

We're continuing in the series entitled *Pursuing A Heart Like David's* with this being *Part 6*.

Toward the conclusion of *Part 5* we covered how the princes of the Philistines who had gathered their armies together to go up against Israel didn't want David and his men to go with them into the battle. Achish had asked them to go with them. He looked up to David. He trusted in David and believed that David was a strong protector for him and his group that were with him.

So, Achish listened to the princes of the Philistines and told David that he needed to go back to the area that he had given to him earlier to live in, with him and his group of six hundred, so, they returned to that area.

We're going to pick up that story once again in 1 Samuel 30 and those first four verses that we read last week at the end of the sermon.

I also wanted to mention again here that to me it's so incredible, so inspiring to think that these things were written, so many of these things God designed and purposed, of the different movements even of David, the things that happened to David. So much of it, again, just by design that God had, of purposes, of lessons, of things to be written for the Church.

It's amazing to me how we can go through these physical examples of things that took place, learn from them the spiritual lessons that God desires us to have and to be able to see that are contained in these stories. They are very inspiring, very uplifting.

I believe indeed, from so much of the feedback in this series, that there is that which works in us to have this mindset, that we do want that kind of thinking toward God. We do want to have that kind of heart and that kind of thinking in our lives in our relationship with others, our relationship, primarily, especially with God, and if that relationship and our pursuit of that is right and good then our relationship with others, especially primarily within the Body, within the Church of God, is going to be good. There's so much we can learn along those lines, and we're going to continue in that.

So again, this helps us because we not only are able to see how God worked with David... God didn't work with very many people at a time throughout the first four thousand years. There were different ones chosen out, different ones even in the same period of time, but as a whole, small numbers. God designed and worked with those situations to mold and fashion things within them just as He does within us as our minds are being transformed, our thinking is being transformed. But especially when you go back to a period like that.

Before the time of Christ there were things that just were not known. They didn't have the advantage that we have today. God worked with them on a personal basis, very close, in the

kinds of situations they went through in life in order to reveal to them, guide and direct them along a path with His spirit to learn the things they needed to learn, to make the changes in their life they needed to make. Again, very inspiring to see that.

But also, this ought to move us as well to realize that our lives don't just happen. When God calls us into the Church He is working to mold and fashion each and every one of us. He has a place for us. He calls us for a purpose. Again, inspired, thankful, awesome to see how God works with sermons as well, going back to the time of talking about our calling and the process of being called, the choices we have to make along the line then in all that, to come to understand a matter of God's government, of how God works in our lives.

Because that's what government is about. It's how it governs our lives and it's a choice we have to make of yielding ourselves to that process of thinking. Because it's a way of thinking, of how life should be governed, our way or God's way.

We have to make those choices in activities throughout our life. I hope we're moved as well, to see and understand that yes, God worked with individuals in the first 4,000 years in a very unique manner, but He's working with us in a very unique manner as well. Just now through a process of so much more having been revealed that He works with larger numbers and with Christ as the High Priest, that there's much more that's able to be done now on a larger scale. Again, a part of God's plan and purpose of how to prepare and mold and fashion and prepare people, especially that first 144,000 in that first great resurrection and then now we live in that unique time of others who are going to have the opportunity of living on into a new age.

We live in an incredible time as far as 7,100 years of history is concerned and it should be very moving to us and encouraging to us as well, to understand our lives aren't just happening. There is design that's going on and things working out in our lives. Some things by chance, obviously, so much of what we go through. Then God can work with in the environment of the Church to teach us, to guide us, and to mold and fashion, to transform our thinking and it's just a matter of us making choices then to yield to that process and to want it.

As this sermon series is about, pursuing a heart like David's, pursuing something takes effort. It takes work. It doesn't just happen, if you're pursuing something. I'm working on the next series behind this one. Not the next series, but this same series but *Part 7* and going through some of the stories of what we're going to cover there, and when they pursued after different armies, chased after different ones in a battle, we're like that in our lives on a spiritual plane. It's a matter of pursuing. It's a matter of chasing after that which is placed before us. It is about a battle and our desire to work at that.

Those things, again, take a lot of effort. They covered a lot of territory and over a long period of time. We have to do the same things in order to have this process take place in it. But that's something you've really got to want. You've got to be dedicated. You've got to desire it with all of your being. Again, lesson after lesson after lesson as we go through this series.

So, picking it up then in 1 Samuel 30, David and his six hundred men were not going to go with Achish now into battle with all of the rest of the Philistines and the princes of the Philistines who had gathered their armies together to go up against Israel, up against Saul in battle. David was sent back to his own area.

So again, nothing is said about what David would have done, how David would have worked with this matter. I think we should understand well by what we covered last Sabbath what his actions would have been and with the kind of loyalty and faithfulness he had toward God's people, towards the army of God, as he talked about, when he went up against Goliath and so forth.

1 Samuel 30:1—Now, it happened when David and his men came to Ziklag...So, this is his returning with the men, leaving from the area of the Philistines as they were getting ready to engage in battle with Israel. They were going back to Ziklag, the area, the region that Achish had given to David and his men to live.

So, they were returning ...his men came to Ziklag on the third day, that the Amalekites had invaded the south, and Ziklag, attacked Ziklag, and burned it with fire; and had taken the captive the women and those who were there, from small to great. They did not kill anyone but carried them away as they went away. So, David and his men came to the city, and there it was, burned with fire; and their wives, their sons, and their daughters, had been taken captive.

So, what an incredible thing to experience, here your mind, your dedication toward God... these kinds of trials, something of this magnitude can test people mightily. Yet this reveals something about the character, the mind, the thinking of David again and it wasn't a matter of turning against God. It wasn't a matter of finding fault with God. Because over time within the Church I've seen that happen, too, where people begin to find fault with God. It's not God. It's us. It's human beings. It's about our selfishness. It's about how we think and how we live and what we bring upon ourselves. But definitely not something that is God's.

God allows certain things to happen, but He allows them for a purpose - to mold and fashion us. It's about the fire we go through. Sometimes we can go through some difficult thing that can be very trying. So, it's not a matter of questioning "If I'm in God's Church, why would this happen to me?" Because people have thought things like that. "I thought everything was supposed to be good, and the blessings we have from tithing and from giving offerings to God and this protection and blessings in life." Well, we receive that. So often we don't even know about it or recognize it when it does happen.

Again, if we can't grasp and see those things then there is something spiritually that we have to address in our lives, and prayerfully able to see it, that we be receptive to that. Because God definitely will show us those things, because His desire when He calls us, is that we be able to succeed, is that we be able to be molded and fashioned, transformed.

So, here they came, and they found the city was burned. Now, those things can be rebuilt, but what about the families, not knowing what had happened to them? What was going to happen to them? Were they going to be killed? Were they going to be sold off into other areas of the world as slaves? Were they going to keep them as slaves? What was going to happen to them?

So again, this mindset that you'd be so distraught at something like that, when you find it, and here you are following God, you're putting God first in your life. But he didn't lose sight of that. There's a lot said for that, truly.

It says, So, David and his men came to the city, and there it was, burned with fire, and their wives, and their sons, and their daughters had been taken captive. Then David and those with him lifted up their voices and wept until they had no more strength to weep.

So, here they were totally distraught, and taking all the energy out of them; something like this of this magnitude, just totally wipe you out, in that respect.

It says, Even David's two wives Ahinoam of Jezreel, and Abigail, the widow of Nabal of Carmel, had been taken captive.

Now we're going to continue on from where we left off last week. **Verse 6—Now, David was greatly distressed.** That's kind of an understatement. The pressure, the stress - well stated, distress - the stress that was in his thinking, in his mind, in his heart, how something like that can work on you. So, it says, **He was greatly distressed, and even the people spoke of stoning him.** This is how worked up everyone was.

"Here the city is burned! Here we are following David, and look what that's gotten us, a burnt city that we worked so hard for so long to build up, a place where we could be in safety, not being pursued by Saul. Now we are away, following David, and look what happens! Our children, our families, our wives, everything is gone! Animals, livestock, wealth, it's all been taken."

It's easy to see how human beings can begin to think under those kinds of conditions. And here, to the point that they were ready to take David's life. They were ready to stone him.

So again, **the people spoke of stoning him, because the heart of all the people was grieved.** Not thinking straight. You know, when you go through trials, when you go through hardships like this, there are times that the thinking turns even more inward, and candidly, we become even more selfish because our thinking isn't right. It's a matter of looking to God. It's a matter of putting God first and then working on getting everything to fall into a place where it needs to be, a right spirit and a right attitude toward God. Which was the mind of David.

So again here, **because the heart of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and for his daughters. But David strengthened himself in the Eternal his God.** What an incredible thing here. So, just what I mentioned. That's exactly what he did. His mind was toward God. His mind was toward getting things right in his thinking. What should he do? How should he do

it? Things can be done here, but what are they? His mind was looking to God for help, for guidance, for direction, for answers. It wasn't a matter of finding fault with God or anything of that nature whatsoever, as so often human beings do.

Then David said to Abiathar, the priest, Ahimelech's son, Please get the ephod and come to me. So, Abiathar, it says, brought the ephod before David, and David enquired of the Eternal. So again, we don't know how this worked fully. There are things written about it in scripture there as far as the Israelites, God working with the Levitical system, the high priest and so forth, and how God communicated these things to them through these stones, if you will. Again, we don't know the full process of it, of what took place, but posing questions and whether it was one that shined? You know, there are things here that are speculated upon. But again, it's just a unique thing.

Because again, God worked with different people in different ways at different times. That's why I love the way it says it in Hebrews, the book of Hebrews, that with God's people and with the prophets and others God worked with them in different ways at different times. He spoke through them in different ways as well. So, depending on the time period someone was worked with and called, and upon the knowledge that they had at that particular time, God worked with them accordingly.

So, we see through time God working with, as an example, Noah in a very unique way. Later on then, Abraham, the next to follow after him. Then some of the children then on down through time. All these very unique situations. So much of it depending upon what insight, what knowledge, what truth God had given to them and where they were, and all the other conditions involved in all of this. So, God worked in different ways.

And again, understanding here they didn't have a whole lot. They were very physically oriented, and the individuals being worked with, primarily they were amongst a nation of people who didn't have God, who weren't being worked with by God on a spiritual plane. They had blessings and help and favor from God on a physical plane but not on a spiritual one.

It's hard for us to put, it's difficult for us to put ourselves in that position in striving to understand the uniqueness of what they went through and their thinking and things that would happen to them at that time. But that's what it was based upon, what they had, what they knew to that point in time, and God worked with them accordingly, judged them accordingly, and so forth.

Some very physical things were used. First of all, they were very physical. The Levites, basically it was a physical structure in the sense of what they saw, what they understood. Just like it talks about, the physical rituals they went through, the sacrificial system they went through and those things that were later, as it said, done away with in Christ.

While that existed, again, it was about very physical things that they did and things that they went through and routines that they went through and going into the tabernacle and the show

bread and the lighting and everything else that they went through, the ceremonies that they had. Very unique to them, but very physical. They tended to think in those ways, almost, as it were, superstitious like, in a sense, in their thinking as far as being physical and how they looked upon some of these things.

Here is something that they can go to here with stones on it, and you have the Urim and the Thumim (I think that's how you pronounce it), and then God would communicate to them through that, because, again, that physical mindset of most of those people. But for those who believed, who understood, people like David who was being worked with by God's spirit, again, it was still the means and the way that he understood at that time or that they understood.

Moses, his first encounter was a burning bush. Other times, God communicated to his mind various things that were to be done. God worked with David in that way as well, revealing things to his mind, but in something like this, when you go and ask and receive an answer, they didn't have the truth and scriptures. We have so many answers to life today that they didn't have! But here is something that they used and would ask God then what to do. "Should I do this?" "Should I do that?" They would get their answers this way. Incredible.

It says, **verse 8, And David enquired of the Eternal, saying, Shall I pursue this band of raiders?** Yes or no? That's as simple as it was, yes or no. Then he would receive his answer that way. What an incredible thing. Whatever the system was that different ones had at different times, and God using them that way, it was up to them as to whether or not they lived by that because that's what they were given. And if they didn't, if they tried to go around that or do it in some other way, like the example of Saul... He didn't do it God's way. David did. David knew what to do.

It was a matter here of going to the priests and asking the priest. It was the priest who did these things. He went through and worked through the priests. He would ask these questions and there's the priest; it's going through them to God. It's the way of working.

It's like in the Church today. God has given us government within the Church. There is this structure whereby we're tried and tested as to whether we're going to be faithful to that, how we're going to think toward it, and that's why this example of David toward Saul is so incredibly important to learn on a spiritual plane. Because again, something that we are trained in, I've been trained in in the sense of how Herbert Armstrong was addressed, how his life, how people looked to him as to their thinking.

People can go too far with that in one scale, if it's done on a physical plane, to where it's one of raising above what they should in their thinking. Another is to recognize the office, the responsibility and the responsibility before God and to seek that spiritual balance in that. Because sometimes people can put too much in a physical way, if God's not in the picture like He should be, because they see the position, because they see the place and they think about that in the sense of desire or whatever or admiration in a way that isn't good.

That's the difference, as I've mentioned so many times, between Herbert Armstrong as God's apostle, and the one who became the man of sin later on when an audience might begin to applaud his appearance. Because they didn't get to see him very often, so at the Feast of Tabernacles there'd be thousands of people there and they'd begin to applaud. He would tell them, and sometimes correct them pretty sternly not to do that. Because it wasn't right. It wasn't the right approach. It wasn't the right thing. It was seeing this in a wrong way. The balance wasn't there.

Another man then, stopping people because they weren't doing it loud enough and saying, "You could do better than that." Now, two totally different mindsets - one from God and one that opposed God. Incredible.

So again here, so again, it says, Abiathar brought the ephod and he asked the question then, **Shall I pursue the band of raiders? Shall I overtake them?** That was the next question. Shall I pursue them? "Will I, will we," in essence, "shall I overtake them? Will I be able to overtake him?" **He answered him, Pursue, for you shall surely overtake them, and without fail recover all.** So, whether more then was given to the priest then to speak these words to David, we don't know, it doesn't say exactly how this happened. But they had, basically, the yes or no to his questions and "Yes, you shall pursue." And "Yes, you shall overtake." They're the answers. "Recover all?" Don't know if that was another question asked or whether, again, that came through the priest or whatever.

Verse 9—So, David went, he and the six hundred men who were with him, and came to the brook Besor. Now, they were at this brook, a location called Besor, and here it is that before this now they'd already been travelling for three days to get back from where they were before, back to Ziklag and it talks about how it took them three days in this particular journey here. They're pretty worn out. They get to Ziklag and now they're going to be worn out mentally and everywhere else because when you see this kind of devastation, of what's taken place here, the burning of the town, the taking of everything, all the possession, everything is gone, that works another level of stress in the sense that so often can just drain people of any kind of energy.

So, here they were, weak already, and so this becomes important now of what happens here. **And they came to the brook of Besor, where those stayed who were left behind.** In other words, it's making it clear here that some stayed behind at this point, couldn't continue on.

But David pursued, he and the four hundred men, for two hundred stayed behind who were so weary that they could not cross the brook Besor. So again here, just too tired to continue on. They just didn't have it in them and certainly not able to engage in a fight.

Then they found an Egyptian in the field, and brought him to David. So, somewhere along the way here in the pursuit, here there is this Egyptian. **And they gave him bread, and he ate it; and they gave him water to drink. They also gave him a piece of cake of figs, and two**

clusters of raisins. So, when he had eaten, his strength came back to him, for he had eaten no bread, nor had water to drink for three days and three nights.

So again, this whole period of time here he was by himself. He wasn't able to continue on. He had gotten weaker. It goes on to explain more of the story here. **Verse 13—Then David said to him, To whom do you belong? And where are you from? He said, I am a young man from Egypt, servant of an Amalekite; and my master left me behind because three days ago I fell sick.** So, he was too sick to travel so he was left behind. He just got weaker because he didn't have anything to eat or wasn't able to eat, or whatever the case was, or drink for that period of time.

Verse 14, he goes on to explain, **We made an invasion of the southern area of the Cherethites, of Judah, and of the southern area of Caleb; and we burned Ziklag.** Here he is acknowledging this and not knowing who it is specifically that he's talking to in the sense of them living and dwelling in Ziklag. And again, this Ziklag, again, is that area that Achish had given to David and his followers.

So, it says here **...and we burned Ziklag with fire. Then David asked him, Can you take me down to this band of raiders?** In other words, "Can you lead me to where they have gone?" So he said, **Promise to me by God, that you will neither kill me, nor deliver me into the hands of my master.** In other words, now by this point he knew what was going on here.

Again, some of these stories they don't put everything in it as to what took place. But he definitely understood something here, that "If I take you to them," they're in pursuit of them, that's what was brought out in this. "We're in pursuit of them. That's who we're after." But if he shows them the way, he's in bad straits because, obviously, if his master wins the battle, he's going to kill him for showing them how to get there. On the other hand, if David and his men win, because he was with him in the past and helped in the raid is he going to kill him? So, he's in this quandary of what to do and how to do it.

So, he asked him, basically, here, "Can you promise me by God?" So, understanding here enough about Israel and their beliefs and so forth, having heard about the God of Israel and whatever here in his thinking. He's asking him, "Are you going to tell me then..." **Promise me before your God that you will neither kill me nor deliver me into the hands of my master, and I will take you down to the band of raiders.** So again here, he's dealt with this in a manner that he wants to preserve his own life.

Verse 16 goes on to say, **When he had taken them down, there they were.** So, he agreed to all this, took them there. **...spread out over all the land, eating, drinking, and dancing, because of all the great spoil which they had taken from the land of the Philistines, and from the land of Judah.**

So, it wasn't just Ziklag. It was other areas because whether news travelled in the region, whatever happened, when they went up there there was no one to stop them because the

Philistines were going up against Israel. So, there were means of things travelling over distances of time and people continually spying on one another. So, whether it was this that promoted this, but they certainly had an easy ability to go into the region and attack and take spoil. This is what had happened.

Here they were, it says, **eating, drinking, and dancing, because of all the great spoil they had taken from the land of the Philistines and from the land of Judah.** So again, there's that whole region there in the south that Philistines were in some, Judah in another part. Again, not well protected, especially in southern parts of Judah. Although they were beginning as a nation to become organized, they weren't there yet. They had a long way to go in this process.

And so, going on here, **verse 17—Then David attacked them from twilight until the evening of the next day.** So, can you imagine? Here you have been pursuing, putting a lot of effort into the pursuit because you're not doing it slowly, you're doing it at a good gait because you want to catch up, you want to rescue your loved ones, first and foremost, and receive back the things that have been taken, the spoil that had been taken. But primarily your loved ones, your family, and so forth.

There is this intense desire to catch up to them, to be able to rescue them, and so there's this continual pursuit. Then when they engage in the battle, here is how long it lasts. This isn't a small thing. This is draining on a physical body in a very powerful way. These battles were not small. They took a lot. They required a lot. It's hard to grasp the strength it would take to endure and to go through something of this magnitude for this long.

Then David attacked them at twilight until the evening of the next day. Not a man of them escaped except four hundred young men, who rode on camels, and had fled. So, how this is recorded and known, it's there. It says four hundred very early on, in essence, got camels and they took off because they were fearful of saving their own skin.

So, David recovered all that the Amalekites had carried away, and David rescued his two wives. Nothing of theirs was missing. Isn't that incredible? They were able to recover everything that had been taken. What an incredible story! Here they were able to go in and rescue, none had been killed. They were able to rescue them and receive back everything that the raiders had taken.

Nothing of theirs was missing, either small or great, sons nor daughters, spoil, or anything which they had taken from them. David recovered all. Again here, sometimes we can go through trials, people have gone through hardships and trials, and though they be hard that's a part of the process whereby we're tried and tested. Where is our thinking? Where is our mind? Is our mind toward pursuing God, toward looking to God for guidance and direction? Do our minds go there continually? In those kinds of situations are we looking to God for help, guidance, direction, and answers during those periods of time, to keep spiritually strong, to have the right thinking, the right mind toward whatever it might be, whatever hardship it might be or for ever how long it might go on?

Those are the kinds of things that have to be addressed and those are the kinds of things whereby we're tested. But what an incredible thing once we've gone through those things successfully, the blessings on a spiritual plane, of what can take place in our thinking. Because it's one that strengthens, it strengthens the mind, it strengthens our understanding of God's purpose working in our lives, and what He's doing helps us come to understand the mercy, the grace, the patience, those things that come from God to us that we're so blessed to have.

Then David took all the flocks and herds... Doesn't mean it's going to be easy, does it? But able to get back to what it was and continue on. **Then David took all the flocks and herds, and as they drove the livestock ahead they said, This is David's spoil.** Here were the ones that were driving the livestock and so forth, and in their minds and in their hearts it was like, at one point some were ready to stone David, and now they were so thankful that everything had been received back, families, they'd received them back, and all this livestock and all that they'd taken.

Now, understand here, there's a lot more than what was taken from Ziklag. There was that which was throughout parts of Judah and parts of the Philistines as well. They had raided those areas so there was much more spoil than what was just taken from Ziklag. There was a lot that was there! This is what they had recovered. This is the spoil that they now had. They were talking about how this is David's spoil. In other words, in their minds this belongs to David. But that wasn't David's mind and David's heart at all, as you're going to see.

Verse 21—Then David returned to the two hundred men, who had been so weary that they couldn't follow David, whom they had made to stay behind at the brook Besor. So, they went out to meet David, and to meet the people who were with him. And when David came near the people, he greeted them.

So again, here is this process. Here is they're part way back there; they haven't gotten back to the area of Ziklag or wherever they're going to be going, so here they are travelling. But they meet up again with the two hundred, families are reunited. Incredible time.

Verse 22 it says, **Then all the evil and corrupt men of those who had gone with David...** So, in other words, all these weren't nice people though they followed with David. They were banded together, had different reasons perhaps why they left Judah and banded together with David. Nevertheless, there were some of those who their minds weren't what they should be in the sense of especially in a relationship toward God or toward one another as it should have been. That's why they're referred to as evil and corrupt men. Because it was about themselves. It was a matter of total selfishness and of gain on their part and not consideration of others whatsoever. That isn't why they did what they did. It was about themselves and their ability to attain to riches and so forth.

Then all the evil and corrupt men of those who had gone with David said, Since they did not go with us, we will not give them any of the spoil that we have recovered, except for every man's wife and children, so that they may take them and then leave. In other words,

“They can be gone. They didn’t come with us; they don’t deserve anything but their families, and none of the spoil. Then they can leave with their families and be gone, because they didn’t come with us.” Well, David understood the reasons of why they didn’t come with them, go with them, and his thinking was totally different. It definitely here shows a mind toward God because God was first in his life. God’s way of life was first, and it was just that kind of thinking.

But David said, My fellows, you shall not do so with what the Eternal has given us. Isn’t that amazing? Here is his mind. It was toward God. Because it wasn’t a matter of what they did, it wasn’t a matter of how great they were. It wasn’t a matter of “their” spoil. David didn’t look upon that livestock as “his” spoil. Not at all. It was all of them together that had done this, but it was God who gave the victory, it was God who had given them this ability to do this and to retrieve everything back in the manner that they had. David saw that. He understood that. He believed that with all of his being.

He saw how God was working in his life and working with them, knowing here what they did, of the safety in numbers that they had to go in battle, all the others who had been killed. He’d experienced this many times before. Lion. Bear. Goliath. The battles with the Philistines. Other battles that they’d engaged in as the six hundred with him. And now this. He knew it was from God.

That’s the way we should be. After we’ve been in God’s Church for a time, molded and fashioned by God, receive the truth to the degree we have, to know the things that we see and know and grasp and understand, to have this mind toward God of understanding everything we have God has given to us in abundance above and beyond anything that we ever deserve in life. But He has a plan and a purpose. What an awesome thing especially that we can see, far more than what David did, and yet with that mind that’s where His mind was. It was toward God and what God had given to them.

Now, we should be able to see those things in our lives within the Church, in our physical lives and in our spiritual lives, and that depends, or shouldn’t say depends, but that determines, in large part, by where we are spiritually as to how we are going to respond to God, whether there’s gratitude. If there is gratitude and thankfulness, then we’re going to acknowledge that before God and we’re going to cherish those things that much more and we’re going to love God and His way of life that much more. You can’t give that to anyone.

You know, even on a physical plane people have to learn thankfulness and gratitude. Many people just never do. Sometimes they’re not taught those things. Sometimes they just don’t learn them. Even within God’s Church it takes time sometimes for people to learn gratitude and thankfulness. Something will be done for someone, given to someone, and you never hear from them again. Incredible, what can happen in the human mind.

Yet it’s like we don’t learn and don’t understand even on a physical plane sometimes to express gratitude. Because then that does something with the relationship. If we grasp that someone

has given something and they're concern is toward us, whatever that might be, then our natural response would be to thank them, obviously, to acknowledge that. Because to not to do so is incredibly rude, is incredibly selfish. It's just not caring. The mind just isn't thinking about it. Why? Because it hasn't learned that yet.

That's something we have to learn. But if we do, what is the fruit of that? It's about the relationship. It's about an appreciation toward the individuals then, toward those who have done such things. Then if we're really learning from that process we can learn, "I have appreciated and enjoyed this so much and understand that mindset towards me that I enjoy and want, that I want to express that to others and to give to others," and to hopefully be a part of a process of teaching others that, of being a part of that. Because it enhances the relationships.

It's just like in our offerings toward God. That comes as a result of really what's inside of our heart and mind. Do we do it because we recognize and see God working in our lives and we're thankful and appreciative for everything He's given to us? And so, when it's given it's not a matter of the amount necessarily by any measure that's given (though that can enter into it), it's about the heart and the mind then toward God, that we love God, we see what God's doing in our life, and we're so thankful and we know we are understanding His love, His care and concern for us. That's why He's given us so much.

But if we don't recognize those things then that personal relationship, that fellowship doesn't achieve or it doesn't grow to the point it can, could, should.

So again, so much to learn by things like this, truly, as to how we think and where we're coming from, where we are on a spiritual plane.

So, David said, My fellows, you shall not do so with what the Eternal has given us. That's an automatic response. Sometimes it's not in us in God's Church. Of all people of all times in 6,000 years of human history, we of all people should be able to have that kind of response quickly and powerfully so because of what God has given us. I think of all the truths! Just that alone that God has given to us that has enriched our lives so much if we can understand it.

And if we really appreciate and love those things then we're going to recognize the gift that God has given to us and we're going to respond to a very loving Father and to our High Priest in a manner that is one of incredible gratitude and thankfulness for what we do have and to recognize the riches and the wealth in that and the bonding then of that fellowship of unity and oneness that we're able to have with God that we can have in no other way.

So again, it's a matter of our thinking. It's a matter of whether God's spirit is in our lives and working with us and we're yielding to that, or whether we're just living selfish lives for self, for what we get out of it. We have to think about those things and ask God to help us to see and understand what it is we're doing and why we're doing it.

David corrected them quickly and said, “We’re not going to do this because the Eternal God has given this to us. Who are we?” He was able to see very clearly this is what God has worked out. We should be able to see things in our life. Whether it be just like I talked about in the sermons, different kinds of sermons we’re given, that they’re ordered, that God feeds us, that He nourishes us. He’s the one who gives us food. On a spiritual plane, let alone what He’s given us in physical life to experience as far as human life is concerned. It’s wasn’t owed to us and neither is a spiritual life. But that’s God’s love and God’s purpose. That should do something inside of us in our response toward Him. Our mind should automatically go back to God just like David’s did.

He said, his mind, “The Eternal has done this! Can’t you see that?” Well, they couldn’t see that. He didn’t ask it that way, but basically, that’s what’s being asked. “This is what the Eternal has given. Who are we? What are we that we should not think of the others,” and understanding here, “We didn’t do all this. God is the one who gave us the victory. God is the one who blessed us in this. Even though it was difficult and hard, look what we have received.”

You have to fight for this way of life. You have to fight for the truth, to live the truth. That’s what this is akin to spiritually.

David said, **My fellows, you shall not do so with what the Eternal has given us, who has preserved us, and delivered into our hand the band of raiders that came against us.** Do we really see God working in our lives? Do we acknowledge that? Because it’s a matter of an appreciation and a love toward God if we see it. To not see that or not acknowledge it, well, if we’re not doing it on a physical plane, we’re definitely not doing it on a spiritual plane. We’re just not. You can’t! You can’t have one without the other.

We have to learn certain things even on a physical plane to become motivated and learn the spiritual significance of that as we grow, and then to recognize that with God, and if we don’t recognize it in the smaller things in life, we’re not going to recognize it in the big things. It’s just impossible.

So again here, David recognized these things. He recognized God’s favor. He recognized God’s mercy. He recognized God’s protection. Do we do that in our prayers on a regular basis before God? To thank Him? To say, “Well, I got COVID.” Yeah. And you’re not in the hospital with your lungs eaten out and dying. How blessed are we that God blesses us, and even experiencing something to a certain level to where we become immune to something, where we don’t have to have the same kind of fear or concerns in a physical life? And you think, that’s a blessing. God brings us through difficult times, hard things.

It’s not the other kind of thinking that thinks, “Well, I shouldn’t have to experience any evil, any harshness, any hardship, any difficulty in this physical life.” Oh, yes, we do. That’s what we have to experience. That’s how we grow.

So again, it's a matter of recognizing God's favor in our life. We need to stop from time to time and ask ourselves and in your next prayer, to acknowledge that before God. Do we recognize, do you recognize the favor that He's shown? If so, where? Where do you have favor in your life? Where have you been shown mercy in your life? Where? What about the protection? On and on it goes.

Verse 24. So, he asks the question, **Should anyone pay attention to you in this matter?** It's like, here you're talking like this and this kind of nonsense, this kind of foolishness, and who's going to listen to you? Who should listen to you? This is from God. God has blessed us in these things. It isn't what you did. It isn't how great you were and that because these others didn't come with us that somehow they shouldn't share in the spoil.

So, it went on to say here, **But as his part...** So, he states this, **But as his part or his share is who goes down to the battle, so shall his share be who stays by the supplies.** So, they had left supplies behind. They were being protected by them. Yes, they were too weak to continue on, but they stayed with them and protected them. It says, **who stays by the supplies. And they shall share alike.** It says we're going to share in this all together because it works together. It's not just one part of a body or a band or an army, it's the entire part. We need each other. That's what it's about. It's about working together as a body.

That's why I love those examples in the New Testament that talk about different parts of the body. We're all necessary. We all need each other. It's that mindset of understanding that we need each other. Like in the Church, we are a family! God works with us in different ways.

So again here, he's stating this. This is just the way it's being stated, the way it should be. He's saying, "His share who goes in the battle, should be the same as the share who stays by the supplies. And they will share alike evenly so." Not one receiving more than the other but splitting it up evenly. **So, it was from that day forward that he made it a statute and an ordinance for Israel to this day.**

This was such an important factor here that not only did it happen right here and become established here because the principle was there, from then on that's what David practiced. So much so that it became a part of the way that Israel functioned from that time forward.

Now, this is just the beginning of some of those things that began to be established through David for what was to follow. Again, incredible here when you understand here is a nation that's just beginning to become organized.

I think of government that's coming to this earth, that we're so close to that being established, and I think of how God's blessed the Church in the last fifty years, sixty years, seventy years now, of things being restored and given to the Church in a very powerful way preparing for what is to follow and the Kingdom of God that's going to be ruling on this earth. What an awesome thing!

Verse 25—And so it was from that day forward, that he made it a statute and an ordinance for Israel to this day. Now, when David came to Ziklag, he sent some of the spoil to the elders of Judah. So, here it was, there were different ones that were raided in Judah and he sent spoil even there, not just for his men but even to areas of Judah, as it says here, saying, Here is a present for you, and from the spoil of the enemies of the Eternal.

It should be pretty easy to understand what David would have done in the battle as the Philistines were going up against Israel. It's pretty easy to understand what David and the six hundred would have done behind the lines like this. It would have turned the battle, powerfully so, but this isn't what happened because David wasn't there and his men weren't there to fight with them, with Israel, in that respect.

It says again here, **Here is a present for you from the spoil of the enemies of the Eternal.** So again, this mindset that God has given this land, God has given everything to Judah and to Israel that it has, and these are enemies. They are not striving for God's way of life. God has blessed us, given us ability to see, to know and understand a certain way of life, to see what He's done with us as a people.

Anyway, going on. So, again, **as a present for you from the spoil of the enemies of the Eternal to those in Beth-el, Ramoth of the south, Jattir, Aroer, Siphmoth, Eshtemoa, Rachal, and those of the cities of the Jerahmeelites of the cities of the Kenites, and of those in Hormah, in Chor-ashan, and Athach, and Hebron, and to all the places where David himself and his men had been accustomed to roving.** In other words, they had been throughout this region, those parts of Judah there as the six hundred went with him at times striving to stay away from Saul.

People knew about them, and yet there was this mindset that even some of them had. Here he is sending things to them, to send some of that spoil. Because they had already taken, this band of raiders had taken so much from parts of Judah and from the Philistines, and here David is sharing it.

He was generous. He was considerate of others. He thought about others. It wasn't about himself. It's a difficult thing for the human mind, and it's a difficult thing once we're called, that we work, that we pursue a change, this change in our thinking to where we're not just focused on ourselves and how we want things to be or how we think life should be, and how we think others should live their lives, and we're not judgmental in that respect toward others. We're considerate of others. We want what's best for others. We strive to think that way and we ask God for help to be able to accomplish that.

It doesn't mean we don't have things we have to address with people sometimes in life because of relationships and how people are able to grow in relationships. Because sometimes that's a part of the process as well within a family, of working things out, of doing things. But it has to be done God's way. It's this thinking of others, this matter of being generous towards others or

thinking of others, considerate of others, a recognizing (as I mentioned earlier here), that we are all a part of a family. We need each other.

Just like it says in the New Testament there about a physical body, if you don't have an arm, you're going to know it. If something is missing and there are parts, you just, you want to have a whole, healthy, complete body. And so, basically, if we recognize that in one another, that we function as a body, it means more to us and those relationships then mean more to us, and it's not just a matter then of something that's steeped just in selfishness. Because if we're not careful, that's what can take place.

So again, this thinking of others, considering their needs, we're told to do that. I think of the different scriptures that talk about to consider other's needs, not just our own. To think in that manner. Well, that's something that doesn't come natural, so we have to ask God for help in that, to think in that manner that it's a matter of a spiritual thinking towards others in the Body of Christ, in the Church of God. Again, to be balanced in that. And where do we get that? From God. You have to ask God for help to have that balance.

1 Samuel 31:1. It says, **Now, the Philistines had been fighting against Israel, and the men of Israel had fled from before the Philistines and fallen slain on Mount Gilboa.** So, an incredible battle had pursued while David and the men had returned down to Ziklag and then pursued after the band of raiders, and then coming back up. It tells then what happened in the battle here, that they had been fighting then against Israel and how the men of Israel had fled before the Philistines and the Philistines were pursuing them. Because they gained the advantage.

They had fallen slain, as it says, on Mount Gilboa. **Then the Philistines followed hard after Saul and his sons.** So, it's like in any kind of war like this, it's a matter of cutting off the head of the snake. That's how the thinking is. You have to destroy from the top. Once you've done that, then the rest of it's in disarray, if you destroy the structure of the leadership.

It's saying here that they pursued hard after Saul and his sons, **and the Philistines killed Jonathan, Abinadab, and Malchi-shua.** These were Saul's sons, the three sons here that it's talking about that were killed along in this battle with Saul.

The battle had become fierce against Saul, and the archers, it says, hit him; and he was severely wounded by the archers. Then Saul said to his armourbearer, Draw your sword, and thrust me through with it, otherwise, these uncircumcised men will come and thrust me through, and abuse me. So, here it is, his body to be dragged, whatever it might be that they do when you're so often in wars and battle like this, and the souvenirs of people wanting to show the victory, and finally what they did do to Saul.

But here, here is the story going through and telling about why he wanted to be put to death, not to be partially alive, dying, in a state of dying. He just knew his end was there. He felt that. The archers had struck him and here he was, he knew he was dying, but he wanted to be able to die quickly because he knew they'd be overtaken because the pursuit was still on.

It says, **But his armourbearer would not do it.** He couldn't do it. Here he'd been with him for this length of time and it's just something beyond his ability to do. It says here, **for he was very afraid.** Perhaps some of the thinking of David there, "This is God's anointed." He's not going to be the one who takes his life. Probably for a lot of reasons, obviously, afraid here.

Therefore, Saul took a sword, and fell down upon it. So, it tells how he died. He took the sword, put it before him and cast his body over on it to kill himself, to finish the job. Because here the Philistines were still coming and he didn't want to be, he wouldn't be able to fight and resist in any fashion or form, so this is what he did.

Verse 5—Then, when his armourbearer saw that Saul was dead, he also fell on his sword. So, he followed suit. It doesn't say he was wounded or anything of that nature, but again here, he was fearful. The thinking that goes on in the mind at a time like that, it's hard to understand unless you're in that kind of a situation, obviously.

He took his sword and fell down upon it, killed himself, and said, **and died with him.** He died there with Saul. **So, Saul, his three sons, his armourbearer, and all his men died together that same day.** So again here, revealing what took place in this particular battle.

Verse 7—When the men of Israel who were on the other side of the valley, and those who were on the other side of the Jordan saw that the men of Israel had fled, and that Saul and his sons were dead... So many of these battles took place going back and forth going over the Jordan area. Even as we're going to see as we continue on with some of the stories here later. But here it says they saw these things taking place in the battles that were there and says, **and those who were on the other side of the Jordan saw the men of Israel had fled, and that Saul and his sons were dead, they forsook the cities, and fled.**

So often here, people when they're fleeing from a battle, then they're going to see different ones fleeing as they're coming across. It doesn't mean that they necessarily even saw the battle. But here they see them, so they know what's taking place, that they've been losing the battle and others are fleeing.

So again, **they saw that the men of Israel fled, and that Saul and his sons were dead, they forsook the cities, and fled. And the Philistines came and dwelt in them. So it happened the next day...** This is quite an area here that they're going into, farther north pursuing and taking in some of these regions as they were going. **And the Philistines came and dwelt in them.**

So, it happened the next day when the Philistines came to strip the slain, that they found Saul and his three sons fallen on Mount Gilboa. They cut off his head, and stripped off his armour, and sent word throughout the land of the Philistines to proclaim it in the temple of their idols, and among the people. So here it was to them they had conquered Israel. That was in their mindset. Here was the leader. Here was Saul. Here is his head, his body, the things that they did here, and basically giving the credit to their gods. Here the people could then rejoice of what a great thing they had done.

Verse 10—Then they put his armour in the temple of the Ashtarothe's, and they fastened his body to the wall of Beth-shan. So again here, mindsets of people at that particular time and how they would do the things that they did. Here is the leader. Here he is. We have the victory. Here is the death to prove it.

Now, when the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead heard what the Philistines had done to Saul; all the valiant men arose, and travelled all night, and took the body of Saul and the bodies of his sons from the wall of Beth-shan. Now, there were always spies and this travelling back and forth, the ability to pursue, to see things that were going on. This is a part of what was taking place.

This news had gotten back up to Jabesh-gilead, these individuals rose up as they did, and it says they were valiant men so they were strong, they were attuned to being warriors, in that respect, in their thinking, and they were ready to go out and fight and do whatever they needed to do in order to gain back, as it says here, **they traveled all night and took the body of Saul and the bodies of his sons from the wall of Beth-shan, and they came to Jabesh, and burned them there.**

Here it is, they cremated them. Again, a part of the process here of what they went through in order to go out and pursue them. They were willing to put their lives at risk in order to accomplish this and they did it. This wasn't a small thing, because here the Philistines were all over the region there and had conquered the region already, and so they were putting their life on the line just to receive back the bodies and to go back and give them, in their mindset, final rites as they do on a physical plane.

Verse 13—Then they took their bones, and buried them under the tamarisk tree in Jabesh, and fasted seven days. Now, there are different kinds of fasts spoken of throughout the scripture. This isn't where they go without food and water and it's a spiritual thing toward God or anything of that nature. It's a matter of lamentation. It's a matter of mourning. It's a manner of thinking in respect of someone who has died of a great importance.

Again, going without food, liquid, there were those kinds of fasts where there was liquid consumed but not any kind of large meals or anything of that nature. So, it was a type of restraint from food and from normal care that you would normally have at a time.

It's just the opposite of rejoicing where you might have a feast. Here is something that was just very minimal. It's referred to in that respect as fasting, but not along the lines of some other things where we see in scripture where it talks about certain fasts without food and water.

Now, added to the story is something in 1 Chronicles 10. We're at a point now where sometimes in the books here through the story of Samuel you get into a point where the chronicles of the kings begin to record various things about people and lineage and so forth. Some of these things are brought in and certain bits on occasion, and this happens more and more the farther

we go into the books. But you go through Samuel and then you get into the books of the kings and the chronicles and a lot more is said.

So, here is something in **1 Chronicles 10:13** that's added to this particular portion of the story. **Verse 13—So, Saul died for his unfaithfulness which he had committed against the Eternal.** It's making it very clear here something that had taken place and why. God was in it. God was a part of everything that had happened in the establishment of the kingdom and of putting Saul into a position of rulership to be the first king over Israel.

Here is this process that is acknowledging God, that here is something that Saul had done. He has unfaithfulness toward God, as it says here, "which he had committed against the Eternal." It was his mind toward God. He was cut off from God very early on because of what he had done. It brings these things out now toward the end of his life story.

It says, **because he did not keep the word of the Eternal.** He didn't listen to God. He didn't follow God. We can look, again, at something like this on a physical plane and think he was given, he was offered so much. Here he was, a humble individual at first, and then pride got in the way, this desire of lavishing power and what it does sometimes to the human mind when people have power and authority and how that can be misused. But it needs to be seen in a right way when it comes to a right relationship with God because there's instruction there from God as to what people are to do and how they're to do it.

But if self gets in the way and it becomes a matter of ego, becomes a matter of self, becomes a matter of pride and vanity and lust for more power and more wealth, then these are the things that transpire, the things about jealousy and envy that we saw that were so deeply embedded in Saul.

So again, these things have happened to people in God's Church, to lots of people in God's Church. I've seen tons of this throughout the time in God's Church, since 1969, of being baptized at that time. It's just something that's ongoing. It just happens because it's so much a part of physical, carnal, selfish human life. And either we yield to that, or if we understand our calling, we'll follow this example of David. Pursing a heart like David's; it's a matter of pursuing the Eternal in a relationship that God offers us to be able to have with Him and with His Son, and with one another within the Body, within the Church. All that we must see as a part of a relationship.

It's not just a one on one with God Almighty, or God Almighty and His Son, Joshua, and not the Body. Because the Body reveals what that relationship is really like. Our thinking toward others in the Body, our actions towards others in the Body actually reveal our thinking toward God Almighty. These things, we're to grow in, we're to come to understand in a better way. It is here that he was offered so much.

So, sometimes if we're not careful we can look at physical stories like this, as I've mentioned from the beginning, which even with the rest of the life story of David, we can look at those

physical stories and think, “But how could this happen? How could they have done this?” And we could. So often we have.

At different levels and different points in our life they’re generally revealed in our lives in smaller ways because we’re not in a position like this. We haven’t been called to be in this respect, a king over a nation in a carnal, physical nation in this world. David was to replace Saul, but Saul was the first. These individuals then are tried and tested as their mind and their thinking toward God.

We are too, on a spiritual plane, and we go through some of the same kinds of things as to choices we have to make once God’s spirit is offered to us and how we respond to God’s spirit and how we think toward God, and if our thinking isn’t right, God will bring that out and it’ll be revealed by the choices we make. Do we really want what God has offered us? Do we really want His way of life to govern ours, or do we hold back and try to hold on to something?

Just popped into my mind, another individual had to be disfellowshipped from the Church. And people do things, hold on to some of the smallest of things that cut them off from God’s help and God’s spirit in their lives, and then they can’t see the things that they need to see let alone to engage in the spiritual battles or warfare that they can’t see either. In time then these kinds of things happen.

For Saul it happened quickly. For so many that have come into God’s Church, some things can start from the very beginning and never get addressed, or at some point later on and a shift is made in people’s lives because they stop making the right choices because their mind isn’t like this mind of David, who wanted God, who desired God, who placed God first in his thinking, who wanted God to be first in his thinking, who loved God, who recognized God in his life. All we need to do is look around in a physical world and grasp God and our blessing of life physically, let alone what we’ve been offered spiritually. But we kind of need to see that, too, on a spiritual plane in order to grasp the physical.

But God blesses us with that. He gives us the ability to recognize how blessed we are to be in His creation, to be a part of His creation, to see how beautiful it is. If we can see some of the beauty and begin to recognize it more on the physical plane, then we have an opportunity and an ability, frankly, with God’s spirit to begin seeing those things on a spiritual plane. Life just gets richer and richer, more meaningful and more meaningful.

And so, it addresses these things about Saul and what happened to him and sums it all up in a couple of sentences here. Incredible. **So, Saul died for his unfaithfulness.**

What a horrible thing that so many who have been called in the past 2,000 years have died in unfaithfulness; had a calling, had the opportunity of making right choices, had opportunities for some of the greatest things of life that could ever be offered to a human being, far beyond our ability to comprehend just being in the Family of God, let alone the different resurrections that are offered and the blessings of life to be a part of, to engage in the beginnings of an

incredible plan that God has, to be in the framework of that. We can't grasp that, but we should so deeply appreciate it and believe it and know it.

So, Saul died for his unfaithfulness which he had committed against the Eternal. It's happened to so many. Hopefully, there aren't many more, because it just continues on and on and on, year by year, as I've so often said, Feast of Tabernacles to Feast of Tabernacles.

Because he did not keep the word of the Eternal. That's just how basic it is. Whatever that word is, whatever guidance is given to us, whatever it is we are to live by. And if we lie, we cut ourselves off from God. But if we lie, which we do whenever we sin, we lie to others and we lie to God, it's like being in the garden there and Adam and Eve trying to hide. It's like they can lie and be lying to God and you can't get by with that.

And yet that's the way we kind of are sometimes. It's like hiding from something and thinking that it won't be there, it won't be seen, or we won't be recognized. Then lying just tears people up. It eats up their lives and it does something horrible to the human mind to where other kinds of things begin to enter in. It can just destroy people.

"...because he did not keep the word of the Eternal." So other sin comes along because we're not able to have God's spirit there because we become cut off from it and yet we think we're a part of the Body, a part of the Church, and we should have certain blessings in the Church but we're not obeying God. So, how does that work? Well, it doesn't, and we aren't blessed when we're cut off from God because of sin.

Saul was not blessed in what he did. He was cut off from God's favor and from God's help.

...because he did not keep the word of the Eternal and also because he consulted a medium for guidance. I mean, that's how far the mind can go. So, he went elsewhere, not to God Almighty to look for guidance and direction, to humble himself. Of course, it's kind of easy to understand why he didn't do that. Because he had already killed so many priests of God.

Verse 14—But he did not inquire of the Eternal, therefore He killed him. God killed him. God took care of it. That's what David said all along, "God will take care of this. Somehow, whether it be in a battle with the Philistines, whether it be a battle of old age, but God will take care of it in God's time. If God allows him to live on, to live to an old age, it's still God, because he was called of God, he had a purpose from God."

Once we're called, again, we're judged in how we live our lives, depends on what happens later. Some things, especially in the Church, are brought to the surface and they become known in time. Other, you know, God will bring it to the attention of the Church or sometimes God will just take care of it Himself. It depends on the situation. But God will take care of it in His way and in His time and we don't have to worry about that.

That's why so often I... Well, I don't want to get into that. But it's a matter of knowing that God will take care of things. God decides. God knows and He'll let us know when we need to know

how to deal with something, how to work with something. Because the Church is God's. It's God's Church.

But he did not inquire of the Eternal, therefore He killed him. So, he didn't look to God. He could have from the very early stages. Instead, he killed some of God's priests. Then even toward the end there went so far to not only have killed the priests but went to other gods. That's what he was doing. It was a matter of looking to some other source, some other means to be communicated with what God's will was. Yet he'd already outlawed them in the country for a reason because he knew that they were wrong. He already had that knowledge of how evil, how wrong those kinds of things were because of what God had said. Yet here he is, trying to find out something because he couldn't humble himself to go to the priests and ask God because he'd gone too far in killing the priests. Here we go, so what do you do? You die. God will take care of it.

God's just making it very clear here those whom He gives His holy spirit, if they do not respond, if they turn against Him once that gift has been given, He'll take care of it one way or another. Even within the Church nobody gets by with anything. Sometimes we can look at things and think, well... God will take care of everything in His time. It's His time. Sometimes there are things to be learned from situations, from the good and from the bad that exists within, like it had been, in the Church, as an example, in Laodicea, some of the things that happened there.

It's because those things were allowed that much was learned of how things should not be in God's Church let alone how things should be. There are things that can mold and fashion us that God allows depending on what He's molding and fashioning in us if we're receptive to those things and are willing to learn and cry out to Him for help to be able to see and grasp and understand. Then God will work with us and teach us. It's a beautiful thing, it truly is.

So again here, what a horrible thing that it had to be written this way. But what a horrible thing that so many have made choices along the way who had opportunity to have the first stages of God's life in them, to not have to live through a period of time over a hundred years later on. Who wants to go through that? It's hard enough battling it in the time we may have on this life now. But to add on to that another hundred years, to have this battle this human mind, human life? That, to me, that's a nightmare. But so many have done that and are going to have to live that.

As it says in scripture, there is going to be weeping and gnashing of teeth when that reality hits people, when they recognize what they gave up, what they could have done and they didn't do all because of "lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life." What a horrible thing not seeking to govern our lives God's way. Because God's way is beautiful. It gives true peace. It gives a fullness and a richness of life that can come in absolutely no other way. The riches of that can't be really known unless it's lived. It has to be practiced and then a person can begin to live it, begin to understand it, and God can begin to teach it ever more so.

It goes on to say, **But he did not inquire of the Eternal, therefore He killed him, and turned the kingdom over to David, the son of Jesse.**

God knew what Saul was going to do in the very early stage there, and it was Saul's choices. But after having been given all that he had there are certain traits within people that they're going to go a certain direction, make certain choices in life. And yet it's their choices. But they have the opportunity... They have no one to blame but themselves.

2 Samuel 1:1—Now, it came to pass after the death of Saul, when David had returned from the slaughter of the Amalekites, and David had stayed two days in Ziklag, then on the third day a man came from Saul's camp with his clothes torn and dust on his head. And so it was, when he came to David he fell on the ground and prostrated himself. So David asked him, Where have you come from? So, he said to him, I have escaped out of the camp of Israel. So, in other words here, "There was that which did not go well. I have escaped. The Philistines were attacking." David already knew this battle was going on, but he didn't know fully all that had happened here, and so here the news is coming to him.

So, anyway, **David asked, What happened there? Please, tell me. And he answered, The people have fled from the battle, large numbers have fallen and are dead; and Saul and Jonathan his son are also dead.** Now, it's hard for us to grasp to the level of this relationship that Jonathan and David had. It goes on to explain it a little bit later here. But an incredibly close relationship in the sense of respect and fondness and desire of well meaning toward life, in life, a kind of friendship, kinship that is very, very rare for anyone to ever have in life to this degree.

So, David said to the young man who reported this, How do you know that Saul and Jonathan his son are dead? Because, in his mind the thought of Jonathan being dead, the thought of Saul as well, but David knew that in time there would be an answering that God would deal with and take care of these matters. He knew what had been promised to him and so he abided his time. He wasn't pushing to have his time to rule. He never demanded, he never requested at all. It wasn't something he was looking for. It wasn't something he was lusting after in any manner, but he believed God.

He's talking to this individual and he says, **How do you know they're dead? Then, the young man declaring this said, As I happened by chance to be on Mount Gilboa, there was Saul leaning on his spear; and, indeed, the chariots and the horsemen had been following hard after him. Now, when he looked behind him, he saw me, and called to me. And I answered, Here I am. He said to me, Who are you? So, I answered him, I am an Amalekite.**

Now, there's a little bit of lying going on here because he is before David, he knows that Saul has been pursuing David in times past, he's expecting something in a carnal manner here as far as human beings tend to think. But David didn't think that way because he saw God always in these matters; he saw the Eternal, as it says here, in a very unique way, his mind, his heart placing God first.

So, he had no idea of how David thought and how David functioned and so he's looking at this on a carnal physical way and by twisting and distorting some of the facts here perhaps thinking he's going to receive some favor or something from David because of what he says, because what he says is not true.

He says here, **Who are you? So, I answered him, I am an Amalekite. Then, he said to me again, Please stand over me and kill me, for complete agony has overcome me, yet life is still in me.** In other words, it's like he's dying, he wants someone to kill him. So, he may have seen a part of this. He may have been right there in that area to see part of this, but everything he tells here is not the truth. Whether this conversation happened, it doesn't say.

So, I stood over him and killed him. Well, we know that's not true. It says that Saul leaned on his sword and killed himself and then his sword bearer did likewise. Perhaps he overheard the conversation of what was said? Don't know. Perhaps there were others around? Doesn't say.

So, I stood over him and killed him. So again, this thinking here, "He was your enemy. I am the one who killed him." Not smart in the case with David, but he didn't know that.

So, I stood over him and killed him, because I was sure that he could not live after he had fallen. I even took the crown that was on his head, and the bracelet that was on his arm, and have brought them here to my lord. So, yes, he did do that. He was there. He picked these things up and he took them to David.

So again, this thing of how people think they can get and get something for themselves and certain honor and recognition, undoubtedly a part of his distorted thinking here, how we as human beings can sometimes think if we think we can get something by twisting the truth just a little bit, by putting ourselves in what we think might be a good light.

Now, this happens in God's Church from time to time as well. It's carnal human nature. If we're not careful we don't necessarily tell the whole story or the truth of an entire story, we tell pieces of it in order to put ourselves in a good light so we can be looked upon by some, perhaps the leadership in God's Church, in a favorable way, because this may be good for us.

That's the kind of perverted thinking that goes on sometimes in the mind of humans. That's just the way we are. It's about these things, "Lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes," this desire, envy, greed, whatever it is, to be looked upon, just to be seen in a positive light, to put ourselves in a positive light.

It's like when something is corrected or if someone receives a correction or whatever it might be, it's not a matter sometimes of just receiving it and learning from it and growing from it, it's then a response of well, why it was done that way and we try to brush it up a little bit, get a little whitewash out here and try to put a little white paint on it because "This is what happened." It was kind of like Adam, "Well, it was the woman you gave to me. It's because of what she said."

Sometimes we don't even recognize what we're doing when a little bit of justification is thrown in because the carnal mind just hates for things to be revealed that are absolutely true and seen for what they are. But what we can do is just repent and move on. It's better not to try to justify. It's better to receive something and grow from it and learn from it and know that's how God works in our lives.

Because we all have sin. We all have problems and difficulties in life, and they have to be corrected from time to time. Some are seen more than others, and when they're seen, we just have to be humbled by that and receive the humility that's there but not try to lift ourselves up and try to put on a better picture of something because "I don't want you to see me in this light, I want you to see me in a different light." That's why justification sometimes comes in. Human nature, the carnal mind is really ugly, it really is. Carnal human nature, when it begins to take over, is really an ugly thing. It's not a good-looking thing at all.

We can get caught up in these things but we have to be able to see them, and if we can see these on a spiritual plane you know what? Then we're incredibly blessed! What a blessing to be able to see those kinds of things so that we can become convicted of how ugly they really are and then we don't want that a part of us. And so, that's where conviction comes from and character comes from. It comes from being able to see those things and then to so hate it.

You have to hate sin. You have to be convicted of how ugly sin is to flee it. If you don't then you're going to still mess around with the sin. But if you really come to see how ugly it is, it's not a matter of just a right or a wrong, or a do or a don't. Because people do that in a physical way in the world all around us. Don't do this. Some people keep the seventh-day Sabbath because it's a do or don't to them and they're doing it on a physical plane and not on a spiritual one at all.

If we're not careful we can think that way, and it's just the wrong way of thinking. To really become convicted we have to be able to see it, and if we see how ugly it is you won't want it a part of your life. And if you don't want it to be a part of your life you know what? You just become more convicted of the ugliness of sin and you have a greater desire then to live right before God, to honor God, to be pleasing to God.

Again, incredible things we can learn on a spiritual plane by all the things we go through in life and by some of these stories here, of what's revealed. The way that this Amalekite was in the story he's giving to David, and what he's telling him. So, he brings back the crown. He brings back the bracelet and brings them to David thinking that this is going to find him some kind of favor, "It's going to put me in good light. He's going to see me in a good way." It doesn't work that way.

Verse 11—David took hold of his own clothes, and tore them; and so did all the men who were with him. Now, this individual was not expecting this, that David after hearing this, of what happened to Saul and Jonathan, here is a witness of it, here is Saul's crown, here is his

bracelet, here is proof he's dead. Here this individual has brought them here and this news he's brought about him being dead and so forth.

They mourned, wept, and fasted until evening for Saul, and for Jonathan his son. He's seeing this mourning going on, that this is the response of David, and others seeing David in this way as well, these feelings they had. Because David had spoken to them many times before of why he wouldn't take his life. They saw this example in David, and though not everyone necessarily agreed with that, they still saw this example and there had to be that which worked in some of them, in their hearts, in their minds, of a right thinking or a better thinking toward Saul and his family than most would ever have. They saw this in David, they saw the example of David, and it had an effect upon them as well in their thinking toward this desire to be united as a kingdom and yet it wasn't there.

They mourned and they wept and they fasted until evening. So, they weren't going to have any kind of meal and this was a time, indeed, of mourning, of feeling badly for what was happening, and it wasn't a time to eat. That's just kind of a natural thing that takes place, so this is what they did.

They fasted until evening for Saul and Jonathan his son, for the people of the Eternal... Isn't that amazing? "For the people of the Eternal." So, David was a part of this. David was a big part of this because it was what he was saying to the men. It's how he taught them. It's how he spoke to them and they received this. It is here he's telling them these things and they're responding in a favorable way.

When you have that kind of a leadership within a people who are looking up to you, they followed him, they were willing to give their lives for him because that's the way they were. Then they received then much of what he had to say. But it was physical, but still they had these feelings, and they knew what he felt about the Eternal because he spoke of him often. What they had was because of God and so forth.

...and for the house of Israel. They had this longing in their hearts and minds to varying degrees depending on the individuals. But it was so deeply embedded in David he had this longing for Israel. Kind of like we should have for the Church, this longing we should have for everyone in the Church, and to have the sense of mourning when something bad happens, when something is difficult in people's lives and to be able to feel for others, to be able to pray for them effectively knowing that people indeed have to go through various things in life. But when it's all said and done it can all work to the good.

That's what it's about, this desire to see things work to the good, that we be able to receive it so that we can grow spiritually, so that we can draw closer to God. Not farther away from God, but closer to God because of whatever it is we're experiencing in life.

They mourned, wept, fasted until evening for Saul and for Jonathan his son, for the people of the Eternal, and for the house of Israel because they had fallen by the sword. Then David

said to the young man who reported this to him, Where are you from? He answered, I am the son of a foreigner, an Amalekite. So David said to him, How is it you were not afraid to put forth your hand to destroy the Eternal's anointed?

This matter comes up again here, the way David thinks and this thing that his men had seen with him over and over again. Now he's directing this toward the Amalekite and saying it. They already knew how David thought two times before concerning God's government and how God works, and "You will lift up your hand against the Eternal's anointed? Weren't you afraid of this?"

Then David called one of the young men, and said, Come forward and execute him. So, he struck him so that he died. So that desire that he had to make himself look good and thinking he's going to bring the crown and the bracelet and somehow receive favor from David, he was way off base, didn't know what he was doing.

David said to him... and you know, that's the way it should be in God's Church. If anyone were ever to bring something to us that isn't right, that doesn't square with what is being taught we should have the ability, the strength, the determination to stand strong and to say, "No!" To be able to out of love, if it be someone in the Body.

But so often people give into that and they listen to someone blab on or yap on about something that's so far off base and won't address it, just let it go on blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. And yet it's off base, it's not sound, it's not balanced. Sometimes then it gets to a point where it's definitely against what is being taught in the Church.

You know, I've learned long ago there are times you just say, "No. That isn't what we teach. That isn't true," or whatever it might be. Those things don't generally happen to me, but anyway, people know.

Sometimes people are not afraid to speak to others because, again, it comes down to how people think toward one another and whether they think someone will listen to them about a matter that doesn't square fully with what the Church teaches. You have to be on your toes. You have to be strong and you have to be willing to say, "No." This is an example here in a physical way that David just put a stop to it and said, "Strike him. Kill him."

Verse 16—David said to him, Your blood is on your own head; for your own mouth has testified against you, saying, I have killed the Eternal's anointed. Even though he didn't do it, by his mouth and what he said, and by what he wanted to gain he put himself in that position and David took care of it.

Much of what David said and did resulted in setting the way people began to look at God's government and God's way of judgment. Because he had an impact on the six hundred. There were those who weren't that good there as well, but they listened to David and they continued to follow him. The things he said had an impact in their lives and it had an impact upon the

kingdom as well. Different ones who became leaders as well as time went along, who worked in Israel, worked in Judah under David.

There are things that happen in life sometimes that have a beginning and a process that takes place, and if people will yield to those, even on a physical plane, if they believe what is given to them when it comes about being about God's way of life, there will be help, there will be blessings. David had a powerful impact upon setting the course for the nation, he truly did, for Judah primarily.

Verse 17—Then David lamented... It's to speak out about something in kind of a poetic manner, kind of like a eulogy in part but in a poetic manner as he spoke. It says, **with the lamentation over Saul and over Jonathan his son. And he told them to teach the children of Israel, of Judah The Song of a Bow.** Incredible. So, here it is, he was moved, and he spoke in this manner, in a poetic type of manner in what he had to say, and it says, **Indeed, it is written in the book of Jasher.**) Of course, written in scripture now.

Verse 19. The glory of Israel is slain on Your high places. How the mighty have fallen!

David had a perception of something here. He had God's spirit working with him and he was moved by the things he saw, and he saw what God was giving to Israel, that God had given a king and he acknowledge this, that here, look at Saul, look at Jonathan, look at what God had given, and yet the mighty have fallen. This regret that it didn't go in the manner that they would have liked to have seen.

How the mighty have fallen! I think about that. When I read that I think about the Church and I think about the people in the Church. Because once you've received of God's spirit you are blessed and you are mighty, in that respect, in the sense of how God has raised you up to give you the most precious things that a human being can ever be given. Truth of His way of life. To be given of His spirit; something the angelic realm has never been given. Something that is reserved for those that are in His family, but to be drawn into, to be given opportunity to be a part of His family.

And then how much mightier can a human being be in human life than to have God's spirit dwelling in them? There is nothing greater. And so, he's saying here, "How the mighty have fallen." We have seen that in God's Church, so many who have fallen. It's a horrifying thing, because it doesn't attain to the purpose and the plan that God had. It didn't attain to the purpose and the desire of a nation, of what David could see as the Eternal would lead and guide it. But again, another matter that would come later.

Verse 20—Do not tell it in Gath, nor proclaim it in the streets of Askelon; otherwise, the daughters of the Philistines will rejoice. You know, don't tell this to them. In other words, this is something for us. **...unless the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph.** Not about the mighty and who has fallen and so forth here, but to understand these things.

O mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew, nor rain upon you, nor fields of offerings. For the the shield of the mighty is cast away there, the shield of Saul not anointed with oil. For the blood of the slain, from the abundance of the mighty, the bow of Jonathan did not turn back, the sword of Saul did not return empty.

So again here, it's this deep, deep feeling toward those whom he loved. Even though Saul was seeking his life he still loved him. Because why? Because of God. Because of God being in the picture and that desire that it would still be in the back of someone's mind that maybe they can change, maybe they can make certain things right for the sake of God's people, for the sake of Judah, for the sake of all of Israel, for the sake of the rest of the family, for Jonathan and others.

When people go through things in the Church we need to think about that. We need to think about others and our desire toward them. Even when people have gotten to a point where they've gone so far to do some of the things they do where they're separated, the desire is still there that hopefully and prayerfully—but that's between them and God—and the desire is to look forward to time, even if it be in the Great White Throne, at least to look forward to that time and hopefully and prayerfully they will receive the things that are needed at that time if they can't do it in this age. That should always be in our hearts and minds, our desire for others, our desire for one another in the scheme of things concerning the way God's working in our lives. To not have that, to not see that, for that not to be a part of our thinking, we're missing a lot. We really are if that's the case.

Saul and Jonathan were loved and pleasant in their lives. In their death, they were not divided. They were swifter than eagles; they were stronger than lions. How can you express that kind of heart, that kind of a mind that has that kind of feelings toward others? Toward others who you desire the best for, that you hold no regrets against. Here he is trying to kill you and yet you still think this way? You still have this kind of fondness and care and concern because that God had called them, and God had anointed Saul? The desire was that he be able to turn around, that he'd be able to do something here, that something be made right.

But nevertheless, still that longing and that desire that died at this particular moment in time. And so, that hurt deep down inside.

So again, when I think of this I think of the Body of Christ, the Church of God and people in the Church and things that people go through and the hardships of life we go through. It's not meant to be easy. It's hard. And yet we each must go through those things and keep God in the forefront because that's where we have the strength and the power to continue forward.

O daughters of Israel, weep over Saul, who clothed you in scarlet and with luxury. In other words here, he's acknowledging and recognizing God gave to Saul an opportunity and the things that God had given, in essence (God was behind all this), but he's acknowledging how Saul was still in the midst of this because Saul was the first king. "Look at all you have now compared to

what it was like before.” Because of God’s blessings, but Saul was a part of that, in that respect, of being the first king, and David is acknowledging this in a big way, in that regard.

...and with luxury and with ornaments of gold on your apparel. How the mighty have fallen. David went into a lot of the battles of the Philistines, and was giving them peace, where they weren’t having things taken from them so that they were able to build up their wealth. Yet what did David do? He gave the honor and the credit to Saul. Incredible!

How the mighty have fallen in the midst of battle! Jonathan was slain in your high places. I am distressed for you, my brother Jonathan. You have been very pleasant to me. Your love to me was wonderful, surpassing the love of women. So again here, something different and unique that’s not the same in a relationship like that. It’s this bond of kinship to where one was willing to die for the other. That kind of a strong bond, if you will, and closeness, of sharing and so forth of life.

How the mighty have fallen, and the weapons of war perished! So again, this ability to look for the good in others. He wasn’t looking for the bad. Because there was plenty there. But did he go through all that and say all the bad that Saul had done and the injustices that Saul had brought out? Nope. Didn’t address those things at all. That takes a converted kind of mind.

That’s the kind of mind we want to have. Again, this pursuing the heart like David, it’s this mind that is desirous to look for the good that can be worked with in others, the good in people’s lives and not to get focused on the bad in people’s lives. Because we all have it. We all have bad in our lives. But to be positive toward them out of love and a genuine care for their lives. This is what David had.

We’re going to stop there. That’s the end of what David had given there in that portion, in that kind of poem, if you will. So, we’ll continue on next week with *Part 7*.