially now a days, God is working with us as a Church, a small remnant Church. Before that it was worldwide, in the days of Herbert Armstrong, with tens of thousands of people baptized into the Church. But God was working in a structure of a Church. But with incredible knowledge and truth that had been given to it. Something David didn't have access to. Hadn't even been written. Hadn't even been given. The things of Christ, of Joshua's words, not recorded yet.

Much of what comes later on, that even Christ refers to and others in scripture refer to, are things God gave David to write in the Psalms. Awesome. God was working with David in a very unique way. To understand that, that David had to learn things, be taught things on a personal

basis by God Almighty through the power of His spirit and communication to the mind, through the experiences he went through.

He didn't have the kind of structure we have to understand, that if you lust on a woman you've already committed adultery. He learned things as time went along. He learned more of the things that were spiritual. But he didn't have those things that Christ gave words about, that if you hate someone you've already murdered them. On and on it goes.

David's life was unique, in that regard, and we have to separate that from the time we live in now. You can't judge the same way. I've seen many, many people in time in the Church, in the ministry, judge the wrong way when it comes to times people have lived in. Because they didn't have what we have. We are judged by what we have. They were judged by what they had at that moment in time.

Just like Abraham. There wasn't a lot around. What he received, he received from his great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great grandfather, Noah. It's hard for us to grasp that, that all he knew had come down from Noah. Then he was told to go into a different land. Noah died. Now God was working with him individually. There wasn't much there to work, in the sense of knowledge and truth of things. So much hadn't happened in time yet. So, God judged him according to what he had at that point in time.

Just like when he was told, when he thought in his mind, he was to offer up his own son, he didn't know and understand the things that we can clearly see. It's like some in God's Church can look at that and say, "Well, how could he have ever thought that you could put your own son to death," and not realize that God had worked with this to teach something very powerful, what it means to offer up your own son in death. To realize the mind that would do that. That God Almighty would do that with His own Son for us, for all of us. Something was written a long time ago and experienced it. If we're not careful we can judge and find fault with Abraham when we don't have a clue! I hope you understand what I'm saying.

There have been a lot of misjudgments of things in times past because people have tended to judge according, in a wrong way, to what we know now to what it was like then. So, to understand this society again here, and what David was doing, is sometimes difficult. That's why we're going through some of this. Sometimes the way it's written it comes out later in the story, and so you have to put the whole story together.

What an incredible spirit she had in what she had to say. So again, that mindset he had of always listening to others, of considering God in the picture, if you will, he recognized the wisdom of what Abigail was saying and that he shouldn't react foolishly and vengefully toward Nabal, that David shouldn't act that way.

I want to read Romans 12 here. Again, on a spiritual plane, things we learn. This is something that was going to happen on a physical plane but again, the lessons are there about avenging one self,

that we allow our own emotions, our own judgment get involved in something and take something personally and have a moment where you haven't kept things in their proper perspective.

Then he realized that failure, that the Eternal God wasn't in his thinking at that moment. He's able to examine himself because of what God told him through Abigail. That's exactly what took place here.

Romans 12:18. That's why in the Church it says, **If it be possible, as much as lies within you, live peaceably with all people.** That's what God gives to us. So, even within the Church then, and even more so within the Church, we are judged according to how we think then and how we apply such things like this, of our attitude toward others whether they be in the Church or out of the Church. But especially in the Church because of God Almighty, because of being God's people, God's sanctified, holy people, sanctified, set apart for holy use and purpose by God Almighty. Then people in the world in understanding there are things they can't see and understand, but you strive to live peaceably with them. That should be one's motivation.

Dearly beloved, do not avenge yourselves. There's a lot that comes into that, and so, we have had sermons about things like this, or it's been in the context of sermons to be careful of how you think, of how you judge matters, of how you try to make things right. Because sometimes it's just too much about self! That shouldn't be the case. Self being offended. Self taking whatever it might be and not dealing with it properly the way God says to on a spiritual plane.

...but rather give place to wrath. Anger, hatred, give place to that; don't give into those things. Because those are the kinds of things that rule the human mind. We have to fight against those things.

For it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the LORD. So again here, quote from the Old Testament, in essence, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay." God will take care of it.

Therefore, if your enemy hunger, feed him; and if they thirst, give them drink. So, this isn't something just on a physical plane. This is about a way of life that we live toward one another spiritually.

...for in so doing you will heap coals of fire on their head. So, it's not for that purpose, but if you do what's right, it's a matter of you are being judged before God, placing your judgment before God and striving to do it in the right way. If someone else doesn't make the same choices, then they're going to suffer for it.

Do not be overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good. What a tremendous difference of thinking here. Don't be overcome by evil. In other words, vengeance comes from our own wrong, selfish thinking, "lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, the pride of life." Again, concepts, truths sometimes that are very difficult to learn here, about how to live life towards others.

Another one, **Hebrews 10:26.** This applies to God's people powerfully so. Things that have happen in the Church, continue to happen. **For if we sin wilfully after we have received the**

knowledge of the truth... What a horrible thing that once we've been called - because this has happened a lot in God's Church, once we receive the knowledge of the truth and wilfully turn against it, what a horrible thing. Yet it's happened over and over and over.

That's something that really boggles my mind sometimes, especially in this time period of the remnant Church and all the truths that God has given, all the things that have been revealed.

To understand that there is only one God eternally existing. Just that alone is incredible to know, to understand the truth of that and how people can turn and go back to something just boggles my mind sometimes. I think of that one Feast in 2005 and all the truth that was given at that particular time about Yahweh Elohim and that Christ was not Yahweh, and how there is so much in scripture about that. We went through every sermon that drove the point home. Then for someone to receive that and have that in their mind for several years and then to become upset about something, become offended by something, and turn from that and go back to there being two in the God Family that eternally existed, once God has clarified that and made the truth clear? It boggles the mind what people can go back to, to justify self.

And so, so much of this is a part of what we're talking about, "If one sins willfully after they have received knowledge of the truth," whatever truth that is at whatever time it's given, and then someone turn against that at some point, what a hideous, sick, perverted thing.

It says, **therefore, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins.** It can come to a point where people can go so far. Those are one of the things that I'm glad I don't know the answer to in many ways, but I know it exists, that there are those we have known in times past that have gone too far willingly so. That's not a small thing.

God is very merciful and very patient and if someone hasn't committed the unpardonable sin (sometimes it's because people are asleep), but sometimes there are things that people can do that they've gone too far where they will not repent no matter what happens ever. God knows those individuals. He knows the mind as to whether it's gone too far, has become so corrupted that it will never change and repent.

That's a horrifying thing to think about, that that can happen. But it has happened. Something people should be fearful of, to turn against something that God gives when He gives it. That should give motivation to have a greater desire to be ever closer to God, to realize how weak we are as human beings and how much we need God all the time.

That's why we should pray as we do, constantly looking to God and crying out for His holy spirit to live and dwell within us. Because that's our strength and our life, the truth and being able to hold to the truth. Because without God's spirit we can't even hold to the truth. But with God's spirit we'll hold on to the truth and we'll move forward in it.

So, it says, **but a certain fearful expectation of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.** Although individuals who go through that don't see that realistically until it comes down to that point in time. But it'll happen in time.

Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. So, we're talking about the Old Testament, of how things were done.

Of how much worse punishment do you suppose will be thought worthy, who has trampled the Son of God underfoot? What does that mean? It's talking about our Passover. Meaning, we refuse to repent. If one refuses to repent, this is how God says what it's like, it's like trampling on that sacrifice, total disdain for the sacrifice of Joshua.

...has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, a common thing. Just, pshaw, you know, not important. ...and insulted the spirit of grace? For we know Him who said, Vengeance is Mine. So again, something to understand and know, that we have to be very careful when it comes to our efforts to try to make things right. Because that can involve vengeance. We are right, you're wrong, they're wrong, and this has to be made right. Be careful of that.

Vengeance is Mine. I will repay, says the Eternal. We belong to God. God has the power to take care of everyone in His Church! We have to be very careful about our dealings with everyone in God's Church. If these things are deeply real to us, this heart of David, this mind of David will be deeply embedded in us as well.

Because that spirit comes from God. It's the mind of God. It's the spirit of God that enables such a heart, such a mind, such a thinking, can be molded and fashioned by God's holy spirit as we yield ourselves to it. It's a beautiful thing when done correctly, when we are of a humble spirit and we recognize the danger of self getting in the way.

Because we tend to as human beings, get in the way. That's why repentance is such a beautiful thing. We can repent of that when we're able to see it, when we come to see it, when by some means that God shows us, like through Abigail in this case to David, David saw it. He came to see it and he was thankful. He responds in an awesome way.

God shows us at different times and different ways. But if we ignore it and insist on something our way in judgment, in execution—this is even stronger—the execution of judgment, because we're taking upon ourselves if we're not careful, that which belongs to God Almighty. Things have to be done God's way.

I will repay, says the Eternal. And again, The Eternal will judge His people. We don't have to worry about that. Now, sometimes we have to be a part of that, but we have to be very careful of that. Sometimes it's a matter of going to your brother alone. If you don't do it you have sinned before God Almighty and their life can be in your hands.

That one has hardly been applied in God's Church! During Worldwide, rarely, rarely, rarely, rarely - rarely, rarely, rarely. Rarely! And if it had been applied so much better could have come out of people's lives. Truly! Truly!

But because, as a whole, so many would not respond to such messages, to such sermons, instead they were more fearful of saying, going to someone, saying something, “Well, they’re not going to be my friend anymore or they’re going to look down...” “It’s just too hard to do. How do you do it?” If you really have a right spirit you’re going to be yes, indeed, fearful of doing such a thing because it’s hard to do, it’s difficult to do. But God gives us the responsibility of doing it. Then we strive to do it in a humble way.

Sometimes people have applied it, and where I have seen it applied more by people in times past is when they’ve done it because they’re self-righteous and they get lifted up and it’s their chance to correct someone. Then it’s not received by the individual because the person that’s come to them has come to them in a wrong spirit and misapplied the way and the manner in which to go to a brother alone, and therefore, the brother never heard. So, they ended up doing more damage than what they did good. I hope we see and understand what I’m saying.

That’s been my history of learning things in Worldwide, of how people have failed to do that. Because the attitude of mind was “Well, that’s not my responsibility. I don’t know if... ugh, umm, is that sin well...” Didn’t even think about whether it was sin or not. Because if it’s sin then you know you better go to your brother alone. “That’s the minister’s job.” Well, that’s quite a way up the road yet.

Because once it gets to the ministry and the ministry has to step in, because nothing has been dealt with, and it’s now been done for so long that it’s so out of, sometimes, out of control in a person’s life, they’re not able to deal with it then, where they could have if a brother out of love had gone to them alone. That’s why God says to do it that way. But if that’s not applied, and by the time it gets so blown out of shape and it’s in such a bad circumstance the ministry has to get involved, rarely, rarely, rarely have people been able to respond well to it because they’re already gone.

What a horrible thing! Talk about murder because of not applying something like that, because God wasn’t in the forefront in the mind and being able to keep what David had in his heart. It’s always about the Eternal. It’s about what God is doing. Especially, if we see that in God’s Church.

And the Eternal will judge His people. It is a fearful thing to fall in the hands of the living God. True.

So, going back to the story here. Going back again to **1 Samuel 25:26—Now, therefore, my lord, as the Eternal lives and as you yourself live, since the Eternal has held you back from coming to bloodshed, and from avenging yourself...** In other words, David knows he didn’t make it there yet. Abigail’s there and she’s saying things that these are right on.

David knew. He knew this was coming from God. He didn’t receive it as just being from Abigail. He knew the words were true and he knew what was true came from God. It’s a beautiful thing when you see all this.

...has held you back from coming to bloodshed (from killing others), and from avenging yourself by your own hand, now then, let your enemies and those who seek harm for my lord be as Nabal, as foolish as he. If they're wrong, they're foolish, they're going to suffer. Basically, what she's saying.

Now, this gift which your maidservant has brought to my lord, let it be given to the young men who follow my lord. Please forgive the trespass of your maidservant. Now, if your mind is right toward God, how could you not respond in a right way to that? David did respond in a right way.

For the Eternal... She just kept bringing in the Eternal. Why? Because the Eternal was working with her to speak what she spoke. **For the Eternal will certainly make for my lord an enduring house...** This is why you can know this is from God Almighty, by what she said. **...because my lord fights the battles of the Eternal.** She knew about Goliath. She knew that David didn't do it. She knew that David knew because God gave her that ability to see that, to know that. She spoke it. Other battles as well. She knew that because God gave it to her.

My lord fights the battles of the Eternal, and evil is not found in you throughout your days.
"It's the way you are."

Yet a man has arisen to pursue you and seek your life, Saul, but the life of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of the living with the Eternal. Now, you can't say that, but God can give that to her to say. **...with the Eternal your God; and the lives of your enemies He shall sling out.** What an analogy. It's like the sling, the giant, that's how God will deal with his enemies, "your enemies." **...as from the pocket of a sling. Then it shall come to pass, when the Eternal has done for my lord according to all the good that He has spoken concerning you, and has appointed you ruler over Israel...**

How many people do you think knew and understood that one? God gave that to her! He was moved by what she said because he knew exactly where this was coming from.

...has appointed you ruler over Israel, that this will be no regret for you, nor offense of heart to my lord. In other words, if you go through with this with Nabal and kill servants. You don't want this to be, in essence, is what God is telling him, to be on you for doing something wrong like this. Because you're going to be ruler over Israel, and looking back, that this be the one big thing, in that respect.

In other words, going on here, **either that you have shed blood without cause to have this,** because you have been striving to do things in a righteous manner, keeping God in the picture.

...and that my lord has avenged himself. So, you don't want this on you, on your conscience, on your mind as sin to you.

But when the Eternal has dealt with my lord, then remember your maidservant. What is she saying? When you become king, remember your maidservant. When the Eternal has fulfilled the things He has said to you. How would she know what the Eternal has said to her?

Verse 32—Then David said to Abigail, Blessed is the Eternal God of Israel, who sent you this day to meet me! And blessed is your advice and blessed are you, because you have kept me this day from coming to bloodshed and from avenging myself by my own hand. For indeed, as the Eternal God of Israel lives, who has kept me back from hurting you, unless you had quickly come to meet me... So, he's acknowledging this came from God. ...surely by morning light no males would have been left to Nabal!

So, David received from her hand what she had brought him, and said to her, Go in peace to your house. Look, I am heeding your voice and I respect you. Awesome!

Now, Abigail went to Nabal, and there he was, holding a feast in his house, like the feast of a king. Nabal was delighting in himself, for he was very drunk; therefore, she didn't tell him anything until the next morning. So it was, in the morning, when the wine had gone from Nabal, in other words, when he was sober, and his wife had told him these things, that his heart died within himself and he became like a stone, like being paralyzed; like a massive stroke, just totally paralyzed. Then it came to pass, after about ten days, that the Eternal struck Nabal, and he died. Vengeance is God's.

God will take care of those things that are unjust in His time, in His way, and this is one of the physical examples of something of this on a very grand scale, in that respect. But it's something we are to look to in our lives in how we deal with others and understanding a relationship with God Almighty, and that when it comes to such things, it's in God's realm to take care of those things, not in ours. Vengeance should never be a part of our judgment, of our thinking toward others at all, ever, ever, ever, toward anyone. It's just the way it should be.

Verse 39—So, when David heard that Nabal was dead, he said, Blessed be the Eternal, who has contended (basically, judged, vengeance, the execution of judgment), the cause of my reproach from the hand of Nabal, and has kept His servant from evil! For the Eternal has returned the wickedness of Nabal on his own head.

So, David sent and proposed to Abigail, to take her as his wife. And when the servants of David had come to Abigail at Carmel, they spoke to her saying, David sent us to you, to ask you to become his wife. What an incredible story.

You know, when God does something, when God gives something, it's always so awesome. Such a massive, beautiful way that God molds and fashions things in His creation and blesses His people and works with His people. We learn from that if we have that mind and desire to learn from God, to see God, to draw closer to God, to be at one with God.

There's so much that God just continues to work with, showing us the awesomeness of His purpose, of His plan, how He does things, the beauty of everything of life that God has made for us. It's beautiful.

Then she arose, bowed her face to the earth, and said, Here is your maidservant, a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my lord. Incredible humility. Something to be sought after, even that kind of a heart and that kind of a mind. Because David had that mind, a heart of humility. "Who am I that you're out to kill? A flea? What am I that you're so worked up?"

Verse 42—So Abigail rose in haste and rode on a donkey, attended by five of her maidens; and she followed the messengers of David, and became his wife. David also took Ahinoam of Jezreel, and so both of them were his wives. But Saul had given Michal, his daughter, David's wife, to Palti the son of Laish, who was with Gallim.

So again, Saul reneged at a point here. They were supposedly bound in marriage there. They were. Saul took her, gave her away. His shenanigans went on and on. But anyway, some of these stories come out even more as we go along here.

But we'll stop there for today and continue next week.

But again, incredible things here thinking about this mind, thinking about how God works with us, and our mind to think like, have that heart of David's, to always keep the Eternal Almighty God at the forefront of our thinking and our choices and our decisions, especially when it comes to how sometimes we as human beings can get riled up in human nature. We have to be cautious that we don't yield to that, but that we always keep God in the picture, striving to do things according to His will, His way.